

# CALIFORNIA FOOD HANDLER CARD LAW



Senate Bills 602 and 303 require food handlers to have a California Food Handler Card. A California Food Handler Card may be obtained by completing an approved training course, and passing a test with a score of 70% or higher.

## 1 Who is required to have the California Food Handler Card?

Individuals working in food facilities who are involved in preparing, storing or handling food are required to obtain a California Food Handler Card. This includes food employees that work in restaurants, cafes, bakeries, delis, mobile food facilities, bars, kiosks, and other food facility staff that are not specifically exempt. Examples of food facility staff required to obtain a California Food Handler Card include:

- ✓ Wait staff
- ✓ Bartenders
- ✓ Supervisory/manager personnel
- ✓ Chefs
- ✓ Host/hostesses that handle food
- ✓ Food warehouse stocker
- ✓ Cooks
- ✓ Bussers

## 2 Who is exempt from obtaining a California Food Handler Card?

- ✓ Grocery stores, and grocery store delis, bakeries, meat and produce departments all under one owner
- ✓ Licensed health care facilities, including hospital employees
- ✓ Facilities used for the confinement of adults or minors, such as a jail, juvenile hall, camp/ranch, residential facility
- ✓ Retail stores where a majority of sales are from a pharmacy
- ✓ Temporary food facilities (food booths at community events)
- ✓ Elderly nutrition programs administered by California Department of Aging
- ✓ Convenience stores
- ✓ School cafeterias (public or private)
- ✓ Food facilities subject to collective bargaining agreement
- ✓ Commissaries
- ✓ Venues with snack bars where the majority of sales are from admission tickets (excluding any area in which restaurant-style sit-down services is provided)
- ✓ Any person who has a valid Food Safety Certification
- ✓ Certified farmer's markets
- ✓ Food facilities with approved in-house training\*
- ✓ Bed and breakfast facilities

\*In-house training course must be approved pursuant to Subpart 2-103.11 of the 2013 FDA Food Code. In addition, the food facility must provide evidence of approval, and the food handler card training must be provided during normal work hours at no cost to the employee.

## 3 Approved food handler classes are provided by:

- ✓ A food handler must obtain a California Food Handler Card only from an organization with an ANSI ASTM 2659E accredited food handler training program.
- ✓ To see the most current list of approved providers, check the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/ansicard>

## 4 What is the difference between the California Food Handler Card and Food Safety Certification?

Both the California Food Handler Card and Food Safety Certification are required under current laws and focus on food handling, employee hygiene and the prevention of foodborne illness. The differences are as follows:

	<b>California Food Handler Card</b>	<b>Food Safety Certification</b>
<i>Typical training hours?</i>	Approximately 3 hours	Approximately 8 hours
<i>Number of exam questions?</i>	40+ questions	80+ questions
<i>Certificate valid for?</i>	3 years	5 years
<i>Number of facilities used for?</i>	Can be used in multiple facilities	Only used in one facility at a time
<i>How long do I have to obtain?</i>	30 days from employee hire date	60 days
<i>Who is required to have it?</i>	All food employees involved in prep, storage or service of food	At least one person at each food facility

For more information, please contact the County of Sonoma, Department of Health Services, Environmental Health & Safety at 707-565-6565.