

FAQs – Food Safety Licenses and Certifications



Food Bank Member Agencies are required to meet certain licensing and training requirements per the RI Department of Health’s (DOH) Food Code and the Food Bank’s Basic Agreement. We have created this resource to answer many of your common questions!

LICENSING REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

	FOOD PANTRY	MEAL SITE
Food Business License	Required.	Required.
Hybrid Handler Food Safety Certified Person	Required.	Optional. Cannot take the place of the Food Safety Manager. Is suitable only for volunteers or secondary staff.
Food Safety Manager	Optional. Can be taken in place of the Hybrid Handler Course if your pantry wants to go above and beyond.	Required.

COMMON QUESTIONS

What are the steps to get the Hybrid Handler training?

1. Take the ServSafe Handler Course
2. Take the Hybrid Handler Course
3. Renew the training once every 3 years

What are the steps to get the Food Safety Manager License?

1. Take the ServSafe Food Protection Manager Course (or an equivalent course)
2. Take and pass the ServSafe Food Protection Manager Exam (or an equivalent exam)
3. Apply to the RI Department of Health for the Certified Food Safety Manager License
4. Renew the license once every 5 years

What responsibilities does the food safety trained person have?

The food safety trained person (either Hybrid Handler or Food Safety Manager) is responsible for ensuring food is received, stored, handled, cooked (if meal site), and distributed safely. They are also responsible for training new volunteers or staff in food safety storage, distribution, and preparation. The food safety trained person should also receive and review the food safety recall alerts sent out by the Food Bank.

If you are a meal site, please note that per the Department of Health’s RI Food Code, a Food Safety Manager must be present anytime food is being prepared for service to guests.

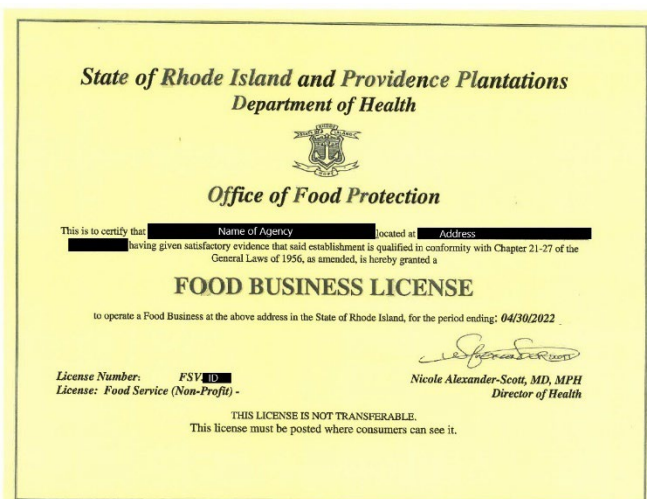
How many food safety trained people does my agency need?

Each agency is required to have at least one person trained in food safety. Your agency can decide to train multiple people as backup, but it is not required.

Questions? Contact Erica Hanson, Director of Community Impact | ehanson@rifoodbank.org

FOOD BUSINESS LICENSE

What is this license?	The Food Business License shows that the physical building your agency is in has been through a health inspection at least once and is registered with the Department of Health. Certain facilities are exempt (ex., Shelters, etc.)
Who issues it?	Rhode Island Department of Health
How do I initially apply for this license?	When moving to a new location, fill and mail out the DOH’s application found here https://health.ri.gov/applications/FoodServiceBusinessRetail.pdf If you are getting approved at your existing location, fill out and mail the DOH’s Food Service Non-Profit application found here: https://health.ri.gov/applications/FoodMarketNonProfit.pdf You will need to pass a health inspection with a DOH health inspector before receiving food from the Food Bank.
Does the Food Bank need a copy?	Yes. Please scan or fax a copy of the original to jhazard@rifoodbank.org or 401-942-2114.
When do I renew?	If your license begins with FSV your license expires every year on April 30th. If your license begins with MRK your license expires every year on September 30 th .
How do I renew?	Renew online through the DOH’s portal https://healthri.mylicense.com/ . A month before expiration, you should receive a letter from the DOH with instructions on how to renew.
Do I need to display this at my agency?	Yes. This should be prominently displayed in a public area.
Cost?	\$0 for non-profits.
Who should I contact if I have issues?	Contact the RI DOH Licensing Department. P: 401-222-5960 E: doh.elicense@health.ri.gov



Food Business License



Food Safety Manager License

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HYBRID HANDLER (for Food Pantries)

	SERVSAFE HANDLER	HYBRID HANDLER CLASS
What is this?	This is a general food safety training covering topics like common sources of foodborne illness, safe storage temperatures and conditions, and hygiene.	This class supplements the ServSafe Handler class and covers food pantry specific information such as donations, retail pick-ups, and Food Bank specific policies.
Who issues this certificate?	National Restaurant Association – ServSafe	Rhode Island Community Food Bank
Do I need to take a test?	Yes. There is a short assessment at the end of the course, and you are given three attempts at passing.	No.
Does the Food Bank need a copy?	Yes. Please scan or fax a copy of the original to jhazard@rifoodbank.org or 401-942-2114.	No certificate issued.
When do I renew?	Once every 3 years	Once every 3 years
How do I renew this?	Retake the ServSafe handler course.	Retake the Food Bank’s Hybrid Handler course.
Do I need to display this at my agency?	No, but it’s not a bad idea!	Not applicable.
Cost?	\$15	No cost.
How long does this take?	2 – 3 hours on average.	1 hour
Who should I contact if I have renewal issues?	Contact your instructor or contact ServSafe customer service.	Not applicable.
Where can I take this course?	Either online directly from ServSafe or in-person through a local instructor. Make sure that your instructor is licensed to teach.	Sign up with Jen Hazard at jhazard@rifoodbank.org



ServSafe Food Handler Certificate



ServSafe Food Safety Manager Certificate

FOOD SAFETY MANAGER (for Meal Sites)

	SERVSAFE MANAGER	FOOD SAFETY MANAGER LICENSE
What is this?	The ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification is a certificate showing you have successfully taken a comprehensive food safety course and passed an exam demonstrating your food safety knowledge.	The Rhode Island Certified Food Safety Manager License is a professional license showing you have met the RI Department of Health’s requirements for being your agency’s designated Food Safety Manager. If you are a meal site, by RI law, a Food Safety Manager must be present every time you are cooking, preparing food, and serving food.
Who issues this license?	National Restaurant Association – ServSafe	Rhode Island Department of Health
How do I initially receive this?	Sign up and take the ServSafe course, then pass the ServSafe exam. The initial course must be at least 8 hours long.	After passing the ServSafe course, fill and mail out the DOH’s application found here https://health.ri.gov/applications/FoodSafetyManager.pdf
Do I need to take a test?	Yes. It is a 90 question, 2 hour long exam.	No.
Does the Food Bank need a copy?	Yes. Please scan or fax a copy of the original to jhazard@rifoodbank.org or 401-942-2114.	Yes. Please scan or fax a copy of the original to jhazard@rifoodbank.org or 401-942-2114.
When do I renew?	Once every 5 years.	Once every 5 years.
How do I renew this?	Take and pass the ServSafe exam. When renewing, you do NOT need to retake the full 8-hour course, though we recommend doing so to keep up to date with all current food safety information.	Renew online through the DOH’s portal https://healthri.mylicense.com/ . Have your renewed ServSafe certificate ready to submit. A month before expiration, you should receive a letter from the DOH with instructions on how to renew.
Do I need to display this at my agency?	No, but it’s not a bad idea!	Yes. This should be prominently displayed in a public area.
Cost?	Depends on where you go.	\$50
How long does this take?	At least 8 hours. The Food Bank’s version takes 11 hours, but other places may vary.	After applying, it typically takes 2 – 3 months for the DOH to approve and issue your license.
Who should I contact if I have renewal issues?	Contact your instructor/proctor or contact ServSafe customer service.	Contact the RI DOH Licensing Department. P: 401-222-5960 E: doh.elicense@health.ri.gov
Where can I take this course?	Either online directly from ServSafe or in-person through a local instructor. Make sure that your instructor is licensed to teach and proctor this exam.	Not applicable.