



# HEALTH CARE AGENCY/PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

To: Orange County Retail Food Facility Owners/Operators

Subject: ORANGE COUNTY FOOD HANDLER CARD LAW REQUIREMENTS (SB303)

## Who Needs a Food Handler Card?

For the most part, any paid employee in a food facility or mobile food facility (catering or produce trucks, carts, etc.) involved in the preparation, storage or service of food needs a valid food handler card. Food handlers must obtain a Food Handler Card within 30 days after the date of hire.

**Exemptions:** There are a variety of exemptions where a Food Handler Card will not be required:

- Food handlers holding a current & valid [Food Protection Manager's Certificate](#)
  - Grocery stores, except for separately owned food facilities to which this section otherwise apply that are located in the grocery store. "Grocery store" includes convenience stores.
  - Public and private school cafeterias
  - Certified Farmers' Markets
  - Commissaries
  - Retail stores where a majority of sales are from a pharmacy
  - Any city, county, city and county, state, or regional facility used for the confinement of adults or minors, including, but not limited to, a county jail, juvenile hall, camp, ranch, or residential facility.
  - An elderly nutrition program, administered by the California Department of Aging,
- pursuant to the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 3001 et seq.), as amended.
- Certain food facilities with approved in-house food safety training
  - Licensed Health Care Facilities
  - Food facilities subject to a collective bargaining agreement
  - Restricted food service facilities
  - Venues with snack bar services in which the majority of sales are from admission tickets (excluding any area in which restaurant-style sit-down service is provided)
  - Mobile Support Units (not to be confused with Mobile Food Facilities that DO require a Food Handler Card)

## How do I get a Food Handler Card?

A California Food Handler Card must be issued from a certification organization that is accredited as meeting the requirements of the Conference for Food Protection's "Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs" with a minimum score of 70%. The California Food Handler Card is valid for three years from the date of issuance. Food handlers must retake the course and test upon expiration in order to maintain a valid Food Handler Card. This list can be found at:

<https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=212&prgID=228&status=4>

The California Food Handler Card is valid for **three years** from the date of issuance. Food handlers must retake the course and test upon expiration in order to maintain a valid Food Handler Card. ANSI accredited Food Handler Card programs can be offered as online courses.

❖ **Important Note:** Food Handler Cards issued by San Bernardino, Riverside or San Diego Counties, unless they carry an ANSI accredited stamp, **CANNOT** be accepted anywhere but within their own counties.

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### **As an Employer, What is my Responsibility?**

The law requires employers to maintain records documenting that each food handler employed by the food facility possesses a valid Food Handler Card. The California Food Handler Law does not require employers to pay for the food handler's training and test. An example of acceptable records would be to maintain copies of the employees' food handler cards at the food facility. Documented violations will fall into the non-critical (minor) category. Lack of a valid Food Handler Card will **not** be grounds for the immediate removal of an employee from work. As an Owner or the Person In Charge, at the time of the inspection, you will be asked by your inspector if you are maintaining current and accurate records regarding the status of your employee's food handler cards. You may be required to submit proof in the form of a current employee work schedule along with a valid copy of their food handler card.

To view the specifics of the new laws visit: [http://www.ocfoodinfo.com/downloads/sb\\_602\\_303\\_bill.pdf](http://www.ocfoodinfo.com/downloads/sb_602_303_bill.pdf)

For all other questions regarding the latest on the Food Handler Card Law, visit us at: <http://ocfoodinfo.com> or the [CCDEH website http://www.ccdeh.com/](http://www.ccdeh.com/).