

Illinois Food Handler Training Requirements

A new law, The Illinois Dept. of Public Health Food Handler Enforcement Act, will soon require that all food handlers complete a certified training course to insure they are versed in the basics of safe food handling. These requirements go into effect as of 7/1/14 for restaurant workers and 7/1/16 for other food handlers. The relevant new text of the law is as follows:

(410 ILCS 625/3.05 new)

Sec. 3.05. Non-restaurant food handler training.

(a) All food handlers not employed by a restaurant as defined in Section 3.06 of this Act, other than someone holding a food service sanitation manager certificate, must receive or obtain training in basic safe food handling principles as outlined in subsection (b) of this Section within 30 days after employment. There is no limit to how many times an employee may take the training. Training is not transferable between individuals or employers. Proof that a food handler has been trained must be available upon reasonable request by a State or local health department inspector and may be in an electronic format.

(b) Food handler training must cover and assess knowledge of the following topics:

(1) The relationship between time and temperature with respect to foodborne illness, including the relationship between time and temperature and micro-organisms during the various food handling preparation and serving states, and the type, calibration, and use of thermometers in monitoring food temperatures.

(2) The relationship between personal hygiene and food safety, including the association of hand contact, personal habits and behaviors, and the food handler's health to foodborne illness, and the recognition of how policies, procedures, and management contribute to improved food safety practices.

(3) Methods of preventing food contamination in all stages of food handling, including terms associated with contamination and potential hazards prior to, during, and after delivery.

(4) Procedures for cleaning and sanitizing equipment and utensils.

(5) Problems and potential solutions associated with temperature control, preventing cross-contamination, housekeeping, and maintenance.

(c) Training modules must be approved by the Department. Any and all documents, materials, or information related to a restaurant or business food handler training module submitted to the Department is confidential and shall not be open to public inspection or dissemination and is exempt from disclosure under Section 7 of the Freedom of Information Act. Any modules complying with subsection (b) of this Section and not approved within 180 days after the Department's receipt of the business application shall automatically be considered approved. If a training module has been approved in another state, then it

shall automatically be considered approved in Illinois so long as the business provides proof that the training has been approved in another state. Training may be conducted by any means available, including, but not limited to, on-line, computer, classroom, live trainers, remote trainers, and certified food service sanitation managers. Nothing in this subsection (c) shall be construed to require a proctor. There must be at least one commercially available, approved food handler training module at a cost of no more than \$15 per employee; if an approved food handler training module is not available at that cost, then the provisions of this Section 3.05 shall not apply.

(d) The regulation of food handler training is considered to be an exclusive function of the State, and local regulation is prohibited. This subsection (d) is a denial and limitation of home rule powers and functions under subsection (h) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution.

(e) The provisions of this Section apply beginning July 1, 2016. From July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016, enforcement of the provisions of this Section shall be limited to education and notification of requirements to encourage compliance.

(410 ILCS 625/3.06 new)

Sec. 3.06. Food handler training; restaurants.

(a) For the purpose of this Section, "restaurant" means any business that is primarily engaged in the sale of ready-to-eat food for immediate consumption. "Primarily engaged" means having sales of ready-to-eat food for immediate consumption comprising at least 51% of the total sales, excluding the sale of liquor.

(b) Unless otherwise provided, all food handlers employed by a restaurant, other than someone holding a food service sanitation manager certificate, must receive or obtain American National Standards Institute-accredited training in basic safe food handling principles within 30 days after employment and every 3 years thereafter. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 3.05 of this Act, food handlers employed in nursing homes, licensed day care homes and facilities, hospitals, schools, and long-term care facilities must renew their training every 3 years. There is no limit to how many times an employee may take the training. The training indicated in subsections (e) and (f) of this Section is transferable between employers, but not individuals. The training indicated in subsections (c) and (d) of this Section is not transferable between individuals or employers. Proof that a food handler has been trained must be available upon reasonable request by a State or local health department inspector and may be provided electronically.

(c) If a business with an internal training program is approved in another state prior to the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 98th General Assembly, then the business's training program and assessment

shall be automatically approved by the Department upon the business providing proof that the program is approved in said state.

(d) The Department shall approve the training program of any multi-state business with a plan that follows the guidelines in subsection (b) of Section 3.05 of this Act and is on file with the Department by May 15, 2013.

(e) If an entity uses an American National Standards Institute food handler training accredited program, that training program shall be automatically approved by the Department.

(f) Certified local health departments in counties serving jurisdictions with a population of 100,000 or less, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2010 Census of Population, may have a training program. The training program must meet the requirements of Section 3.05(b) and be approved by the Department. This Section notwithstanding, certified local health departments in the following counties may have a training program:

(1) a county with a population of 677,560 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2010 Census of Population;

(2) a county with a population of 308,760 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2010 Census of Population;

(3) a county with a population of 515,269 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2010 Census of Population;

(4) a county with a population of 114,736 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2010 Census of Population;

(5) a county with a population of 110,768 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2010 Census of Population;

(6) a county with a population of 135,394 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2010 Census of Population.

The certified local health departments in paragraphs (1) through (6) of this subsection (f) must have their training program on file with the Department no later than 90 days after the effective date of this Act. Any modules that meet the requirements of subsection (b) of Section 3.05 of this Act and are not approved within 180 days after the Department's receipt of the application of the entity seeking to conduct the training shall automatically be considered approved by the Department.

(g) Any and all documents, materials, or information related to a restaurant or business food handler training module submitted to the Department is confidential and shall not be open to public inspection or dissemination and is exempt from disclosure under Section 7 of the Freedom of Information Act. Training may be conducted by any means available, including, but not limited to, on-line, computer, classroom, live trainers, remote trainers, and certified food service sanitation managers. There must be at least one commercially available, approved food handler training module at a cost of no more than \$15 per

employee; if an approved food handler training module is not available at that cost, then the provisions of this Section 3.06 shall not apply.

(h) The regulation of food handler training is considered to be an exclusive function of the State, and local regulation is prohibited. This subsection (h) is a denial and limitation of home rule powers and functions under subsection (h) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution.

(i) The provisions of this Section apply beginning July 1, 2014. From July 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014, enforcement of the provisions of this Section shall be limited to education and notification of requirements to encourage compliance.