

FOOD MANAGER CERTIFICATION / RECERTIFICATION

Per WI Statutes Chapter 254.71 and the adoption of the WI Food Code applicable to all Food Establishments, each licensed food establishment operation must have at least one manager or operator certified in food protection practices.

The operator or manager of an establishment that is new or undergoing a change-of-operator shall have a certified food manager within **90 days** after the business opens or provide documentation that they are scheduled within 3-months to take and pass an approved exam. This requirement is applicable with the effective date of the WI Food Code. 12-201.11

What does Certification mean?

Certification requires that the food establishment permit holder or manager pass one of four DHFS approved exams which tests basic knowledge of food protection practices. Safeguarding patron health is a primary concern of food operations. Food manager certification is Wisconsin's food safety agencies' first level of assurance that operations have a basic understanding of food safety laws and principles.

Does certification apply to all food establishments?

No. Certification is required for most DHFS food establishments but not all. Simple food establishments that serve only single service, individual, already pre-wrapped foods from a licensed food distributor or serve/sell only non-potentially hazardous foods are exempt from the certification requirement. Operators of Temporary Restaurants are exempt from this requirement. Only DATCP establishments that engage in restaurant activities are required to have a certified food manager. Call your licensing authority.

Can an operator with more than one food establishment have the same individual as their certified manager at all locations?

No. Each food establishment must have its own and unique certified manager.

The Operator's Responsibilities

The operator is required to promptly notify the regulatory authority when the designated certified manager terminates employment with their food establishment and supply the regulatory authority with the name and state certification number of the new certified manager. The current certified manager's certificate must be conspicuously posted on the premises.

The regulatory authority could be an agent local public health department, your DHFS Environmental Health Specialist or your DATCP Food Safety Inspector. Contact our office for specific departments or individuals.



How do I obtain certification?

Certification involves: a) taking and passing a DHFS approved exam and b) applying for state certification.

After the exam is taken and passed, the individual must apply for DHFS certification by submitting **all** of the following:

- Proof of passing one of the exams by providing a copy of an official written statement of certificate from the testing organization-indicating passage of an examination approved for initial certification.
- A check or money order made out to the Department of Health and Family Services in the amount of \$10.00.
- A completed State of Wisconsin Food Manager Certification application form.

The operator or designated manager must take one of four state-approved examinations. These exams are listed with this brochure. A variety of private and public organizations have been authorized by the testing organizations to administer the approved examinations and teach food manager certification courses. These organizations are listed with this brochure. The Division of Public Health only approves the exams and has no control over training courses for initial certification.

Must I take a class in order to pass the exam?

No. The Division of Public Health only requires the passing of an approved examination. An individual's background and knowledge may vary. The type and amount of study and course work are dependent on the individual. However, most examination organizations offer the examination as part of a course on food protection practices.

What is covered on the exam?

The certification exam tests basic knowledge of safe food handling practices and includes but is not limited to:

- Food source and storage
- Employee Health
- Personal Hygiene
- Temperature control of potentially hazardous foods

- Effective hand washing
- HACCP Principles and Practices
- Prevention of food borne illness
- Equipment cleaning, maintenance, and storage practices
- Toxic product use/storage
- Manager responsibilities and duties, Etc.

How much will it cost?

Cost of the exam varies with the examination organization that administers it. Cost depends on whether the exam accompanies a text, classroom instruction, or other training aids. For information regarding course/exam cost and schedules, contact one of the organizations listed with this brochure. No matter who pays for the training, exam or certification, the certificate belongs to the individual person who is certified. The cost of state certification is currently \$10.00.

I took and passed this exam a long time ago, can I still apply for WI certification?

Yes, but no more than three years is the time limit for past examination.

Expiration Date

If the WI certification is applied for *within* 12 months of passing the approved examination, the certificate expires five years from the date of the department's issuance.

If the WI certification is applied for *more* than 12 months of passing the approved examination, the certificate expires five years from the examination date.

If an individual is applying for reciprocity from another state's certification requirement, the WI certification will expire five years from the date of issuance of the other state's certificate.

What examinations are DHFS approved for initial certification?

The following examinations are approved for manager certification:

- ServSafe (SS) Examination, by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association.
- The National Registry of Food Safety Professionals, Food Safety Manager Certification Examination
- National Assessment Institute's (NAI) Certified Professional Food Manager Examination from Experior Assessment, Clearwater, Florida.
- Dietary Manager's Association (DMA) Food Sanitation and Safety Examination from the Certifying Board of the Dietary Manager's Association.

Information regarding the above examinations can be obtained from the organizations listed with this brochure.

Details of the Food Manager Certification Program are available in Chapter 12 of the WI Food Code. Consult our web site at: http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/hfs/hfs196_app.pdf

Recertification

All food manager certifications expire five years from the date of issuance with the exceptions mentioned. **A state approved recertification-training course is required to renew food manager certification. Only a course, not an exam, is minimally required for recertification. Although repeating a written examination will suffice for the recertification requirement.** The intent of recertification is to provide continuing education for the food manager.

How do I become recertified?

In order to renew a Food Manager Certificate, a certified food manager must meet all of the following requirements for recertification:

- Complete a state approved recertification course;
- Submit a copy of a letter or dated certificate from the organization that administered the state approved recertification/certification course regarding attendance and completion;
- Or, take and pass another WI approved examination, the same as initial certification;
- Complete a recertification application; and
- Submit a check or money order for \$10.00 with the application.

GRACE PERIOD: *All certified food managers have 6 months from the date of expiration to renew their certifications by attending an approved recertification course. If a food manager has not renewed their certification within the 6-month grace period, their certification can only be renewed by taking and passing a DHFS approved examination required for initial certification.*

Persons requesting recertification may do so up to one year before the expiration date of their food manager certificate. There will be no penalty for early recertification. Renewal certificates issued within the 12-months of a certificate's expiration date will be effective from five years from the expiration date of the original certificate.

Where can I get information regarding certification courses and examinations?

You may obtain information about certification courses and exams on the attached sheet. For further information regarding, certification applications, to submit certification materials or for a completed listing of organizations providing certification exams or recertification courses, contact:

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