

INDUSTRY BULLETIN

for Florida's Food Service Industry

SUBJECT: FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEE TRAINING PROVIDER INFORMATION

Number: 2011-03

Date: August 1, 2011

This bulletin is provided to aid in compliance with Florida law, and is not intended to be legal advice. While care has been taken to ensure its accuracy, in the event of conflict the actual statute or administrative rule will control.

Training Delivery Methods

Over recent years, the division has seen an increase in the number of approved food service employee training programs offered through alternative training methods, such as Internet-based courses. Recent changes to rule 61C-4.023, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), address this issue by specifying acceptable methods of delivery for food service employee training. The new law allows the division to accept certifications from any approved provider regardless of the training delivery method utilized. The law specifically allows training to be provided through:

- o Written materials;
- o Interactive distance learning;
- o In-person instruction; or
- o Any other method of delivery that conveys the necessary information.

Interactive distance learning includes delivering the training through the Internet or other interactive electronic media. To be considered interactive, the delivery method must include:

- o An exchange of information at regular intervals to promote student involvement;
- o Ability to register students, evaluate, monitor and verify the training completed; and
- o Student verification at the end of the course that he or she personally completed each module.

Any approved program provider may offer its food service employee training program through interactive distance learning. The provider is responsible for verifying student identification at each log-in and regular intervals and ensuring that one student registration cannot be used to complete the training more than one time. The provider must have a certified food manager responsible for maintaining and updating the information provided by the program through interactive distance learning.

Section 509.049, Florida Statutes (F.S.), allows the division to audit a program to ensure it continues to comply with the minimum program requirements. Therefore, an approved program provider delivering the training through interactive distance learning must provide the following information to the division initially and within 30 days of any change:

- o Approved program provider number;
- o Form of electronic media utilized;
- o Internet address for the training, if applicable;
- o Name and certificate number of the certified food manager responsible for the training.

New Requirement for Food Service Employee Training Certificates and Cards

Rule 61C-4.023, F.A.C., requires each certificate and card issued by third-party food service employee training providers to include the provider number assigned by the division and the certificate number of certified food manager responsible for providing the training. For training delivered through interactive distance learning, the certified food manager listed on the certificate and card should be the same certified food manager responsible for maintaining and updating the interactive distance learning program. Chapter 509.049, F.S., also requires the certificate and card to include the employee's name and date of birth, the employing food service establishment, the name of the certified food manager who conducted the training, the training date, and the certification expiration date.

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