



AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION

Certified Fundamental Cook (CFC) Credential Information

2024 National Leadership Conference

Description:

American Culinary Federation (ACF) certification is the only culinary program with stackable credentials and is recognized throughout the industry and by the Department of Labor. ACF certifications validate knowledge, skills, and experience in industry-relevant competencies and are earned based on education, experience, and successful completion of both a written and practical exam. The ACF Certified Fundamental Cook and Certified Fundamental Pastry Cook credentials are the first steps on a ladder of certifications and do not require any work experience.

Eligibility Requirements:

- High school diploma/GED

OR

- Enrolled in a culinary course(s) covering a minimum of 75 hours in basic food prep, safety and sanitation, culinary nutrition, and foodservice management.

Exam Information:

Candidates will complete the ACF Certificate of Culinary Essentials exam as the exam requirement for this credential. The ACF Certificate of Culinary Essentials exam covers safety and sanitation, culinary nutrition, and fundamental concepts of the culinary arts and foodservice industry concepts.

The exam consists of 100 questions, with approximately 50 questions on culinary fundamentals, 35 questions on food safety and sanitation, 15 questions on foodservice concepts, and 15 questions on culinary nutrition, to be completed within 120 minutes. The exam is completed on the ACF Online Learning Center and proctored by a locally-identified administrator. Proctor to candidate ratio is 1:30.

Applicant must pass the exam with 75 percent to earn the Certificate of Culinary Essentials and satisfy the exam requirement for the ACF Certified Fundamental Cook credential.

Performance Assessment Information:

Candidates will demonstrate their culinary skills in the performance assessment and must prepare a main course of sautéed chicken with fine herb sauce, rice pilaf, and steamed carrots within 2 hours and 30 minutes. Substitute ingredients may be used as long as the candidate demonstrates the required skills competencies.

Candidates will be evaluated by a culinary professional (preferably ACF-certified) identified by the host location with a minimum of three years of industry experience within the last five years. The evaluator to candidate ratio is 1:3.

Price:

The price to take the Certified Fundamental Cook (CFC) examination as part of the 2024 National Leadership Conference is \$35 per individual. This price includes certification and exam processing fees, as well as access to one practice written exam on the ACF Online Learning Center.

Exam Proctor Requirements:

Proctor must be a "disinterested third party" with no direct family or direct educator relationship to the applicant. Duties:

- Confirm the applicant's identity by using a photo identification such as a driver's license.
- Ensure the applicant does not receive any outside assistance while taking the exam. This includes course materials, help from other persons, prepared notes, and access to other websites. Cell phones must be checked and turned completely off. The student may use a non-programmable calculator.
- Remain in the presence of the applicant from the time the applicant starts the exam to the time the applicant finishes, or until the end of the maximum time allowed for the exam, whichever comes first.

Performance Facility Requirements

The facility will provide ample space for the candidate to successfully complete the performance assessment to include refrigeration, work area, sinks, ranges, and oven space. Each station must be provided with a basic set of cutting boards, pots, pans, and hand tools. Credential candidates are required to bring their own ingredients; however, a facility may choose to provide ingredients. The facility administrator will provide the candidates with a list of available equipment and food.

Required Knowledge Competencies

Sanitation and Safety

- Identify major contaminants related to foodborne illness.
- Describe microorganisms including requirements for growth and prevention methods.
- Demonstrate acceptable procedures when preparing potentially hazardous foods to include time/temperature principles.
- Demonstrate good personal hygiene and health habits to include handwashing.
- Understand the requirements for proper receiving and storage of both raw and prepared foods.
- Identify the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HAACP) during all food handling processes as a method for minimizing the risk of foodborne illness.
- Review Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and explain their requirements in handling hazardous materials.
- Demonstrate appropriate emergency policies for kitchen and dining room injuries.
- Discuss appropriate measures for insects, rodents, and pest control eradication.
- Describe appropriate types and use of fire extinguishers used in the foodservice area.
- Review and apply the laws and rules of the regulatory agencies governing sanitation and safety in a foodservice operation.

Nutrition

- Identify and discuss dietary guidelines and recommended dietary allowances based on current USDA Food Guideline principles and food groups.
- Describe primary characteristics, functions, and major food sources of major nutrients.

- List the primary characteristics, functions, and sources of vitamins, water, and minerals.
- Interpret food labels in terms of the portion size, ingredients, and nutritional value.
- Identify common food allergies and determine appropriate substitutions. (i.e. gluten, sugar, lactose-free)
- Evaluate and analyze recipes and menus using dietary guideline recommendations, food guides, and food labels.
- Discuss contemporary nutritional issues to include specialty diets, dietary trends, and religious dietary laws (i.e. vegetarianism, heart-healthy menus, food allergies, alternative dieting, vegetarian, etc.)
- Discuss and demonstrate cooking techniques that apply sound nutritional principles and current industry trends.

Introduction to Food Service

- Define the philosophy of the hospitality industry and its role in providing customer service.
- Trace the growth and development of the hospitality and tourism industry from its birth to its present day. Include names of restaurateurs, chefs, and hospitality entrepreneurs that helped to shape the industry in the past and present day.
- Discuss and evaluate the importance of professional ethics as it applies to the foodservice industry.
- Outline the organization, structure, and functional areas in various hospitality organizations as they pertain to the functions of menu planning, purchasing, food production and service, food and beverage controls, management, etc.
- Identify and describe professional organizations associated with the hospitality and foodservice profession, and discuss these organizations' role in preparing and advancing one's career in the industry.
- Discuss industry trends as they relate to the various segments of the foodservice and hospitality industry.

Basic Food Preparation

- Discuss proper kitchen safety including knife care.
- Discuss how to maximize food freshness, quality, safety, and sanitation when serving hot foods and cold foods.
- Discuss the principles of heat transfer as they relate to cooking methods including roasting and baking, broiling, smoking, grilling, griddling, sautéing, frying, deep-frying, braising and stewing, poaching and steaming.
- Discuss recipe conversions.
- Explain the factors that affect taste, how we perceive those tastes, and what we can do to optimize a combination of seasonings and flavors when preparing and cooking food.
- Evaluating the differences in methods to develop flavor through preparation.
- Define the process for making classical stocks, soups, mother, and compound sauces.
- Evaluate and analyze a variety of proteins, vegetables, legumes, grains, and starches using moist, dry, and combination cooking method.



Required Skills Competencies

- Demonstrate good personal hygiene and health habits.
- Demonstrate acceptable procedures when preparing potentially hazardous foods to include time/temperature principles.
- Demonstrate proficiency in using knives and small wares to fabricate protein.
- Demonstrate use of chef's knives in preparing classical cuts (minimum of two).
- Demonstrate proper sauté using a protein.
- Demonstrate a proper cooking method to prepare a rice or grain.
- Demonstrate a proper vinaigrette.
- Demonstrate effective techniques in presenting food that maximizes the flavor of the products used.

Next Steps:

Purchase the ACF Exam (\$35) when registering for the 2024 National Leadership Conference.