

**CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

Implementation of SB 602 (Food Handler Card)

Background

Pursuant to SB 602 enacted into law in 2010 (Health and Safety Code 113790 et seq.), food handlers, as defined, will be required to obtain a food handler card after taking a food safety training course and passing an exam. 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 is working 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.

Statutory Clarifications

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

The proposed statutory clarifications, if approved by the governor, would:

- *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 2659.*

Implementation

Current law (SB 602) allows a food handler to obtain a card only from a food protection manager organization described in Section 113947.3, and requires food handlers to obtain a card before July 1, 2011.

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 will be limited to education and notification of requirements for compliance.

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

All local enforcement agencies are urged to adopt this approach to SB 602 implementation and to notify regulated facilities accordingly. Additional information on implementation of SB 602 will be provided in a guidance document.