



HEALTH CARE AGENCY/PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH *INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN*

TO: Orange County Retail Food Facility Owners/Operators

SUBJECT: Requirements for Food Safety Certification

Who is Required to Have a Certified Food Safety Person?

Since January 1, 2000, all existing food facilities (i.e., food establishments, mobile food facilities, and commissaries) that handle unpackaged food, are required to have at least one (1) owner or employee who has successfully passed one of the approved and accredited food safety certification examinations. Newly constructed unpackaged food facilities, or food facilities that no longer have a certified person or have undergone a change of ownership must have a certified individual within sixty (60) days.

Food facilities operated by a school district, county office of education or a community college district are not exempt from the certification requirements unless they elect to be regulated by an existing *Food Safety Program* operated by the city or county in which they are located. Because the County of Orange does not have an existing *Food Safety Program*, school districts, county offices of education or community college districts located within the County of Orange are not exempt from the certification requirements.

Food facilities which handle only unpackaged, **non-potentially hazardous** foods may be exempt from the certification requirement if they can adequately demonstrate to the enforcement officer that the employees of the food facility have knowledge of the food safety principles as they relate to the specific food operation.

What is the Certified Person's Responsibility?

The certified person is responsible for the instruction of all employees at the facility who handle, or have responsibility for handling unpackaged food, to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge regarding the safe preparation and service of food. The certified person may tailor food safety instruction to be relevant to the employee's specific duties.

A certified person may not serve as the person to be certified at more than one food facility. However, multiple connecting food facilities within the same site and under the same management, ownership, or control, are considered to be one (1) food facility (e.g., hotels with bars, coffee shops or snack bars within the same site). Additionally, the certified person does not need to be present at the food facility during all hours of operation.

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How Do You Stay In Compliance?

The original food safety certificate must be retained on file at the food facility at all times, and be made available for inspection by a representative of Environmental Health. The certificate expires five (5) years from the date of original issuance. Certified individuals must be recertified every five years by passing one of the approved and accredited food safety certification examinations. Replacement or duplicate certificates must have an expiration date the same as the original certificate.

The following food safety certification examinations are currently approved as meeting the requirements:

1. *The ServSafe Serving Safe Food Certification Examination*

National Restaurant Association
175 West Jackson Blvd Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60604-2702
(800) 765-2122
www.nraef.org

OR

California Restaurant Association
621 Capitol Mall Ste. 2000
Sacramento, California 95814
(800) 765-4842
<http://www.calrest.org/go/CRA/>

2. *Thomson Prometric*

1000 Lancaster St.
Baltimore, MD 21202
(443) 923-8200
www.prometric.com

3. *Professional Testing, Inc.*

National Registry of Food Safety Professional
5728 Major Blvd., Suite 750
Orlando, FL 32819
(407) 352-3830 or (800) 446-0257 FAX (407)-352-3603
www.nrfsp.com

The examinations are very comprehensive and it is highly recommended that a certification training course be taken prior to the examination. If you have any questions regarding the requirements for food safety certification, please contact your Environmental Health Specialist at (714) 433-6000.

