

I'm not a robot



So you need a food handlers card. Maybe you just got your first job, or maybe you’ve worked in the industry for years and need to renew your certificate. Whatever your situation, you’re not alone. As of May 2019, there were about 1.2 million food workers in Texas. To put that in perspective, that means almost 10% of all working Texans are employed in the foodservice industry. Who’s required to get a food handlers license? Texas state law requires every food worker to get a food handlers card (also known as a food handlers license or permit) within 60 days of starting work. Don’t let the job title fool you — a “food handler” is anyone who works at a food establishment in a non-managerial position. Whether you’re preparing food, serving food, or just bussing tables, you’ll need to get your food handlers certificate. There are a few exceptions to the statewide requirement. You don’t need a food handlers card if any of the following situations apply to you: You’re a volunteer rather than a paid employee (if that’s the case, you might want to look into our free food safety course for volunteers) You work at a temporary food establishment that’s open for two weeks or less each year (such as a food stand that’s only open for a specific event or celebration) You work at a food establishment that only sells pre-packaged food Your job is to aid in activities of daily living (including, but not limited to, certified nurse assistants) If you’re required to have a food handlers card and you don’t get one, it can hurt the business where you work. You might get a lower score during a health inspection, for example. Or you might make a mistake that causes a customer to get sick. Where can I get an approved card? Texas has two criteria for food handler training. Your training must either be approved by your local health department or accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB). As long as the program has been approved or accredited, it will meet the legal requirements for food handler training. Sometimes people take a food handler training class from an instructor. But the easiest and fastest way to get your card is online. You can get your Texas Food Handlers Card from StateFoodSafety in just over an hour. The nice thing about online training is that it’s accessible 24/7. You can go through the training at your own pace, stopping and starting as needed. Our system automatically saves your progress so you can continue right where you left off. We offer the training in eight languages: English, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, American Sign Language (ASL), Tagalog, and Serbo-Croatian. After you purchase the course on our website but before you start watching it, you’ll be asked to choose your preferred language for training. About the Texas food handlers training The food handler training and test cover a variety of topics, including: How to keep your hands, body, and clothing clean to protect food from contamination How to recognize people who are highly susceptible to foodborne illness What symptoms and illnesses you must report to a manager before going to work How to identify Time/temperature Control for Safety (TCS) foods and prevent bacterial growth in those foods How to maintain a sanitary work environment Many of these topics will seem like common sense, such as wearing clean clothes to work. But others may require a bit more study on your part, like the FDA’s recommended cooking temperatures. Study aids for the food handlers test We offer several resources on our website that can help you prepare for the final test. After you pass, you may want to download and print these posters to keep as a reminder of what you learned. .TCS foods poster Feeling Sick? poster Cooking Times and Temperatures poster In summary, the process of getting an approved food handlers card in Texas is simple! You can get it through any ANAB-accredited or health department-approved training program. Get your license online in just over an hour through StateFoodSafety’s accredited course. — Jessica Pettit If you are a food handling employee, you hold your customers’ health and safety in your hands. The more you know about food safety, the easier it can be to keep them safe. That’s why a food handler card, also known as food handler certification, is so important. You receive such a certificate after learning about food safety in a dedicated course. If you’re about to enter the food industry, you’ll need your food handlers license before long. If you’re unsure how to get it, keep reading: How to Get a Food Handlers Card Getting your food safety certification for safe food handling in Texas doesn’t have to be complicated. In fact, the Texas Department of State Health Services (TXDSHS) makes it straightforward. You can take these steps below: Choose a food handler training program from the list of programs with TXDSHS accreditation Visit their website and locate the Texas Food Handlers Card page Enroll in the program and complete it at your own pace Download your certificate Why Get a Food Handler Permit? While obtaining your food handler card online is fast and convenient, you may still not be convinced that it’s the right move for you. However, now might be the right time to acquire your food handler card for the following reasons: 1. For Legal Reasons If you’re a food service worker in Texas, you must have a food handler’s card under Texas Food Establishment Rules. The law requires you to obtain your food handler’s permit within 30 days of employment. 2. To Keep Customers Safe Food handler courses enable you to learn all about food safety to keep your customers safe. There is a great deal of helpful information on avoiding cross-contamination, maintaining food temperatures, practicing good personal hygiene, and more. 3. Employer Requirements Many food-related businesses won’t hire employees without food handler cards. You may not be an employer’s first choice to be hired if you don’t have one. Alternatively, you must prioritize getting one within 30 days of your employment commencing. Frequently Asked Questions About Food Safety Certification in Texas If you’re new to the food service industry or plan on entering it soon, it’s only natural to have questions. You may not be aware of the credentials you need to have or if there’s anything specific you need to do to obtain your food safety certification. Below, you can learn the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about food handler certification in Texas: 1. Can you get a food handlers permit at 15? Many people ask, ‘Can you get a food handlers permit at 14, 15, or 16?’ Whether you’re a teenager or an adult, you can get a food handlers permit to work in food service in Texas. There is no minimum age requirement for someone to enroll in a food handler permit program so they can receive their Texas food handlers card and serve food safely. 2. Who must get food handler training? In Texas, the Texas Department of State Health Services requires all food employees to complete an approved food handler training course within 30 days of employment. This rule falls under Texas Food Establishment Rules. 3. Where can I find an accredited food handler program? You can get your food handler card online! There are dozens of TXDSHS-approved training program providers online to choose from. 4. How long is a food handlers license valid? Your food handler card or certificate is valid for two years from when it was issued or up until the date visible on your card or certificate. Obtain Your Food Handler Card Online with TABC Pronto Do you want to serve delicious food and keep your customers safe? Enroll in our Texas Food Handlers Card today. Our course is 100% approved by the Texas State Board of Food Handlers. Learn more at TABC Pronto now! main content The Texas Department of State Health Services (TXDSHS), under Texas Food Establishment Rules (TFER) §228.31, requires that ‘...all food employees shall successfully complete an accredited food handler training course, within 30 days of employment.’ Food employee is an individual working with unpackaged food, food equipment or utensils, or food-contact surfaces under FDA Food Code, 1-2 Definitions, “Food Employee”. The following are exempt from food handler training requirement: Certified Food Manager Food establishment that only serves pre-packaged items Temporary Food Establishment (in DSHS jurisdiction) The following are exempt from food handler training as long as they are supervised by a person who has had either food handler certification through an accredited course or is a Certified Food Manager: Individuals with an Intellectual Disability Persons in a rehabilitation or correctional facility that work with food or food related items as part of their rehabilitation Persons who aid in activities of daily living (ADLs) (such as but not limited to certified nurse assistants, nurses, etc.) Persons who distribute pre-portioned food items in settings such as but not limited to classrooms, daycare, and similar facilities. Volunteers, those individuals that work with food or food related items but are not employed by the food establishment An accredited food handler education or training program may be taken at any program listed on the Food Establishments Group website. A link to the website is provided at the top of this page. A food handler education or training program approved by TXDSHS or by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Yes, accredited training providers may offer training on the internet. All internet training providers, along with traditional classroom training providers will be listed on the website listed above. A food handler card or certificate issued by an accredited program will vary in size and color. However, all food handler cards or certificates issued are required to have the food handler program name, address and either a TXDSHS Accreditation License Number or ANSI listed on the card or certificate. Food Handler Cards or certificates issued by an accredited program shall be recognized statewide by regulatory authorities as the valid proof of successful completion of an accredited food handler education or training program under Texas Health and Safety Code §438.046. A registry of TXDSHS accredited programs and ANSI link are also posted on this website link at the top of this page. Food Handler Cards or certificates issued outside the state of Texas receive reciprocity if the education or training program is an ANSI accredited. All accredited food handler programs are required to meet the training requirements for bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods as defined in §3-301.11(E) . All food handlers who contact ready-to-eat food must receive training providing the required food safety information as specified by regulations of the workers’ state or local government.ScopeThis food handler course will prepare the learner to become a responsible food handler. A “food handler” is generally understood to be a food worker in a non-managerial role.Learning Objectives (Effective date April 29, 2020)By the end of this course, you will be able to:Recognize how food can cause illness or allergic reactions.Prevent contamination of food and food-contact surfaces with the hands and body.Identify which symptoms or illnesses must be reported to a manager.Use time and temperature control throughout the flow of food.Maintain a clean environment for food preparation and service. If you are a food handler in Texas, you are required to complete a food safety course that is approved for use in Texas. Completing an approved food safety course will award you with a Texas Food Handlers Card License. A food handler is someone who handles, prepares, serves, sells, or gives away food for human consumption. This training is approved for use throughout Texas, including all counties (Harris, Dallas, Tarrant, Bexar, Travis, etc.) and cities (Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, Austin, Fort Worth, etc.). Within 60 days of starting work. After completing the Texas Food Handler Training and passing the test, you will receive your card. A valid Texas Food Handlers Card and a food handler certificate of completion. Your Texas Food Handlers Card License will be valid for 2 years. If your card has expired, you will need to purchase and retake the Texas Food Handlers Card License Training. If you need to reprint your current valid card, log in and go to the Certificates section. From there, you can click View and print your card. A certificate program is a training program combined with an assessment. Successful participants in these programs receive a certificate, not a certification. A certification program is an exam that yields a certification to individuals who pass. These programs do not include a formal training component, although training may be used to prepare. The food handler course and test is a certificate program. When you purchase a StateFoodSafety course, you automatically get one year of unlimited access to the training videos. Take your time through the course or come back after completion to brush up on your food safety knowledge! In most areas, you can reprint your required Food Handler Certificate by logging in to your account.Login.Find the Certificates window on your dashboard.Locate the digital version of your certificate and click View Certificate.Select Print or Email.Note: In some areas, you get your official Food Handler Certificate from the local health department. If you have lost the card you received from your state, county, or local health department, you will need to call that health department to obtain a new card, permit, or certificate.Are you looking for an easy way to manage training for multiple employees? Try our group purchase system!Easily Manage TrainingWhen you make a group purchase, we automatically add administrative tools to your account to help you manage your training vouchers. You’ll be able to email voucher codes to employees, track their progress through the course, and view earned certificates.Qualify for DiscountsBuy training in bulk and get up to 10% off. Discounts are available for all course types, from food handlers card training to food manager certification.Start Group PurchaseThe U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued food safety guidelines for businesses since the year 1934. In 1993, it issued the first food code. The food code is a set of scientifically sound food safety guidelines that [...]— Read MoreCutting boards come in all shapes, sizes, and materials. You might have one made of glass, plastic, marble, wood, or even stainless steel. No matter what kind of cutting board you use, it can easily become a source of contamination and foodborne illness if you’re not careful. How can a cutting board make people sick? [...]— Read MoreAre you hosting a holiday party this year? As you think about your dinner menu, make sure you plan ahead for how you will thaw and cook the meat. When food is thawed incorrectly, foodborne germs can multiply to dangerous levels and cause people to get sick — and you don’t want to invite foodborne [...]— Read More main content Frequently asked questions about food handler programs include information on required course topics; processes for media conversions, language translations, and course revisions; and more. For additional questions, contact the Food Licensing Group via email or by phone at 512-834-6727. The Food Handler Program Initial/Renewal Application contains a Cover Document (pages 6-11) which includes each of the major topic areas required for approved Food Handler Education or Training Programs. These topic areas are taken from the Texas Food Establishment Rules regarding food employee information and knowledge. Note: All program curriculums must meet the training requirement for bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods. Food Handler Program Initial/Renewal Application Food Handler Program Cover Document page 12 must be completed and submitted with documentation as to the specific language translation, the methodology used for the program language translation; the procedures used to determine the validity, reliability and equivalency of the language translation. (i.e. 3rd party edit, back translation etc.); and the qualifications of consultant(s) used in language translation who are competent in the languages of both the original and translated version. No. An additional license is not required if the translation is an exact translation of the approved course. Food Handler Program Initial/Renewal Application Food Handler Program Cover Document page 13 must be completed and submitted with documentation as to the type of media conversion; the methodology used for the conversion; the procedures used to determine the validity reliability and equivalency of the conversion; and the qualifications of consultant(s) used in the conversion who are competent in internet and/or DVD training (i.e., illustration/images/storyboards etc.). No. An additional license is not required if the conversion is an exact conversion of the approved course. Each course curriculum is considered a new program and must be submitted with an Initial/Renewal Food Handler Program Application along with the appropriate fee. One course curriculum is approved for each TXDSHS License Number. All program language translations and methods offered under this license must be of the approved course curriculum. All revisions must be approved prior to being released as an approved course curriculum. The revised curriculum must be submitted with the completed Food Handler Program Initial/Renewal Application Food Handler Program Cover Document (pages 6-13 ONLY). There is no fee for the review. Please Note: All language translations and delivery methods must be of the ONE approved course curriculum. The watermark or background are security measures to assure that a Food Handler Certificate may not be duplicated. If you work in the food service industry in Texas, obtaining a food handlers certificate is a necessary requirement. This certificate ensures that you have received the proper training to handle food safely, reducing the risk of foodborne illnesses. In this article, we will discuss the steps you need to take to obtain a food handlers certificate in Texas. Do you like this article? The Process To acquire a food handlers certificate in Texas, you must follow these steps: 1. Choose an Approved Program The first step is to choose an approved food handlers program. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) maintains a list of accredited programs to ensure you receive the proper training. 2. Complete the Training Once you have selected an approved program, you need to complete the required training. This training covers various topics such as hygiene practices, cross-contamination prevention, temperature control, and proper food handling techniques. 3. Take the Exam After finishing the training, you will need to take an examination to demonstrate your understanding of the material. The exam is usually multiple-choice and can be taken online or in person, depending on the program you choose. 4. Pass the Exam To successfully obtain a food handlers certificate, you must pass the exam with a minimum score set by the program provider. The passing score generally ranges from 70% to 80%, depending on the program. 5. Receive Your Certificate Once you have passed the exam, you will receive your food handlers certificate. This certificate is valid for two years and must be renewed before it expires. Frequently Asked Questions 1. How long does it take to get a food handlers certificate in Texas? The time to acquire a food handlers certificate in Texas varies depending on the program you choose. Some programs can be completed in as little as two hours, while others may take longer. 2. Do I need a food handlers certificate to work in the food industry in Texas? Yes, Texas law requires all food service employees to obtain a food handlers certificate within 60 days of employment. 3. What happens if I fail the exam? If you fail the exam, most programs allow you to retake it. You may need to pay an additional fee to retake the exam. 4. How much does a food handlers certificate cost in Texas? The cost of a food handlers certificate varies depending on the program. Generally, it ranges from \$7 to \$20. 5. Can I take the training and exam online? Yes, many approved programs offer online training and exams for convenience. However, some programs may require in-person attendance, so be sure to check the options available. 6. Can I transfer my food handlers certificate from another state to Texas? Texas does not accept food handlers certificates from other states. You must complete a Texas-approved program and obtain a certificate specifically for Texas. 7. Is the food handlers certificate valid statewide? Yes, the food handlers certificate is valid in all counties and cities within the state of Texas. 8. Can I use my food handlers certificate for multiple jobs? Yes, once you have obtained a food handlers certificate, you can use it for any job within the food service industry in Texas. 9. Can I apply for a food handlers certificate if I have a criminal record? Having a criminal record does not automatically disqualify you from obtaining a food handlers certificate. However, certain criminal convictions related to food safety or hygiene may affect your eligibility. 10. Can I renew my food handlers certificate online? Yes, many programs offer online renewal options. You can usually renew your certificate by retaking the training and exam before it expires. 11. Are there age restrictions for obtaining a food handlers certificate? No, there are no age restrictions for obtaining a food handlers certificate in Texas. However, some programs may require applicants to be at least 16 years old. 12. How often do I need to renew my food handlers certificate? Food handlers certificates in Texas are valid for two years. Therefore, you need to renew your certificate before it expires to remain compliant with state regulations. Now that you understand the steps involved in obtaining a food handlers certificate in Texas, you can take the necessary action to ensure you meet the requirements. By obtaining this certificate, you are not only demonstrating your commitment to food safety but also safeguarding the well-being of consumers. Watch this awesome video to spice up your cooking! Your friends have asked us these questions - Check out the answers!