

Presentation to Public Health and Human Services Committee

Food Handler Update

Presented by

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Brief History

- In the spring of 2007, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) proposed new legislation that became effective October 1, 2007, which established the required curriculum and standards for the Food Handlers Certificate.
- The Center for Disease Control has put out statistics that are staggering, 76,000,000 food borne illnesses per year, 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths as a result. (2008 est.)
- The Food and Drug Administration lists hand washing and food temperatures as two of the leading causes of Food Borne Illness.
- Cities throughout the nation as well as Texas have acknowledged the need for additional training of food handlers by adopting a requirement for a Food Handler requirement.
- The City of Austin determined that this would benefit Austin as well by putting in place a requirement for food employees to receive training that include these two areas.



Initial Food Handler Ordinance 9/25/08

- All food establishment employees handling food or food contact surfaces will be required to have a Food Handler Card
- Training will be available on-line or in classroom settings for businesses that are not able to provide the required training
- There will be a phase in of the requirement (30 days) to enable businesses to schedule and obtain the cards for new and existing employees
- For training taken at a location other than the Health Department sponsored sites, a registration fee will apply
- Registration for the Food Handler Card is \$10.00 for a two year period and the training must be retaken every two years
- The Food Handler training is a 2-hour course focusing on hand washing, employee hygiene and critical food temperatures



Amended changes 3/1/12

- **FOOD HANDLER** means a food enterprise employee who works at any time with unpackaged food, food equipment or utensils, or food contact surfaces.

City Code 10-3-34

Except as provided in Subsections (B) and (I), a person employed or volunteering at a food enterprise shall register as a food handler. It is unlawful for the person to be employed or volunteer at the food enterprise without a valid food handler registration.

(B) The requirements of this section do not apply to:

- (1) a nonprofit organization that serves food only to members of the organization;
- (2) a food processing plant that is inspected at least once each week by a state or federal food sanitation inspector or that only stores prepackaged food that is not potentially hazardous;



Amended changes 3/1/12

(B) The requirements of this section do not apply to:

(3) a mobile food establishment that offers only prepackaged food, if a certified food manager is in charge at a central preparation facility that supplies the products for the vending machine or mobile food establishment; or

(4) a temporary event; or

(5) a person who verifies by affidavit that he or she does not ever work with unpackaged food, food equipment or utensils, or food contact surfaces.

(I) A person operating a food enterprise shall ensure every employee or volunteer who is not exempt pursuant to Section (B) above has a current food handler registration. Upon request by the health authority, a person operating a food enterprise shall provide a list of all food handlers at the enterprise along with a signed statement verifying the listed persons possess current food handler registrations.



Questions?

