

# **Illinois Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act FOOD HANDLER CERTIFICATE (FHC)**

## ***NEW REQUIREMENT!***

Beginning July 1, 2014, **all** food handlers employed by restaurants will be required to obtain American National Standards Institute (ANSI)-accredited training or training approved by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) in basic food handling principles within 30 days of employment and every three years thereafter. In 2014, enforcement is limited to education and notification of the requirements.

All food handlers working in non-restaurants will be required to have training completed by July 1, 2016.

### **Who is required to obtain food handler certificate (FHC) training?**

Any food handler in the state of Illinois must obtain training, unless that person has a valid Illinois Food Service Sanitation Manager Certification (FSSMC). If someone works in a non-food handler capacity, but fills in as a food handler when needed, they too must obtain FHC training.

### **Who is considered a food handler?**

A food handler is a food employee as defined in Section 750.110 of the *Illinois Food Service Sanitation Code*. A food handler means an “individual working with unpackaged food, food equipment or utensils, or food-contact surfaces.”

### **What is the definition of a restaurant?**

A “restaurant” means any business that is primarily engaged in the sale of ready-to-eat food for immediate consumption. “Primarily engaged” means have sales of ready-to-eat food for immediate consumption comprising of at least 51% of the total sales, excluding the sale of liquor.

### **What is the definition of non-restaurant?**

Non-restaurants are facilities such as nursing homes, licensed day care facilities, hospitals, schools, long-term care facilities and retail food stores.

### **Who pays for FHC training?**

The law does not require employers to pay for an employee’s time or expense to take the training and test. However, the ANSI-accredited training certificate is the property of the food handler, who can take it to another employer as long as it is still valid.

### **Is there a set fee for FHC training?**

No, but the Act states there has to be at least one food handler training option available for \$15.00 or less and there are multiple ANSI-accredited programs available online at that price.

### **How long does the FHC training take and is there a test afterward?**

The ANSI-accredited training course must cover specific subject matter. At the end of the training, an assessment (test) is taken. Most people complete the training and assessment (test) within 90 minutes.

### **Who issues the FHCs?**

The agency that provided the training to the food employee should provide certificates.

### **Will the local health district/department provide ANSI-accredited training and assessment?**

No, but check our website for information about approved programs as it becomes available in 2014.