



FSSAI mandates at least one certified supervisor for 25 food handlers

Wednesday, 11 October, 2017, 08 : 00 AM [IST]

Ashwani Maindola, New Delhi

The Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has made it mandatory for every food business operator (FBO) with either a Central or a state license to have at least one trained and certified food safety supervisor for every 25 food handlers on each of their premises. These supervisors should, in turn, carry out a periodic onsite training of all the food handlers, at least on a quarterly basis, and maintain all records.

In the order, Madhavi Das, chief management services officer, FSSAI, said, "To implement this policy, FSSAI has designed a large-scale Food Safety Training and Certification Programme (FoSTaC) for food businesses across the value chain. The curriculum and content for the training have been created centrally."

The course would comprise a basic module, an advanced module and a special module on different subjects related to the food safety ecosystem. And the training will be delivered through training partners under the skill development programme, large FBOs and academic and vocational institutions, amongst others. A website has also been created to assist on the subject.

It was approved at the 20th Central Advisory Committee meeting.

The state food safety commissioners were instructed to initiate special drives to facilitate FoSTaC for the licensed FBOs under their jurisdiction and designate a senior officer as a nodal officer for the implementation of the programme.

Ashwin Bhadri, chief executive officer, Equinox Consulting (a certified FoSTaC training partner), said, "FSSAI initially launched the Train the Trainer (TOT) Programme, under which FSSAI officials trained the trainers from different food safety training organisations in the different courses."

FSSAI IN NEWS

These FoSTaC training partners are now certified to conduct these training sessions pan-India.

The latest amendment was a document from FSSAI which spoke about the initiative, the kind of training imparted and the number of certified partner compliance agencies for the same.

Bhadri said, "My interaction about compliance always ended with food handlers requiring a standard training programme. Compliance with the food law will see an all-new high post this implementation. Equinox Consulting has conducted over 17 training sessions pan-India, training over 350 food handlers across multiple states."

He added that the FoSTaC training sessions will be made mandatory in phases over the next two years. Many new implementations will be in place over time to help in the smooth transition of the amendment.

About the FoSTaC programme

Three levels have been introduced for each kind of training pieces based on the level of difficulties, the time duration of the course and the targeted audience.

- Level 1 (Basic) - Five courses of four- to six-hour durations over one or two days. The topics covered include street food vending, catering, manufacturing/processing, storage and transport, retail and distribution.

- Level 2 (Advanced) - Four courses of eight-hour durations over one or two days. The topics covered include catering, manufacturing/processing, storage and transport, retail and distribution.

- Level 3 (Special) - Six courses of four-hour durations on one day. The areas covered include milk and milk products, meat and poultry, fish and seafood, packaged water, bakery and edible oil.

All the training content is prepared by FSSAI and is available in English, with translations in Hindi and other regional languages.