

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I run a bar-only operation with no food prepared except bagged snacks. Do I have to take the Food Handler training?

A. No. You are exempt from this requirement to send an employee to this training, however, should your establishment be cited with any red-critical violations during your inspection, then you will be required to take the training.

Q. I have been told I have a Medium-Risk food establishment. I have a very limited menu at this time. May I apply for a waiver from this requirement to have a Certified Food Handler?

A. Yes, you may apply in writing for a waiver from the requirement. However, the granting of a waiver for Medium-Risk food establishments will be the exception, not the rule, and ***if you handle any raw meats such as chicken or beef, a waiver will not be given.***

Q. I have several kitchen employees that I would like to be certified for Food Handling. However, they do not all drive and the nearest class is over 30 miles away. Can we have a class in my area?

A. Yes. The Health Department will bring the training to interested groups or food service establishments in other localities of the County, provided that we are contacted and a local venue for a class space can be provided and at least 10 participants are guaranteed.

Q. I have been looking for work for several months. I will be applying to some restaurants for a cook position. Can I take the Certified Food Handler training?

A. Yes. You may register for the Certified Professional Food Handler course and you are highly encouraged to do so. You do not have to be currently employed by a food service establishment. The Food Handler course is appropriate for entry-level food workers and you will be given a Certificate of Completion that will show potential employers that you have the knowledge to prepare food safely.

Q. I have a "ServSafe" Certification. Do I have to register for the Food Handler course offered by the County?

A. No. Your certification must be current, you must provide a copy of the certificate, and it must be issued by a nationally accredited authority that is recognized by the Health Department. However, we strongly urge that you still attend the certified Food Handler training for several important reasons, including: the chance to meet and question your County Health inspectors, to remain current in local laws and food safety information, to contribute to food safety discussion with your peers, and to encourage your non-certified food workers to gain training as a Certified Food Handler.

Q. I run a "mobile" food service wagon in the summer at local fairs. Do I have to take this Food Handler training?

A. No. At this time, you are not required to attend the training provided. However, considering that many Mobile food operators prepare potentially hazardous foods, it is very likely you will be required to be certified in the future.

Q. I only sell food at the local fireman's convention on one weekend a year under my tent. Do I have to be certified?

A. No. Operators obtaining a Temporary Food Permit do not require a Certified Food Handler if the food item(s) are from an approved menu list or reviewed and approved by the permit issuing official **prior** to the event. The food workers must keep conditions sanitary and must **avoid bare hand contact with any ready-to-eat foods.**

