



California's Requirement for Food Safety Certification

The California Health and Safety Code, Section 113947.1 requires food facilities that prepare, handle, or serve non-prepackaged potentially hazardous food (PHF), except temporary food facilities, to have at least one owner or employee who has successfully passed an examination from an accredited food protection manager certification organization. Once this person is certified, he/she is recognized as a **Certified Food Protection Manager** and the certification is valid for **5 years**. Except for the certified food manager, all other food handlers who prepare, handle, or serve non-prepackaged PHF are required to obtain a **California Food Handler Card**. A food handler card is valid for **3 years**.

It is the duty of a certified food manager to ensure that all food handlers at the food facility have adequate food safety knowledge and training and perform their jobs pursuant to the health and safety requirements. It is also the responsibility of the certified food manager to provide continuous supervision, training, and monitoring to ensure the food facility operates in a sanitary and safe manner. As a certified food manager, you can only act as the certified food manager for **one** food facility. You may work for more than one food facility, but not in a certified food manager capacity. On the other hand, as a certified food handler, you may work for multiple food facilities. It is the responsibility of each food facility to maintain records of a certified food manager and certified food handlers throughout their employment with the food facility and provide records to the health department upon request. A food facility that starts a new operation, changes ownership, or no longer has an owner or employee who is a certified food manager will have **60 days** from the date of the change to comply with the certified food manager requirement. A food handler shall obtain a food handler card within **30 days** after the date of hire.

While training is not required to take the examination, many people find that training helps them pass the exam. The certification organization for a certified food manager must be accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) meeting the requirements of the Conference for Food Protection's "Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager's Programs". Correspondingly, the certification organization for a certified food handler must be accredited by an ANSI accredited training provider that meets International Standard Practice for Certificate Programs. The Ventura County Environmental Health Division does not provide certification training and testing.

Please make sure the examination you take is one of those accredited by ANSI. You may find the accredited provider lists through the following links to the ANSI website: [Certified Food Handler](#) and [Certified Food Protection Manager](#).