

UPDATE ON SINGAPORE'S FOOD DONATION POLICY LANDSCAPE

Singapore's food donation policy has evolved alongside its efforts to reduce food waste and enhance food security.¹ Until recently, Singapore's legal framework lacked specific liability protections for food donors, which posed a significant barrier to the expansion of food donation activities. However, in 2024, Singapore enacted a Good Samaritan Food Donation Bill to protect food donors from liability for any harm that occurs due to donated food. The Act aims to encourage food donations, reduce food waste, and increase the availability of food for redistribution to food-insecure communities.

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS LEGAL LANDSCAPE FOR LIABILITY PROTECTION

Prior to the passage of the Good Samaritan Food Donation Bill,² Singapore had no explicit liability protection for food donors. While food safety guidelines existed under the Sale of Food Act³ and the Singapore Food Agency Act,⁴ food donors—whether individuals, businesses, or charitable organizations—were at risk of facing civil or criminal liability if the end recipients of donated food experienced harm. This lack of formal protection hindered participation in food donation efforts, as potential donors feared legal repercussions despite good intentions and safety measures.

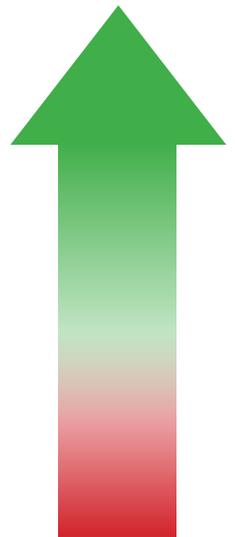
DETAILS OF THE UPDATED LAW

The **Good Samaritan Food Donation Act 2024** (Bill No. 22/2024), passed in August 2024, establishes legal protections for food donors and charities that receive and distribute donated food, shielding them from liability for any death or personal injury caused by the consumption of donated food, provided that specific conditions are met.⁵

Key provisions of the Act include the following:

1. **Waiver of Liability:** The Act explicitly protects food donors from both civil and criminal liability for any death or personal injury that results from the consumption of donated food, under certain conditions.⁶ Specifically, a food donor will not be liable so long as:
 - a. The food is donated for free, without requiring the exchange of any money or anything of worth.⁷
 - b. The food was not unsafe or unsuitable at the time it left the possession or control of the donor.⁸
 - c. If the food required specific handling to remain safe and suitable, the donor informed the recipient of those handling requirements.⁹

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- d. If the food had a limited safe consumption period, the donor informed the recipient of the time limit for safe consumption.¹⁰
 - e. The donor complied with all applicable food safety and hygiene requirements when handling the food prior to donation, as required by written law.¹¹
2. **Who receives protection?:** The Act provides a broad scope of protection for various types of donors—including individuals as well as businesses—and food recovery organizations that receive food and pass it along to end recipients.¹²
 3. **How is safe food defined?:** The terms “unsafe” and “unsuitable” are defined by reference to Sections 2C and 2D of the Sale of Food Act 1973.¹³
 4. **Exclusions:** Section 5 of the Act clarifies that these protections do not apply retroactively to liability arising before the commencement of the law.¹⁴ Additionally, the Act does not apply to personal exchanges of food between individuals as part of personal relationships or to food provided with accommodation in private residences in exchange for services.¹⁵

CONCLUSION

With the passage of the Good Samaritan Food Donation Act 2024, Singapore’s legal landscape has become significantly more favorable to food donation. The Act provides comprehensive protections, encouraging businesses, individuals, and charitable organizations to donate and distribute donated food without the fear of legal repercussions. By offering a clear legal framework, this legislation is poised to expand food redistribution efforts and enhance food security. Consequently, the policy rating for Singapore’s food donation laws has been updated to **strong**, reflecting a robust commitment to addressing food waste and insecurity through safe and legally protected food donations.

→ STRONG POLICY

For more best practices related to liability protection for food donation, please see FLPC’s [Liability Protection Issue Brief](#).

Endnotes

- ¹ TOWARDS ZERO WASTE SG, *Singapore’s Zero Waste Masterplan*, <https://www.towardszerowaste.gov.sg/zero-waste-masterplan> (last visited Oct. 24, 2024) & SINGAPORE FOOD AGENCY, *The Food We Eat*, <https://www.sfa.gov.sg/food-farming/singapore-food-supply/the-food-we-eat> (last visited Oct. 24, 2024).
- ² GOOD SAMARITAN FOOD DONATION ACT 2024 (Bill No. 22/2024) (Sing.). <https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Bills-Supp/22-2024/Published/20240702?DocDate=20240702>
- ³ SALE OF FOOD ACT 1973 (Cap. 283, 2002 Rev. Ed.) (Sing.).
- ⁴ SINGAPORE FOOD AGENCY ACT 2019 (Act 11 of 2019) (Sing.).
- ⁵ GOOD SAMARITAN FOOD DONATION ACT 2024 (Bill No. 22/2024) (Sing.).
- ⁶ *Id.* at § 4.
- ⁷ *Id.* at § 2
- ⁸ *Id.* at § 4(1)(a)
- ⁹ *Id.* GOOD SAMARITAN ACT, § 4(1)(b)
- ¹⁰ *Id.* at § 4(1)(c)
- ¹¹ *Id.* GOOD SAMARITAN ACT § 4(1)(d)
- ¹² *Id.* at § 2
- ¹³ *Supra* Note 4 SALE OF FOOD ACT 1973; Section 2C (defining “unsafe” in relation to food) and Section 2D (defining “unsuitable” in relation to food).
- ¹⁴ *Supra* Note 6. GOOD SAMARITAN ACT § 5(1)
- ¹⁵ *Id.* at § 5(2)

