

17 November 2022

[REDACTED]
Kia ora [REDACTED]

Food health and safety ratings

Thank you for your request made under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act), received on 26 October 2022. You requested the following information:

1. How many restaurants, niche food distributors, catering companies, bars, cafes, and takeaway joints were temporarily closed by environmental health officers for serious hygiene regulation breaches or public health concerns over the past 12 months?
2. Can you please provide a full list including the establishment's name, details of the type of food business operated, length of the temporary closure (start and end date of temporary closure) and reasons given for why it was temporarily closed?
3. Can you provide further detail about how establishments are ranked in relation to food safety and hygiene standards?
4. Can you please provide the most recent list (preferably in a searchable Excel format) detailing all food related businesses registered with Wellington City Council and their current rankings?

Wellington City Council (WCC) has granted your request for information. Please see the below response to your request. For any further information or explanation please contact Andrew Taylor, Team Leader, Public Health Andrew.Taylor@wcc.govt.nz

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2. Can you please provide a full list including the establishment's name, details of the type of food business operated, length of the temporary closure (start and end date of temporary closure) and reasons given for why it was temporarily closed?

Waitangi Park Café was the only establishment closed in the last 12 months. They sold coffee, gelato, and toasted sandwiches. The business was closed because of rodent activity and lack of cleaning. They were closed on 14 August 2022 and have chosen not to reopen.

3. Can you provide further detail about how establishments are ranked in relation to food safety and hygiene standards?

A Council verification officer will contact a business around two weeks before the date the verification is due to arrange a visit.

A verifier will check things such as:

- paperwork
- temperature monitoring
- long-term maintenance plans
- cleaning schedules
- staff training

The categories are not equally rated, with heavier weighting placed on food safety process. The first verification will happen within six weeks of a food registration certificate being approved. How often they need to be verified in the future depends on the outcome of the previous verification and the business's level of risk.

Wellington City Council awards food businesses who obtain high standards with an 'excellent' grade. This is the only grade issued by WCC. To obtain an excellent grade, the business must score 80 or higher during their verification. The system used is the Ministry for Primary Industries' scoring, which we then enter into MPI's system [Titiro](#), where all verifications across the country are entered.

A significantly low score is likely to result in an unacceptable outcome for their verification. An unacceptable outcome will result in a shorter timeframe until their next verification. Any serious non-compliance will result in a WCC Food Safety Officer attending, with a range of compliance tools available, closure being one of them.

If a business had a historically poor compliance record, they would be unlikely to get an excellent grade off the back of one positive verification. They would have to sustain that period to demonstrate that high standards were now in place.

4. Can you please provide the most recent list (preferably in a searchable Excel format) detailing all food related businesses registered with Wellington City Council and their current rankings?

Amended on 09 November to: If possible, it would still be good to get a list or a figure for the number of restaurants awarded this excellence grade.

There are 2,011 register food related businesses, of these 488 have an 'excellent' rating. An absence of an excellent grade means the business has not scored high enough (80 or higher) in their most recent verification. A small number of new businesses will be yet to get their first verification.

Right of review

If you are not satisfied with the Council's response, you may request the Office of the Ombudsman to investigate the Council's decision. Further information is available on the Ombudsman website, www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Please note, we may proactively release our response to your request with your personal information removed.

Thank you again for your request, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards

Claudia Holgate

Senior Advisor, Official Information