



The National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations

Non-prescribed voluntary code

Part 1: Purpose and Objective

The Code supports remote community stores (stores) that service remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (definitions below).

The purpose of this Code is to establish minimum standards that are to be followed (referred to as must) or are best practice if followed (referred to as should). The standards aim to improve health outcomes and protect food security of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The standards cover governance, operations and health.

The Code has been informed by the National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Remote Food Security Strategy) and is guided by the strategy's remote retail goal of stores being responsive to, and meeting the needs of, community.

The Code does not override existing legislation at local, state or federal government levels.

Part 2: Code rules

Governance Standards

The Remote Food Security Strategy sets best practice and has an intended outcome that remote communities have genuine decision-making authority to determine ownership, governance and management practices of stores in their community.

- Stores must be able to demonstrate how local community is able to input into the store functions.
- Stores should:
 - Be able to demonstrate how the local communities are informed of the performance of the store.
 - Have a governance structure that is accountable, transparent, manages risk and has good conduct, compliance and stakeholder engagement.

Operations Standards

- Stores must:
 - Be compliant with relevant legislation, policies and procedures at a State/Territory and federal level
 - Have clearly displayed and accurate prices
 - Clearly display opening and closing hours and notify community of anticipated store closures in advance
 - Not participate in practices where in-store informal credit arrangements are being made with customers (formally known as book up practices)
 - Clearly display their membership to the Code, including details of how customers can make complaints about non-compliance. This signage will be provided by the Administrator.
- Store operations should aim to progress the goal and six intended outcomes of the Remote Retail pillar (refer appendix) of the Remote Food Security Strategy, which are outlined in the definitions section below.
- Business decisions taken by the store should support:
 - Ongoing food security
 - Continued store viability
 - Operations that meet community expectations
 - Good health of customers through stocking and promoting healthy product options.
- Stores should:
 - Prioritise local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment
 - Have suitably trained and qualified staff to effectively run the store
 - Work with parties planning for and responding to local emergencies and disasters.

Health Standards

The Remote Food Security Strategy has an intended outcome that stores encourage healthy purchases and discourage unhealthy purchases.

To give effect to this, stores must:

- Not promote or discount unhealthy food and drinks, unless the discount is reasonably necessary to reduce waste from expiring food or drink.
- Not provide easy access to unhealthy food and drinks at the counter and high traffic areas, except for ready to eat meals.

- Ensure all fresh fruit and vegetable items are continuously available, well-presented and clearly displayed:
 - Basic and small stores will carry a minimum of 5 fresh fruit and 5 fresh vegetables of high quality (not including frozen or tinned)
 - Medium to large stores will carry a minimum of 10 fresh fruit and 10 fresh vegetables of high quality (not including frozen or tinned)
 - Have a minimum of 50 per cent of displayed ready to eat meals be healthy foods.
- Have at least 50 per cent of refrigerated drinks dedicated to no sugar products (must include bottled water).

Stores should:

- Have price discounts on healthy foods and drinks, either promotional or ongoing.
- Not refrigerate sugar sweetened drinks (non-perishable) greater than 600 millilitres.

Part 3 – Code Administration

The Commonwealth, represented by the portfolio with responsibility for Indigenous Affairs, is the Administrator of the Code.

The Administrator is supported by the Code Administration Committee to review and revise the Code, annually at a minimum.

The Administrator will support Store compliance, manage complaints and investigate alleged breaches of the Code.

Rights and Responsibilities

Signatories to the Code are supported to comply or work towards compliance through the Guidance <link when available>, benchmarking tools <link>, and ORIC Governance training <include link here>.

Stores must be open and transparent with stakeholders regarding their membership of the Code.

Stores have a right to access advice and support from the Administrator, with regards to interpretation of the Code and how compliance can be achieved. The Administrator must seek to provide timely and effective support to this end.

Under the Code, stores and the Code Administrator can choose how to resolve a dispute.

The Code has a defined dispute resolution procedure which must be followed if one of the parties chooses it.

Compliance under the Code

Stores must complete an annual statement of compliance (link to statement).

Compliance checks by the Administrator will monitor compliance with the Code. The Administrator can make reasonable requests for evidence on compliance with the Code.

The Administrator has a range of options in the instance of potential or deemed non-compliance, including:

- Supporting stores in areas of non-compliance to work towards achieving the standards outlined in the Code
- Seeking administrative resolutions, where the store agrees to cease the non-compliance
- Issuing a notice of non-compliance, a formal request to cease non-compliance
- Suspension of the store's membership of the Code
- Termination of the store's membership of the Code.

Dispute Resolution and complaints

The process for dispute resolution is at Attachment X.

Definitions

Good faith Under common law, good faith requires parties to an agreement to exercise their powers reasonably and not arbitrarily or for some irrelevant purpose.

Certain conduct may lack good faith. For example, if one party acts dishonestly or fails to have regard to the legitimate interests of the other party.

Grocery items mean items for basic household needs, including personal care; hygiene and cleaning products; and cooking utensils.

Healthy foods mean food and drinks that are derived from the five food groups described in the Australian Dietary Guidelines, and contain essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals. They are typically low in saturated fats, added sugars and salt and are not highly processed.

Promotion means the methods used to advertise and sell products and services to customers, these specifically include, but are not limited to, product selection, placement, marketing and pricing.

Ready-to-eat meals mean perishable foods that are prepared and ready to consume immediately without the need to be cooked or reheated.

Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community aligns with the definition of a discrete community included in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Targets 9a and 9b). The National Agreement uses the ABS definition "a discrete community is a geographic location, bounded by physical or legal boundaries, which is inhabited or intended to be inhabited predominantly (greater than 50 per cent of usual residents) by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people".

Remote used throughout the Code is loosely defined as areas that are classified as remote or very remote areas in the Australian Statistical Geography Standard.

Remote community store is a business that sells food, drink and/or grocery items to be a remote community store if:

- (a) the store is in, or services, a remote or very remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community as defined by the Code; and
- (b) the store is a significant source of food, drink and/or grocery items for residents of one or more of these communities or areas.

Store size (Basic, small, medium to large store) is self-determined by the Store, using guidance at appendix to support.

Unhealthy food or drinks (also known as discretionary items as per the Australian Dietary Guidelines) are often high in added sugar, fat, and/or salt, low in nutrients needed for health and are typically highly processed. Examples include sugary drinks (soft drinks, cordial, and fruit drink), some breakfast cereals, lollies, chocolates, sugar, sweet biscuits, packaged snacks, cake, ice cream, processed meat, pies and sausage rolls, crisps, deep fried foods (e.g., chips), fast foods.

Guidance on Store size

Store size weekly turnover ¹	Store size productive floor area	Population ²
less than \$35,000 per week (basic)	Basics (<250m ²)	<200
\$35,000 to \$80,000 per week (small)	Small (250 - 500m ²)	200 - 500
\$80,000 to \$150,000 per week (medium)	Medium (>500 m ²)	500-1000
Greater than \$150,000 per week (large)	Large (>750m ²)	1000+

¹ ABA Stores Infrastructure Project, *Design Principles*, 2010

² Community population is based on ABS Census data www.abs.gov.au/census

Remote Retail Pillar from the National Strategy for Food Security in Remote First Nations Communities

Goal	5. Remote stores and other food outlets are responsive to and meet the needs of community.
Intended outcomes	<p>5.1 The needs of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are met through the reliable provision of quality, affordable, nutritious food and other essentials.</p> <p>5.2 Remote store and other food outlet environments encourage healthy purchases and discourage unhealthy purchases.</p> <p>5.3 Remote communities have genuine decision-making authority to determine ownership, governance and management practices of their remote food outlets.</p> <p>5.4 Remote food providers have strong local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment across the remote store environment.</p> <p>5.5 Remote residents in locations without a permanent store have access to alternative food retail services.</p> <p>5.6 Remote stores and other food outlets are supported to achieve high quality, best practice operations and governance through continuous improvement.</p>