**WHY REGISTER MY FOOD BUSINESS?**

Registration of a food business is required by law under Sections 25-27 in the Food Safety and Quality (FSQ) Act (2016). When all food businesses register their business, it allows for an up-to-date register or list to be compiled to facilitate inspections and traceability, the latter, of particular importance in foodborne outbreaks.

**WHO IS REQUIRED TO REGISTER?**

Food businesses required to register include hotels, restaurants, wholesalers, retailers, butcher shops, staff cafeterias, cafes, delis, buffets, roadside vendors, ice cream vans, caterers, fast food establishments, guest houses, or any establishment where food is stored, sold, distributed or prepared.

**HOW DO I REGISTER?**

Unless otherwise directed, application forms are to be completed online under the FSQ Unit and all the requested information uploaded. There is a $50 annual online fee (payment commences in January 2022). If there are multiple locations with the same name, each location must be registered independently of the other.

**HOW IS THE INFORMATIONIN ON THE APPLICATION FORM USED?**

The application forms are compiled and a list of registered food businesses will be posted on the Bahamas Agricultural Health and Food Safety Authority (BAHFSA) website at [www.bahfsa.com](http://www.bahfsa.com) for public viewing and shall contain at minimum, the name, address and the nature of the food business. Information may also be shared with enforcement agencies upon request such as the Department of Environmental Health Services (DEHS), The Customs Department, The Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources (MAMR) and The Ministry of Health (MOH).

**WHAT IF I USE DELIVERY VEHICLES?**

You will need to indicate on the application how many vehicles you have and provide the license plate number for each. These vehicles will be subject to inspection as well. If all the vehicles are not kept at one location, you will have to provide information where they are normally kept.

**WHAT IF I TEMPORARILY CLOSE MY FOOD BUSINESS OR MAKE OTHER CHANGES?**

Food business operators (FBOs) are required to notify the FSQ Unit within 21 days of the closure of their business and the Unit made aware of any other significant changes to the business including new management or proprietor, change of address, change in type of service provided, etc. A signed notification is required in writing, i.e., via email to [bahfsa@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:bahfsa@bahamas.gov.bs).

**ONCE REGISTERED, CAN I OPERATE MY FOOD BUSINESS?**

No. Registration of your food business is only a pre-condition to the issuance of a business licence under the Business Licence Act (No. 25 of 2010). There are other requirements that you will have to satisfy such as a Food Handler’s Certificate and a Certificate of Sanitation as noted in Sections 28-29 respectively, in the FSQ Act (2016). Once these and all other requirements are met and a successful application is made for a business licence, you may operate your food business.

**WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM NOT REGISTERED BUT OPEN FOR BUSINESS?**

Note that it is an offence to operate a food business without being registered. Those who are in breach of this requirement are liable to a fixed penalty as prescribed by regulations.

**DO I HAVE TO REGISTER MY CROP OR ANIMAL FARM AS WELL?**

Anyone who cultivates food or rears animals for food shall make application to be registered under the BAHFSA Plant Protection Act (2016) or the Animal Health and Production Act (2016) respectively.

**IS REGISTRATION A ONE TIME PROCESS?**

No. Your business must be registered every year and the requisite fee paid.

**WHAT IF MY REGISTRATION IS DENIED?**

FBOs who do not adhere to the provisions of the Food Safety and Quality Act, do not renew their annual registration or have been convicted of an offence under the FSQ Act, may have their registration denied by suspension or revocation by the FSQ Director via a written notification explaining the actions taken. Where such denial takes place, the FBO shall cease all operations until further notice, i.e. until satisfying the corrective actions needed to resume operations.