CALIFORNIA FOOD HANDLER CARD LAW GUIDELINES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

October 21, 2011

Pursuant to SB 602 enacted into law in 2010 and SB 303 in 2011, Health and Safety Code 113790 et seq., ("California Food Handler Card Law"), food handlers, as defined, will be required to obtain a food handler card after taking a food safety training course and passing an assessment. This document was compiled by a stakeholder working group comprised of members of the California Retail Food Safety Coalition (CRFSC), the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH), the California Restaurant Association (CRA) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). These frequently asked questions are intended to provide guidance for food handlers, local enforcement agencies, industry, and training providers as this law is implemented.

The questions and answers noted in this document reflect the current language of the California Food Handler Card Law. SB 303 makes technical changes to the Food Handler Card Law and requires training providers to be accredited through the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

***To allow time for the clarifications to be adopted, the stakeholder group and CCDEH recommend that from July 1, 2011 until January 1, 2012 enforcement of the law be limited to education and notification of requirements for compliance. All local enforcement agencies are urged to adopt this approach to the California Food Handler Card Law implementation and to notify regulated facilities accordingly*.**

All cards issued in compliance with the existing requirements of the California Food Handler Card Law or the recommended revised requirements, once adopted, shall be valid for 3 years from date of issuance.

To view the Food Handler Card Law, visit: Senate Bill 303 or go to http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/11-12/bill/sen/sb_0301-0350/sb_303_bill_20110906_chaptered.pdf

For additional information or to submit comments, please visit http://www.crfsc.org/

A. Employees/Food Handlers

A1. Q: What type of positions fall under the California Food Handler Card Law?

A: Most restaurant positions are subject to the California Food Handler Card Law. Food handlers are defined as individuals involved in the preparation, storage or service of food in a food facility. However, certain statutory **exemptions** exist including food handlers in:

- temporary food facilities (food booths),
- certified farmers' markets,
- commissaries, grocery stores (including convenience stores),

- licensed health care facilities,
- mobile support units,
- public and private school cafeterias,
- restricted food service facilities,
- retail stores where a majority of sales are from a pharmacy,
- venues with snack bar services in which the majority of sales are from admission tickets (excluding any area in which restaurant-style sit-down service is provided),
- certain food facilities with approved in-house food safety training (see D1 and D2),
- food facilities subject to a collective bargaining agreement,
- Any city, county, city and county, state or regional facility used for the confinement of adults or minors, including, but not limited to, a county jail, juvenile hall, camp, ranch, or residential facility,
- An elderly nutrition program, administered by the California Department of Aging, and
- food handlers subject to the local food handler programs in the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego and food handlers holding a valid Manager's Food Safety Certificate pursuant to current food safety law. The definition therefore effectively includes most restaurant employees such as those holding the positions of, but not limited to: wait staff, chefs, head cooks, cooks, bussers, bartenders, host/hostesses that handle food, beverage pourers (including alcoholic beverage pourers), and supervisory personnel, such as the general manager or managers (unless they are certified under the existing food managers certification program). The law applies to both salaried and hourly food handlers. For more information, see also D1.

A2. Q: How do I get a California food handler card?

A: You must complete an approved training course and pass a test with a score of 70 percent or higher to obtain your California Food Handler Card.

1) From now until January 1, 2012, you can obtain a California Food Handler Card from either a food manager protection certification organization or an organization with an ANSI accredited food handler program.

   A list of approved organizations can be found at:

   ANSI Accredited Food Handler Programs:
   https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=212&prgID=228&status=4

   Food Manager Protection Organizations:
   https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=8&prgID=8&status=4

2) After January 1, 2012, you must get a California Food Handler Card only from an organization with an ANSI accredited food handler program, which are listed at:
https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=212&prgID=228&status=4

A3. Q: Do I need a new California food handler card for every restaurant where I work?

A: Generally, no. The California food handler card is valid for three years from the date of issuance and belongs to the individual food handler it is issued to, regardless of whether the food handler changes employers during that period or whether the food handler works for two or more different restaurants concurrently. However, food handlers in Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties are subject to pre-existing local food handler card programs and pursuant to the California Food Handler Card Law, food handlers in these three counties are exempt from the California Food Handler Card Law while working in these three counties. However, if a food handler works in one of these three counties, and also works in a restaurant outside one of these three counties, then they would have to obtain a California Food Handler Card for the restaurant outside these three counties in addition to being subject to a local food handler card requirement for the three counties.

A4. Q: Is my California food handler card valid anywhere in the California?

A: A California food handler card is valid everywhere in California except in Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties which have pre-existing local food handler card programs. Consult with the local enforcement agencies in each of these counties to obtain information on their local food handler programs and requirements.

A5. Q: Where can I take the food handler training and test?

A: The California Food Handler Card Law states that food handler training courses and tests may be offered through a trainer-led class or online. Whichever method is used, the approved training course must be completed and the individual must pass a test with a score of 70 percent or higher to obtain the California Food Handler Card.

1) From now until January 1, 2012, a California Food Handler Card can be obtained from either a food protection manager organization or an organization with an ANSI accredited food handler program. A list of approved organizations can be found at:

   ANSI Accredited Food Handler Programs:
   https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=212&prgID=228&status=4

   Food Manager Protection Organizations:
   https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=8&prgID=8&status=4

2) After January 1, 2012, you must obtain a California Food Handler Card only from an organization with an ANSI accredited food handler program. This list can be found at:
   https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=212&prgID=228&status=4

A6. Q: I already have a food handler card issued by my county, which is Riverside County. Do I need a California food handler card as well?

A: Not if you only work in Riverside County. Food handlers who work in Riverside, San Bernardino or San Diego counties need to obtain a county-specific food handler card because those three counties have pre-existing local food handler programs. However, if an employee works in San Diego, Riverside or San Bernardino counties, as well as an establishment outside those counties, they also will need a California food handler card as it is required in all the other counties in the state.

A7. Q: I work in a restaurant in San Diego County and have a San Diego County specific food handler card, but also work part-time in a restaurant in Orange County. Do I still need to obtain a California food handler card?

A: Yes, you must still obtain a California food handler card to work in the restaurant in Orange County. San Diego County has its own pre-existing local food handler card program and the locally issued San Diego food handler cards are only valid in San Diego County. Also, a California food handler card is not valid in San Diego County as fulfilling the San Diego local food handler requirement.

The above rule applies to food handlers in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties as they have preexisting local food handler programs in place as well.

A8. Q: I have a food handler card issued from another state. Are food handler cards from other states compliant with the California Food Handler Card Law?

A:

a. If the food handler card was issued by another state, the food handler card would not be valid in California. (See also Section D, questions D1 and D2 for additional information).

b. If the food handler card was issued by an ANSI approved training provider in another state, then yes, the card would be valid.

A9. Q: I am a restaurant manager and have a valid Manager's Food Safety Certification pursuant to existing California law (CalCode). Do I need a California food handler card?

A: No. Anyone who holds a valid Manager's Food Safety Certification doesn't need a California food handler card. However, if you're a manager without the Manager's Food Safety Certification and you are a food handler, you'll need a California food handler card.

A10. Q: I'm interested in working in the restaurant business but don't have a California food handler card yet. Do I need to obtain one prior to employment in a restaurant?

A: You must obtain a food handler card within 30 days of hire. The law states that food handlers hired prior to June 1, 2011 must obtain a food handler card on or before July 1, 2011. Food handlers hired on or after June 1, 2011 have to obtain a food handler card within 30 days after the date of hire.

A11. Q: I'm a high school student and work in a restaurant part-time and only during the summer. Do I still need a card?

A: Yes. Regardless of age or the amount of time working in a restaurant, food handlers must have a valid California food handler card for the duration of employment as a food handler.

A12. Q: I currently work in a restaurant. Am I responsible for taking the food handler course and test, or is my employer responsible for offering me the food handler course and test?

A: As a food handler, you are responsible for taking the food handler course and test. This is required by the California Food Handler Card Law for food handlers. Food handlers must obtain a valid California food handler card from an organization as specified (see "Only accredited Food Protection Manager Certification organizations can offer valid Food Handler Cards" section above) and maintain a valid food handler card for the duration of his or her employment as a food handler. The food handler card is issued to the individual food handler taking and passing the test, and is valid for three years from the date of issuance, regardless of whether the food handler changes employers during that period.

A13. Q: What documentation is my employer required to keep?

A: Under this law, employers are responsible for maintaining records documenting that each food handler employed by them possesses a valid food handler card. These records must be provided to the local enforcement officer upon request. An example of proper documentation would be for the employer to maintain copies of the food handlers' cards on file and have them available upon request by the health inspector.

A14. Q: Is my employer responsible for paying for my food handler card course and test under the new law?

A: No. The California Food Handler Card Law does not require employers to pay for the food handler's training and test. The food handler card is the property of the restaurant employee, which allows the employee to change jobs without having to obtain a new food handler card.

A15. Q: I just obtained a California food handler card for my current restaurant employer. However, what if I get a new job in another restaurant, do I need to take the test again?

A: No. A California food handler card is issued to the individual food handler and can be used wherever the food handler works, whether it is a new restaurant or multiple restaurants concurrently. The only exception

is for the three exempt counties of Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego. A California Food Handler Card is not valid in these three counties as food handlers working in the three counties are subject to pre-existing local food handler programs. Consult with the local enforcement agencies in each of these counties to obtain information on their local food handler programs and requirements.

A16. Q: Do volunteers who serve food at soup kitchens, food banks or volunteer run restaurants have to have a California food handler card?

A: No, volunteers are not required to obtain a California food handler card. The law only applies to food handlers who are "hired" by subject food facilities. Food handlers who work in a food facility on a regular basis and benefit financially from the business are not considered volunteers (e.g., family members/owners).

A17. Q: What if I only work part-time (e.g., one day a week) or am a temporary employee (e.g., for two months), do I still need to obtain a California food handler card?

A: Yes. The law applies to all subject food handlers irrespective of whether they work part-time, full-time or are a temporary employee.

A18. Q: I am a non-union employee, but work at a restaurant that is unionized. Do I have to obtain a California food handler card?

A: No. The law provides that if a food facility is subject to a collective bargaining agreement with its food handlers, then the food facility is exempt (meaning that all food handlers employed by that food facility are exempt).

A19. Q: I work at a demonstration booth serving samples of food at a grocery store. Do I have to obtain a food handler card?

A: No. If you are an employee of the grocery store or demonstration company, then you do not have to obtain a food handler card as grocery stores are exempt and demonstration companies are not permitted as food facilities.

A20. Q: What is the definition of a grocery store for purposes of this law?

A: Grocery stores are exempt from the California Food Handler Card Law. Grocery store is defined as a store primarily engaged in the retail sale of canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, and fresh meats, fish, and poultry and any area that is not separately owned within the store where food is prepared

and served, including a bakery, deli, and meat and seafood counter. “Grocery store” includes convenience stores.

A21. Q: Is a food handler that is required to have a food handler card also required to have the card in his/her possession while working?

A: No. The employer is required to maintain records verifying that the employee(s) has a valid food handler card.

A22. Q. I work in a food warehouse and stock prepackaged non-potentially hazardous foods. Do I need to obtain a food handler card?

A: If you are handling food items, such as hand-stocking shelves, and are employed at a non-exempt food facility (e.g. restaurant, bar, deli food facility, sports stadium, or food court), then you are required to have a food handler card. However, if you work in a food distribution center or commercial warehouse that is not permitted as a retail food facility and you are handling only case goods which will be distributed to retail facilities, you do not need to obtain a food handler card.

A23. Q. I work in a hospital cafeteria. Do I need to obtain a food handler card?

A: No. Hospital employees are not required to have a food handler card.

A24. Q: I work at a hotel and as a guest service, cookies are prepared for guests and we deliver them to the guests’ rooms. Do I need a food handler card?

A: The law applies to places that are permitted as a food facility. While hotels, themselves are not permitted as food facilities generally, certain parts or locations within a hotel are separately permitted as food facilities. So, if you are employed at the hotel’s restaurant, work in the kitchen that provides room service to hotel guests, or if the facility is permitted as a food facility (e.g. restaurant, bar, cafeteria, deli), then yes, a food handler card is required because these are permitted as food facilities.

B. Employers

B1. Q: What are employer’s responsibilities under the California Food Handler Card Law?

A: The law requires employers to maintain records satisfactory to the local enforcement officer documenting that each food handler employed by the food facility possesses a valid food handler card, and shall provide those records to the local enforcement officer upon request. Failure to maintain records that

all food handlers meet the requirements of the Food Handler Law would constitute a violation of the California Retail Food Law, which may be prosecuted as a misdemeanor. An example of acceptable records would be to maintain copies of the employees' food handler cards at the food facility.

B2. Q: How do employers know which employees need a food handler card?

A: Most restaurant positions are subject to the California Food Handler Card Law. Food handlers are defined as individuals involved in the preparation, storage or service of food in a food facility. However, certain statutory exemptions exist for food handlers working in various types of facilities. Refer to A1 for a list of exemptions.

B3. Q: Does the California Food Handler Card Law require employers to pay for their employees training and test?

A: No. The California Food Handler Card Law does not require employers to pay for the food handler's training and test. The food handler card is the property of the employee. However, if an employer avails itself of the exemption provided in the law authorizing employers to use a food safety training program approved for use in another state (as specified), then the training must be provided during normal work hours, at no cost to the employee.

B4. Q: When do all of my current employees need to have a California food handler card?

A: Food handlers must obtain a valid food handler card within 30 days after the hire date. See D8 for additional information.

B5. Q: My restaurant offers in-house food safety training to my employees – are we in compliance with the California Food Handler Card Law?

A: Maybe. An in-house food safety training program is compliant with the California Food Handler Card Law if certain requirements are met:

> (1) The food facility uses a training course that has been approved for use by the food facility in another state that has adopted the requirements described in Subpart 2-103.11 of the 2001 edition of the model Food Code, not including the April 2004 update, published by the federal Food and Drug Administration; and
> (2) Upon request, the food facility provides evidence satisfactory to the local enforcement officer demonstrating that the food facility training program has been approved for use in another state pursuant to above provision; and
> (3) The training is provided during normal work hours, and at no cost to the employee.

(For more information, see also Section D, questions D1 and D2.)

B6. Q: What is a Licensed Healthcare Facility?

A: A Licensed Healthcare Facility is a facility that is licensed by the California Department of Licensing and Certification. These facilities are categorized as follows:

- Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF),
- Intermediate Care Facility (ICF),
- Intermediate Care Facility – Developmentally Disabled (ICF-DD),
- Intermediate Care Facility – Developmentally Disabled Habilitative (ICF-DDH),
- Intermediate Care Facility – Developmentally Disabled Nursing (ICF-DDN),
- Congregate Living Health Facility (CLHF),
- Pediatric Day Health and Respite Care Facility (PDHRCF),
- General Acute Care Hospital (GACH),
- Acute Psychiatric Hospital (APH).

These operations are permitted and inspected by the California Department of Public Health. The kitchens are also subject to most Cal Code requirements. However, the employees of these kitchens or food preparation areas within these facilities are exempt from food handler card requirements.

B7. Q: What if my employees are illiterate?

A. All accredited training providers must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This would mean reasonable appropriate accommodations may have to be made such as offering an oral examination or extending the length of time to take the test in standardized secure conditions.

B8. Q: What if my employees don't speak English?

A. Often training providers are able to offer the training and test in other languages, but there is no legal requirement to do so under the state law. Often training providers offer courses/tests in different languages. Please contact the training providers directly for more information.

C. Training and Test

C1. Q: Where can food handlers receive a food handler card?

A: See Question/Answer in Section A (A2) above.

C2. Q: How long will the course and test take?

A: The law states that the course and test must be designed to be completed within approximately two-and-a-half hours and that the test must have at least 40 questions.

C3. Q: What is covered by the course?

A: The law requires that the course provides basic, introductory instruction on the below listed six elements:

1) Food-borne illness, including terms associated with food-borne illness, micro-organisms, hepatitis A, and toxins that can contaminate food and the illness that can be associated with contamination, definition and recognition of potentially hazardous foods, chemical, biological, and physical contamination of food, and the illnesses that can be associated with food contamination, and major contributing factors for food-borne illness.
2) The relationship between time and temperature with respect to food-borne 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.
3) The relationship between personal hygiene and food safety, including the association of hand contact, personal habits and behaviors, and food employee health to food-borne illness, and the recognition of how policies, procedures, and management contribute to improved food safety practices.
4) 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.
5) Procedures for cleaning and sanitizing equipment and utensils.
6) Problems and potential solutions associated with temperature control, preventing cross-contamination, housekeeping and maintenance.

C4. Q: Does the California food handler card expire?

A: Yes. A California food handler card is valid for three years from the date of issuance. Food handlers must retake the course and test upon expiration in order to maintain a valid food handler card.

C5: Q: What happens if a food handler needs special arrangements to complete their training and testing?

A: Training providers, as part of their accreditation, must adhere to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. This includes evaluating requests for special arrangements for learning including modifications of the learning materials and testing. If the "condition" does not fall under the scope of the ADA guidelines, it would be up to the discretion of the training provider. The main consideration would be if the special arrangement does not unfairly affect the individuals who are not receiving special arrangements. All of the policies and procedures of the training provider must be fair and equitable.

C6: Q: How much does a food handler card cost?

A: There is only one stipulation in the law regarding food handler cards. At least one food handler training and testing provider must offer the course for $15.00 or less; however, it is up to each food handler training and testing provider to determine the cost of their products and services.

C7: Q: What happens to my food handler card if I move?

A: A California food handler card is valid statewide, except for in the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego, which are exempt from the law based on having a previous food handler program in place. If you move outside of the state and you have received a certificate from an ANSI accredited training provider, it MAY be accepted but this will be up to the state or local jurisdiction where you are moving.

D. Enforcement

D1. Q. What evidence will be acceptable to local enforcement officers regarding the exemption of food handlers which work for food facilities that provide approved in-house food safety training to their employees?

A: California will use the approved vendor lists from both Florida and Texas as one way to determine which companies have approved Food Handler Training programs. Employees working for companies on the Florida and Texas lists are exempt from the food handler card requirements if the training is provided free of charge to employees during normal work hours. A list of companies operating in California and exempted by Florida and/or Texas can be found below and the full list of companies with approved programs may be found at:

FLORIDA: http://www.myfloridalicense.com/dbpr/hr/food-lodging/documents/fs_training_list.pdf

1. A&W Restaurants
2. Bennigan's Grill & Tavern/Metromedia Restaurant Group
3. Bonanza Restaurants/Metromedia Restaurant Group
4. Burger King Corporation
5. Carlson Restaurants Worldwide
6. Captain D's Seafood, Inc.
7. Carrabba's Italian Grill
8. Chart House Enterprise
9. Chevys Fresh Mex
10. Chez Pierre
11. Chick-fil-A, Inc
12. Chili's Bar and Grill Restaurants
13. Darden Restaurants
14. Denny's
15. Friendly's
16. Golden Corral
17. HMSHost
18. Hooters of America, Inc.
19. Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC)
20. Long John Silver's
21. Marriott International, Inc.
22. McDonald's Corporation
23. Medieval Times
24. On the Border Restaurants
25. Panera Bread Bakery-Café
26. Papa John's International
27. Pizza Hut
28. Ponderosa Steakhouse / Metromedia Restaurant Group
29. Popeye's Chicken
30. Ritz Carlton, The
31. Roadhouse Grill, Inc
32. Romacorp, Inc. (Tony Romas)
33. Steak n Shake, Inc.
34. Taco Bell Corp.
35. T.G.I Friday's/Carlson Restaurants Worldwide
36. UNO Restaurant Corp.
37. Wendy's International, Inc.

TEXAS: http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/foodestablishments/handler.shtm#training

1. Jack in the Box

Based on review, it has been determined that the only state programs that are currently compliant with this

provision are Florida and Texas. If a food facility believes that its program has been approved by a regulatory agency in another state that meets the requirements of the California Food Handler Card Law, please direct your inquiry to the CRFSC Sub Committee C by visiting: http://www.crfsc.org/.

D2. Q. What if a food facility is not listed on the Florida or Texas websites? Can that food facility have their food handler training program approved in California?

A: The States of Florida and Texas are the only states we are currently aware of with a list of companies that have approved food handler training programs that are in compliance with the California Food Handler Card Law. The California Food Handler Card Law spells out the criteria for having employees of a company exempted from the food handler card requirements. These criteria are:

1. A regulatory agency in another state has approved the company's internal training program.
2. The regulatory agency in another state has adopted the requirements listed in 2-103.11 of the 2001 FDA Food Code, not including the 2004 update.
3. The training is provided at no cost to employees during the employee's normal work hours.
4. Upon request, the food facility provides evidence satisfactory to the local enforcement officer that the program has been approved in another state.
    i. Examples of 'satisfactory evidence', as mentioned above in bullet 4, could include a listing on a regulatory agencies' website or an approval letter from the regulatory agency. See attached template.

D3. Q: What happens if a food handler takes a course or test that is not approved?

A: Upon inspection, if a food handler is found to have taken a course or test that is not approved, operators are advised by inspectors that the employee must retake the training and test from an approved provider to be in compliance with the law.

Food handlers are encouraged to seek refunds or notify their local environmental health agency.

D4. Q: What if I took a course from one of the approved training provider organizations, but my food handler card/certificate does not have an ANSI symbol?

A: If you took a class and passed a test with a score of 70 percent or above from an approved training provider (see A2), your Food Handler Card will be valid three years from date of issuance.

D5. Q: If a food facility is not in compliance with the food handler requirements, what type of violation will be documented by the local enforcement agency, a major or minor violation?

A: Between July 1, 2011 and January 1, 2012, neither major nor minor violations will be documented. During this six month period, enforcement of the law will be limited to education and notification of

requirements for compliance. After January 1, 2012, documented violations will fall into the minor category. To obtain specific information regarding point deductions, contact your local enforcement agency.

D6. Q: I am a training company that has a food handler training program with a 40 question test. If I obtain approval in another state, can I use it in California?

A: No. Currently, there is an exemption for in-house training programs approved in another state, but this exemption only applies to in-house training programs for "food facilities," not training and testing companies. Training companies can obtain approval in California by becoming accredited through ANSI and meeting the ANSI ASTM 2659E standard.

D7. Q: I am a company that is providing contracted services (e.g. food management, food service, delivery, sanitation, supplies, etc.) for a food facility. If I get a food handler training program approved in another state, can I use it for my employees in California.

A: No. There is an exemption for food handlers employed by food facilities whose in-house training programs has been approved in another state meeting certain requirements, but this exemption only applies for those food facilities if they provide the in-house training to their own employees. This exemption is not available to entities that are not food facilities.

D8. Q: I am a franchisee of a national chain and developed a food handler training program that was approved in Florida. Can this training be used in California?

A. Yes, but only for your franchise locations. Since the Florida approval was for your specific franchise and not for the national chain as a whole, it cannot be used by the national chain or other franchisees. The exemption only exempts the food facility who received approval for their training program and only if that food facility provides training to their California employees during normal work hours at no cost to the employee.

D9. Q: I heard that there will be changes to the California Food Handler Card Law this year. What are the changes, when are they effective and how does this effect enforcement of the current law until then?

A: The original law was enacted by the passage of SB 602 in 2010 (Health and Safety Code 113790 et seq.). Since then, concerns have been raised by industry, food safety training organizations, training providers and local enforcement agencies over the implementation of the new law and the July 1, 2011 compliance deadline. CCDEH worked with the California Retail Food Safety Coalition (CRFSC), California Restaurant Association (CRA) and other stakeholders, to propose clarifying amendments to the law and provide additional guidance. As a result, SB 303, which included these statutory changes, was passed by the

legislature and signed by Governor Brown in September 2011. The changes became effective at the time of the governor's signature.

Statutory Clarifications:

This stakeholder group proposed that statutory clarifications be made to the food handler training and test requirements on an urgency basis.

The statutory clarifications are now included in SB 303 and provide for the following:

- Before January 1, 2012 – Allow a food handler to obtain a card from either:
  (i) an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited training provider that meets ASTM International 2659 – Standard Practice for Certificate Programs, or

  (ii) a food protection manager certification organization described in Section 113947.3.

- After January 1, 2012 – Require a food handler to obtain a card only from an ANSI accredited training provider that meets ASTM International 2659E.

Implementation of current law:

To allow time for outreach and notification of the retail food industry, the stakeholder group recommends that from July 1, 2011 until January 1, 2012 enforcement of the law be limited to education and notification of requirements for compliance.

All cards issued in compliance with the previous requirements of SB 602 or the recommended revised requirements within SB 303, shall be valid for 3 years from date of issuance.

All local enforcement agencies are urged to adopt this approach to implementation and to notify regulated facilities accordingly.

E. Resources

E1. Q: Where can I obtain more information about the California Food Handler Card Law?

A: You can visit the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH) website at www.ccdeh.com or the California Retail Food Safety Coalition at www.crfsc.org.

b) Contact your local environmental health agency.

c) Refer to A5.