



## Texas Food Handler FAQs – Employers

**Does the new training and certification requirement apply statewide?**

Yes.

**Will the new state requirement replace current requirements or will employees have to have both state and city Food Handler Certifications?**

The new state requirement for a food handler certification is a minimum standard throughout the state of Texas. For those jurisdictions that already have a food handler certification requirement in place, nothing will change. As long as the food handler certification is approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services the card is valid anywhere in the state of Texas. Courses that are also accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), like ServSafe Food Handler Texas, are not subject to any additional fees required by local jurisdictions.

**My local jurisdiction already requires food handler certifications. Do my currently certified employees have to get re-certified before September 1, 2016?**

No. As long as their food handler certificate is still valid September 1, 2016, they are in compliance

**Which employees are required to have a food handler certificate?**

All employees that work with unpackaged food, food equipment or utensils, or food-contact surfaces such as kitchen staff, bussers, hostesses, servers, bartenders, bar-backs etc. will need to have their food handler certificate.

**Is this new law a mandate for every restaurant employee or just managers?**

The food handler requirement is for regular staff that are not the certified food manager (CFM). The CFM has training that is already above and beyond the food handler training and would not need to be food handler certified.

**Do I have to pay for the training course for my current employees?**

No, so long as the training program does not take an hourly paid employee below the minimum wage. The food handler card is an individual mandate for a person to work in a food establishment. It belongs to the employee and the business is not required to provide or pay for

the training. The one-year rollout allows businesses to encourage current employees to get their cards now at the employees' cost.

Employers need to encourage current employees that won't drop below minimum wage to go get certified on their own now.

**Do I have to pay for training if the cost of the course would take an hourly paid employee below the minimum wage?**

Yes, if the cost of the food handler training would take a current, hourly employee that is earning at or very close to the minimum wage below the minimum wage the employer is responsible for the cost of the training.

You can purchase ServSafe Food Handler Texas online courses in bulk and distribute access key codes to your employees. To purchase in bulk, [email](#) Angela Schuster, ServSafe Regional Sales Manager or call 612.408.0249.

**How does the tip credit impact this? Do I have pay for the training if I take the any tip credit?**

Yes, employers that take any tip credit would be required to pay for the training for those employees because the cost of the food training program would take them below the tipped minimum wage.

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**What about new hires? Do I have to pay for their training?**

No. You can make obtaining a food handler certificate a condition of employment for any new hires.

**How long is the food handler certification valid?**

The certification is valid for two years.

**Where can I send my current employees or new employees to get their food handler training and certificate?**

Send them to [ServSafe.com/TXFoodHandler](http://ServSafe.com/TXFoodHandler). The course is just \$10.20 with coupon code TXMEMBER.

ServSafe Food Handler® Texas is ANSI accredited and accepted by the Texas Department of State Health Services to meet all regulatory requirements and once passed, serves as employees' food handler permit. Employees that take ServSafe Food Handler Texas do not have to pay any addition permit fees to the local health department.