



## ***Important and Exciting News!***

### **Changes are proposed for the Lincoln Food Code Food Handler and Food Manager Permits**

**Proposed Effective Date - April 1, 2009**

To improve Lincoln's Food Handler Permit program, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) is proposing to revise the Lincoln Food Code. The proposed changes have been carefully reviewed by the Lincoln Food Advisory Committee and the Board of Health – both support the changes. We believe the improvements will better meet the needs of the food industry. The new food handler permit categories will be based on tasks that food handlers perform, making it easier to determine which permit an employee needs. Food Handler Permits will be good for two years, reducing how often food handlers have to update their permit. In addition, the Lincoln Food Code is being updated to reflect recent changes in the State Food Code and clean up outdated language.

#### **Summary of changes:**

##### **1. Permit Categories**

There will be four categories of permits: Serve/Clean; Prep/Cook; Restricted/Shift Manager; and Food Protection Manager. Training and testing for each of these categories will be based on specific job tasks of that employee.

A **Serve/Clean Food Handler** permit will be required for wait staff, bus staff, and cleaning staff.

A **Prep/Cook Food Handler** permit will be required for staff preparing potentially hazardous foods as chefs, cooks, salad prep staff, buffet line staff, and deli staff.

A **Restricted/Shift Food Manager** permit will be required:

- for a manager of an establishment that does not prepare and serve potentially hazardous foods, such as bar managers or coffee shop managers; or
- as an option for a restaurant shift manager that may be in charge of a food establishment that prepares and serves potentially hazardous foods when the Food Protection Manager is not present.

*Current permits will remain valid until they expire. Upon expiration of the current permit, food handlers will need to obtain one of the new permits.*

##### **2. Permits Will be Issued For Two Years and Cost \$20**

Serve/Clean, Prep/Cook, and Restricted/Shift Food Manager permits will be issued for two (2) years and cost \$20. The Food Protection Manager Permit will stay the same at \$30 for a three (3) year permit.

### **3. Person in Charge Requirements**

For establishments that do not prepare or serve potentially hazardous foods such as some bars, coffee shops, and theaters, a Serve/Clean food handler may serve as the “person in charge” when the Restricted/Shift manager is not present.

For establishments that prepare or serve potentially hazardous foods, either a Prep/Cook food handler or a Restricted/Shift food manager must be in charge of the operation when the Food Protection Manager is not present.

#### **The projected outcomes of these changes are:**

**Reduce confusion** about what permit is needed by creating clear distinctions between food handler permits based on job function that make sense to managers and staff. For example, if the employee does not prepare food and is responsible only for serving or cleaning, they will only need a Serve/Clean permit.

**Increase effectiveness** by training employees in the food safety information needed based on what they do and what they are responsible for.

**Increase time efficiency** by renewing every two years.

**Improve managerial knowledge** for the Restricted/Shift Manager by incorporating important training and information that is not currently covered in the Level III class. This training will include: managing employee health and personal hygiene behaviors; excluding or restricting sick employees; handling vomiting, diarrhea and blood spill incidents; understanding staff food handler permit requirements; plumbing requirements; pest management; and understanding inspection reports.

**Update the Lincoln Food Code** to reflect recent changes in the Nebraska Food Code, to clean up outdated language, and to better organize the code. These changes, other than the changes to the food handler and food manager permits, do not make substantial changes from the current interpretation or enforcement of the Lincoln Food Code. The proposed Lincoln Food Code may be viewed at [www.lincoln.ne.gov](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov) and search “Food.”

If you have any questions or concerns, contact  
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