



Division of Environmental Health

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FOOD FACILITIES TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

CALIFORNIA FOOD SAFETY MANAGER CERTIFICATION

The California Retail Food Code (CalCode) requires food facilities to have at least one individual on staff that has passed an approved food safety manager certification test (§113947.1). An individual who is food safety certified can only serve as the certified manager for one facility. The certified manager is responsible for establishing the food safety system at the facility and for training staff in principles and practices of food safety.

Food safety manager certificates are valid for five (5) years from the date of successful testing. The food safety manager certificate must be retained on file at the food facility at all times and be made available for inspection by the enforcement officer.

Food facilities exempt from the certification requirement are certified farmers' markets, produce stands, temporary food facilities, certain compact mobile food operations, and facilities handling only prepackaged foods.

You can access the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited certified food safety manager training list at the following website:

<https://anab.ansi.org/resource/food-protection-manager-certification-body-directory/>

CALIFORNIA FOOD HANDLER CARDS

The California Retail Food Code requires that all food handlers obtain a food handler card by passing one of the approved exams within 30 days of the date of hire (§113948).

“Food Handler” means an individual who is involved in the preparation, storage, or service of food in a permanent or a mobile food facility (§113790). Most restaurant employees are required to obtain the food handler card, including (but not limited to): wait staff, chefs, head cooks, cooks, bussers, bartenders, host/hostesses that handle food, plates, or glasses, beverage pourers (including alcoholic beverage pourers), and supervisory personnel (such as the general manager or managers). Those employees certified under the existing food safety manager certification program do not need a food handler card. See below for a list of facilities and operations that are exempt from this requirement. The food handler card is valid for three years, after which an additional training is required.

Cottage food operators and their employees are required to complete a food processor course [§114365.2(d)]. The food handler training course satisfies this requirement.

You can access the ANSI accredited certified food handler training list at the following website:

<https://anab.ansi.org/resource/certificate-issuers-accreditation-directory/>

Facilities must maintain records showing that each food handler they employ has a valid food handler’s card (for example, copies of each employee’s card), and must make these records available at the time of inspection. The enforcement officer may ask to see food facility records for all food handlers and may cite violations if the records are incomplete or unavailable. Enforcement officers may also ask the individual food handlers to show their cards.

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXEMPT FROM FOODHANDLER CARD REQUIREMENTS:

- Certified farmers’ markets
- Commissaries
- Licensed health care facilities
- Grocery stores, including convenience stores
- Mobile support units
- School cafeterias
- Restricted food service facilities
- Pharmacies
- Facilities providing approved in-house food safety training (primarily major chains).
- Facilities subject to a collective bargaining agreement with their employees
- Temporary food facilities