

FOOD MANAGER CERTIFICATION

Code Requirement

Effective October 1, 2001, the Massachusetts Food Establishment Regulation, 105 CMR 590.003(A)(2) requires food establishments to have a least one person-in-charge (PIC) who is a certified food protection manager. This person must be at least eighteen years of age and be a full-time equivalent on-site manager or supervisor. When the certified PIC is unavailable during operating hours, an alternate PIC must be assigned. The alternate PIC does not require certification; however, this person must be knowledgeable in food safety, foodborne illness prevention and corrective actions.

All food establishments must have a certified food protection manager except the following:

- Temporary food establishments operated by non-profit organizations
- Daycare operations which prepare and/or serve only snacks
- Food establishments which sell only pre-packaged food
- Satellite feeding sites, receiving prepared meals for immediate service
- Food establishments with limited preparation of non-potentially hazardous food
- Food establishments which prepare and serve USDA meat and poultry products containing 120 PPM nitrite and 3.5% brine concentration, such as hotdogs.

Importance of Food Manager Certification

Massachusetts has adopted the food manager certification in order to protect public health and prevent foodborne illness. A certificate implies that the person has knowledge of food safety and the prevention of foodborne illness through the control of risk factors. The certified person must be able to apply this knowledge in day-to-day operations in order to provide consumers with safe food.

Responsibility of the Certified Food Manager

The certified food protection manager is responsible for monitoring and managing all food establishment operations and to ensure that the facility is operating in compliance with food establishment regulations. The certified PIC must be knowledgeable about foodborne illness prevention and must use this knowledge to recognize hazards and take appropriate preventive and corrective actions.

How to Become a Certified Food Protection Manager

A PIC becomes a certified food protection manager by passing one of three accredited examinations. The three accredited examination development companies are:

- Experior Assessments, 1-800-200-6241
- National Registry of Food Safety Professionals, 1-800-446-0257
- National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (ServSafe), 1-800-765-2122

Independent consultants and organizations administer these examinations. Upon passing one of the accredited exams the PIC will receive a certificate and will be in compliance with the certification requirement.

Although training is not a Massachusetts requirement, it is strongly recommended. Most consultants and organizations conduct trainings and then administer an exam. Training is usually needed in order to pass the examination.

How to Find Training

To find food protection training in your area, contact your local board of health. Your local board of health should have information on trainings in the area. Many local boards of health are organizing training and examinations for the food industry. They can also provide a list of trainers in Massachusetts. The three examination organizations may also be contacted to obtain information on trainings in the Massachusetts area. You can also find a list of trainers on the Food Protection Program's Retail Food Safety and Information website at <http://www.state.ma.us/dph/fpp/retail/training.htm>.