

# Food Premises Reference Document, 2019

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

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## Food handler training

S. 32 Every operator of a food service premise shall ensure that there is a least one food handler or supervisor on the premise who has completed food handler training during every hour in which the premise is operating.

To increase food safety knowledge and improve safe food handling practices, food service premise operators are required to ensure that at least one food handler or supervisor is on-site at the food premise who has completed food handler training and is present during every hour the premise is operating.

The FPR requires a food handler who has “completed training”. To complete training, it is expected that all aspects of the food handler training plan, as specified in *The Operational Approaches for Food Safety Guideline, 2018* (or as current),<sup>5</sup> including the 70% pass and certificate are complete.

The FPR sets out minimum requirements. PHIs can encourage all food premise operators to obtain food handler training as a component of the annual risk categorization under the *Operational Approaches for Food Safety Guideline, 2018* (or as current).<sup>5</sup> PHIs can also promote additional training or recertification for food handlers whose lack of hygiene or inadequate food preparation practices have been implicated in a foodborne illness or outbreak under the *Food Safety Protocol, 2018* (or as current).

Ontario has recognized a variety of public and commercial food handler certification courses. Culinary programs across Ontario now require food handler training certification as a component of the program. Please refer to the [Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s Environmental Health website at http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/enviro/](http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/enviro/) for more information.

It is advisable to have more than one food handler and/or supervisor trained with a food handler certificate. Increased food safety training and awareness is essential to operating a safe food environment. There may also be instances when a food handler requires back-up or coverage when on sick leave and it is a good practice to have alternative measures in place.

Operators may find it convenient to have copies of the food handler certificate(s) available on-site and to ensure they are easily accessible for the PHI to review.

**Note:** Food handler certificates expire every 5 years and must be kept up to date.

The *Operational Approaches for Food Safety Guideline, 2018* (or as current)<sup>5</sup> includes minimum requirements for board of health program delivery including:

- The provision of food handler training programs delivered by boards of health, or on behalf of boards of health;
- Standardized food handler training examinations;
- Provincial food handler certification card and template; and

- Acceptance of certifications awarded by non-board of health providers recognized by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
- A component of the food handler training program requirements includes a 70% pass on the examination and issuance of a certificate to the successful candidates.

**Note:** There may be instances as described in the *Operational Approaches for Food Safety Guideline, 2018* (or as current),<sup>5</sup> where “temporary special event halls (e.g., church basements, community centres, etc.), rent or use the food premise to host private functions.” The following should be considered:

- The structural components of the special event halls are required to be inspected no less than once a year (e.g., adequate potable water).
- A special event hall as defined above would not require a food handler or supervisor on the premise who has completed food handler training so long as the hall is rented or used for the purposes of a private event (those that rent the hall are considered users of the space and it is a private event).
- If the hall is a full-service banquet hall with on-site food preparation and the facility is not usually available for private rental or hire, then the requirement to have a trained food handler or supervisor would apply.

These private functions should be distinguished from commercial food businesses where the commercial food business rents shared community spaces for the purposes of selling food to the public. The requirement to have a trained food handler or supervisor would apply.

## 5. Mobile Food Premises

Mobile food premises include a trailer, cart or vehicle-mounted food premise or other itinerant food premise which is capable of being readily moved and in which food is prepared and offered for sale to the public. Operators are encouraged to speak with a PHI to ensure they are adequately equipped and follow safe food handling practices.

**4. (1) In every mobile food premise,**

- (a) food shall be prepared within the premise and served to the public by persons working within the premise;
- (b) only single-service articles shall be used to serve the food;
- (c) separate holding tanks shall be provided for potable water and waste water; and
- (d) every waste tank and water supply tank shall be equipped with an easily readable gauge for determining the waste or water level in the tank.

(2) Clauses (1) (c) and (d) do not apply to mobile food premises that sell only pre-packaged or non-hazardous food.























































































considered neutral. Generally, potentially hazardous food items with a pH less than 4.6 is preventative in microbial growth.

**Public Health Inspector (PHI):** PHIs are qualified professionals who have obtained a degree from a specialized public health program and have the Certificate in Public Health Inspection (Canada) granted by the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors and hired by a local board of health.

**Potentially hazardous food:** Food in a form or state that is capable of supporting the growth of infectious or toxigenic micro-organisms and which requires time and temperature control to limit such growth.

**Sanitizing:** Treatment designed to reduce the level of microorganisms to a level that will not compromise the safety of food products, and “sanitize” has a corresponding meaning.

**Serving:** Includes self-service.

**Single-service article:** Any container or eating utensil that is to be used only once in the service or sale of food.

**Single-service towel:** A towel that is to be used only once before being discarded or laundered for reuse.

**Utensil:** Includes kitchenware, tableware, glasses, cutlery or other similar items used in the handling, preparing, processing, packaging, displaying, serving, dispensing, storing, containing or consuming of food.

**Water activity (Aw):** Water Activity (Aw) is the ratio of water vapour pressure of a food product to the vapour pressure of pure water at the same temperature and pressure. Generally, food products with an Aw of less than 0.85 are considered shelf stable.

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