
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 1583

Brief Description: Authorizing program providers to issue food and beverage service worker's permits.

Sponsors: Representatives Stanford, Chandler, Blake and Wilcox.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows an individual or entity approved in food safety training by the Board of Health to issue food and beverage service worker's permits to persons who have successfully passed an examination regarding food safety.

Hearing Date: 2/16/11

Staff: Morgan Powell (786-7119); Chris Cordes (786-7103)

Background:

A food service worker is defined by the Department of Health as an individual who works (or intends to work) with or without pay in a food service establishment and handles unwrapped or unpackaged food or who may contribute to the transmission of infectious diseases through contact with food products, equipment, and facilities.

All food workers must obtain a food worker card within 14 calendar days from the beginning of employment at a food service establishment and receive food safety training before handling food served to the public. Food workers who attend a food safety training class and pass an exam on food safety basics are issued a food worker card (also called a food handler permit).

Local health departments offer food worker training, examinations, and issue the food worker cards. A card is valid throughout the state. The local health department may contract with persons to provide food safety training or examinations.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The food worker card is valid for two years. The food worker card may be renewed, before the card expires, after the completion of an exam. A renewed card is valid for three years, but may be valid for five years if additional food safety training is acquired.

Summary of Bill:

A food and beverage service worker's permit will be issued to an individual who has successfully passed an examination from a program provider approved in food safety training by the Board of Health.

A program provider is an individual or entity that has approval from the Department of Health to create and administer a food handler program. The Department of Health will grant approval when the program provider seeking to administer a food handler program demonstrates: 1) sufficient experience in food safety, science, or service; and 2) knowledge in all areas of the food handler training curriculum.

In addition, the program provider seeking to administer a food handler program must have the ability to provide and safeguard training and assessment materials, provide the materials in multiple languages, and ensure that a knowledgeable person is available to answer questions regarding program and assessment content.

These provisions do not preclude any food and beverage service worker's permit programs operated by the county health departments.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.