



Maricopa County

News Release

Environmental Services Department

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Environmental Services
Department

*"Working with our
community to ensure a safe
and healthy environment"*

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April 8, 2015

Food Safety, beyond a card Maricopa County announces changes in Food Service Worker requirements

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors approved changes to Food Service Worker (FSW) requirements, including the discontinuation of County issued cards. Although the County will no longer provide the FSW cards, proper staff training is still required as well as a strong emphasis on food safety practices.

"We have been listening to our stakeholders and the public, and food safety is a primary concern and goal that we all share," said Steven Goode, Director of the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department (MCESD). "As we conduct our inspections and work with industry to ensure food safety practices, we will still require all food employees be trained and that documentation of this training be maintained at the food establishment," underscored Goode.

It is the food establishment's responsibility to have properly trained personnel, which ensures good food safety practice, as well as Active Managerial Control. With the new changes, MCESD recognizes the value of allowing food establishments to decide the most adequate staff training to meet their business needs.

The changes to the Maricopa County Environmental Health Code align with a recently enacted Arizona Statute ([A.R.S. § 11-269.12](#)). The statute allows FSW training and certification by accredited entities and sets the requirement to accept any Arizona county's certificate or identification card.

Following the [Maricopa County's Enhanced Regulatory Outreach Program](#) (EROP) process, MCESD provided multiple opportunities for stakeholder and public input on the proposed revisions for the FSW program. Suggestions were presented to and voted upon by the Board of Health with final approval granted today by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors. The regulatory change that goes into effect immediately does not require any fee changes.

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Some Frequently Ask Questions

What would be an acceptable form of training documentation for the County?

- 1) A valid food handler card or certificate issued by another county within Arizona
- 2) A valid card or certificate issued by an ANSI-accredited food handler training program.
A list of the ANSI-accredited programs can be found at:
<https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=212&prgID=237&prgID1=238&status=4>
- 3) Maricopa County offers specialized training for individuals with disabilities and for fee-waived entities. These are also acceptable forms of food handler training documentation.
To learn more about this training visit:
<http://www.maricopa.gov/EnvSvc/QC/FoodHandlerCard/LimitedUseCard.aspx>

Can I choose any of the training courses outlined above?

- You must check with your employer to see which of the training(s) they accept. Although each of these forms of training is accepted by Maricopa County, it is the responsibility of the Person in Charge of the food establishment to determine which form(s) of training and training documentation they will accept.

How much does the training cost?

- The cost of the training is up to the organization/company providing the training. This may vary from organization to organization.

How often do I need to renew the training documentation?

- The training documentation is valid for 3 years in Maricopa County. The training would have to be re-taken every 3 years in order to receive new training documentation.

What if I already have a MCSED FSW card, will it still be valid?

- Current MCSED FSW cards would still be valid until their expiration date, as long as they are accepted by the employer.

Please be advised that Maricopa County Environmental Services Department still requires all food establishments handling open foods where Time/Temperature Control for Food Safety is required to have at least one licensed Certified Food Protection Manager who has undergone more extensive food service training. Learn more at:

<http://www.maricopa.gov/EnvSvc/QC/FoodHandlerCard/FoodManagerCard.aspx>

For more information, call (602) 506-6616 or visit ESD.maricopa.gov.

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For more than 50 years, Maricopa County Environmental Services department has been working with our community to ensure a safe and healthy environment. The department serves the nation's fourth largest county with a population of nearly 4 million people. Using innovative methods, our Environmental Health professionals take proactive steps to regulate the food safety in eating and drinking establishments, work with stakeholders to keep our water supply free from contamination, and provide surveillance/enforcement activities to help minimize vector borne health risks.

To find out more, visit esd.maricopa.gov or call (602) 506-6616. Follow us on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/MCEnviro>

