



HEALTHY EATING IN THE *Workplace*

Whatever the set up, the facilities at your workplace will influence how and what workers eat.

The type of food and drinks available in a workplace is determined by multiple factors. These include the workplace environment, types of food provision facilities surrounding the workplace and workers, and various activities and events that may be taking place. There are many sources of food within the workplace and it is important to consider how these factors might influence our food choices.

Your workplace may have a fully equipped kitchen, a small basic tearoom or a shared lunch area. Alternatively, your workers' lunch room may be in their car or at their desk. Whatever the case, all these settings have the potential to influence workers food and drink choices.

WORKPLACE FOOD ENVIRONMENT



Essentials for your office kitchen

For workers who spend most of their time at a dedicated worksite, adequate food preparation and storage facilities make it easier to eat well.

Storage areas – cold (refrigerators) and/or dry (pantry, shelf, cupboard)

Allow for appropriate storage of perishable and non-perishable food items.

Basic preparation equipment

Together with adequate storage areas, food preparation items such as microwaves, toasters, sharp knives, chopping boards and cling wraps allow workers to prepare or heat up meals brought from home, thus reducing reliance on takeaway options for lunch.

Hot water provision

Provide a kettle, urn or instantaneous hot water tap.

Eating utensils

Supply basic crockery and cutlery in the kitchen.

Washing up facilities

With any type of food preparation, washing up facilities will be required. Ensure that a sink or dishwasher with appropriate cleaning utensils and detergents are available.

Advanced preparation equipment

For workplaces that have the capacity and demand, more advanced food preparation equipment such as ovens, blenders and stoves may be provided to assist workers to make healthier meals and snacks onsite.

Food supply

Access to a workplace-provided food supply such as fresh milk or chilled water can assist workers to make healthier choices more easily.

Eating space

Consider providing a comfortable space for workers to eat. This can enhance worker cohesion, provides an alternate meeting space and encourages workers to take a break from work-related tasks.



On the go workforce

For the “on the go” or mobile workers, where their workplace is ‘on the road’, being healthy presents additional challenges, such as:

- Difficulty accessing fresh, healthy food and cool water
- Inflated cost of food at roadhouses, lunch bars or cafes
- Reduced opportunities to regularly stop and eat
- The ability to store food safely

To encourage healthy eating for workers ‘on the go’, consider the following:

- Provide a drink bottle for workers to ensure that they have access to drinking water
- Offer solutions for safe food storage, such as eskies, truck fridges or chiller bags with ice blocks.

Vending Machines

Vending Machines are known for their sugary drinks, salty snacks and chocolate bars. Reviewing the workplace vending machine and making simple substitutions is another way to provide some healthy snack options within the workplace.

Before you begin to overhaul the workplace vending machine, you’ll need to get some information, including:

1. Who currently liaises with the vending machine supplier?
2. Get a copy of the contract and review the terms
3. Talk with the supplier to work out if anything can be changed

There are many different ways to provide healthier choices in vending machines. Depending on the supplied and amount of flexibility you have to make changes, you can consider:

- smaller packet sizes
- price the healthier options competitively compared with less healthy items
- dedicate a section of the machine to healthier options, particularly at eye level if possible
- promote the healthy options and provide information to staff about the differences of choices, e.g. posters near the vending machine

