

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 27, 2012

Health District introduces new 'Food Handler Safety Training Card'

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District continues to make sweeping changes to its health card program with the introduction of the new Food Handler Safety and Certification Program and the elimination of a health card requirement for massage therapists, reflexologists, aestheticians, health club attendants, child care employees, adult group care staff, barbers, and tattoo/body art/permanent makeup artists beginning Jan. 2. The health district still requires that all food handlers must take and pass the online food safety training course to receive their new Food Handler Safety Training Cards. For updated information, visit www.SNHD.info. The new Food Handler Safety Training program is the final step in the health district's revamping of its 50-plus year program.

"These changes are being put into place as we bring our program in line with current medical practices after a careful review of our health card requirements. We've spent about a year reviewing the health card program and we implemented changes this past summer that streamlined the process. We believe that this new, streamlined and targeted program is a positive step for our local business community and it removes employment obstacles for some job applicants," said Dr. John Middaugh, interim chief health officer. "These changes will be beneficial to Southern Nevada and allows us to re-purpose our resources so we can provide better public health services to our community."

Food handlers must take online food safety training and receive a passing grade before they can receive their Food Handler Safety Training Card. The total cost of the card is \$40. Online training is \$20 and must be paid at registration and the balance of \$20 must be paid when applicants visit the health district to receive the card. Applicants must bring their online training certificate to receive their card. The Food Handler Safety Training Card is valid for three years. A late fee of \$15 will be assessed if the card is not renewed prior to its expiration date. Food handlers with a current, valid health card will receive the new Food Handler Safety Training Card when they renew their cards.

Applicants can visit the following health district locations to receive their card:

- East Las Vegas Public Health Center: 560 N. Nellis Blvd., Ste. E-12
- Henderson Public Health Center: 520 E. Lake Mead Pkway
- North Las Vegas Public Health Center: 955 W. Craig Rd. (*by appt. call 759-1616*)
- Cambridge Community Center: 3900 Cambridge St.
- Mesquite Public Health Center: 530 Hafen Lane
- Laughlin Public Health Center: 3080 Needles Hwy, Ste. 1900

Food Handler Safety Training program - add one

The health district still recommends that adults review their immunization status to ensure they have received vaccines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Vaccines are not required for food handlers to receive their Food Handler Safety Training Card.

Child care staff members are not required to obtain a Food Handler Safety Training Card unless they are hired to prepare food for children attending the child care facility. Current tattoo/body art/permanent makeup artists are still required to undergo infectious disease training and it is recommended that they receive a hepatitis B immunization, although this is not required. All new tattoo/body art/permanent makeup artists will still be required to prove they have adequate experience and will be required to obtain a Body Art card.

Updated information about the Southern Nevada Health District can be found on Facebook www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict, on YouTube www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict or Twitter: www.twitter.com/SNHDinfo. The health district is now available in Spanish on Twitter www.twitter.com/TuSNHD. Don't have a Twitter account? Follow the health district on your phone by texting "follow SNHDinfo" to 40404.