



**Occupational Licenses and Certifications Testimony  
Ohio Department of Health  
House State and Local Government Committee  
October 16, 2019**

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair Ginter, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the occupational licenses and certifications the Ohio Department of Health oversees. My name is Lisa Griffin, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at the Ohio Department of Health.

ODH's mission is to protect and improve the health of all Ohioans by preventing disease, promoting good health, and assuring access to quality care. The core public health responsibilities of the Ohio Department of Health's Bureau of Environmental Health and Radiation Protection (BEHRP) is to assess and monitor environmental factors that potentially impact public health, including air, water, soil, food, and physical and social features of our surroundings.

Through BEHRP, ODH offers certificates or occupational licenses in 5 areas: food safety, sanitarian registration, lead, radon, and radiation medicine. Eighteen of the 19 certifications and licensures the committee is reviewing are part of ODH's Environmental Health and Radiation Protection program. The last is an epi-pen training certification course.

**Food Safety Certifications (ORC 3717.09, 3717.51)**

1. Basic (Person in Charge) food handler certification for food service operations: Level One
2. Food protection manager certification for food service operations: Level Two

In ODH's Food Safety Program, individuals have the option to be certified at a basic (or "Person in Charge") and manager levels in safe food handling and food service in order to promote food safety practices and protecting the public from foodborne illnesses. It is important to note that individuals can work in food service operations without obtaining these certifications. These certifications may help an individual advance in the food service industry and are not a barrier to entry into a career in food service.

The ODH Food Safety Program provides a list on its website of approved certification providers in each county. An individual works directly with a provider of their choice to register and receive the certification training. Online or in-person training options are available.

Person-In-Charge (PIC) Certification in Food Protection is a mandated training for the designated person in charge for each shift of a risk level I, II, III, and IV food service operation or retail food establishment under specified conditions. An individual would pay the provider of their choice and the course provider issues the PIC certification.

The Manager Certification in Food Protection program is a more extensive training that provides managers with in-depth knowledge of proper food safety practices for use in their facilities. The Ohio Department of Health has administered the Manager Certification in Food Protection program since 1973. The Manager Certificate is issued directly from ODH after receiving the exam results from the course provider.

Beginning March 1, 2017, each risk level III and risk level IV food service operation and retail food establishment is required to have at least one employee with supervisory and management responsibility and the authority to direct and control food preparation and service that has obtained the Ohio Manager Certification in food protection.

Both certifications help ensure the public is receiving safe food at retail and food service operations, they also provide training that will help these employees and businesses be successful and efficient in their operations. Coursework is approved by the ODH Director, and the public is welcome to comment on the program and rules at various points. ODH also offers expedited certification application processing for service members, veterans, and their spouses.

### **Sanitarian Registration (ORC 4736)**

3. Sanitarian registration
4. Sanitarian-in-training registration

Sanitarians have specialized knowledge and skills in the field of environmental public health science, including but not limited to, food safety, private water systems, and rabies control. Sanitarians are essential to protecting the health and safety of Ohioans.

The Director of ODH is charged with registration of sanitarians and sanitarians in training. The Director of Health appoints the seven members of the Sanitarian Advisory Board (ORC 4736.02) who advises the Director on the Sanitarian Registration Program. The Sanitarian Registration Program reviews and issues registrations in a timely and effective manner to allow sanitarians and sanitarians in training to enter the workforce in Ohio. Program also reviews and approves continuing education courses and assists registrants renewing their registrations.

Sanitarians and Sanitarians-in-Training who fall under the Registration Program overseen by the board work for both public and private entities. Many work for the 113 local health districts around Ohio.

To become registered as a sanitarian, the individual must apply, pay a fee, be of good moral character, pass an exam, and meet the education and experience requirements outlined in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC 4736.08). Individuals must have a bachelor's degree and relevant coursework in science and environmental fields, along with work experience as a sanitarian. Those who meet the educational qualifications of a sanitarian, but have not yet met the work experience requirements, may apply for registration as a sanitarian-in-training and pay a fee. A sanitarian-in-training must apply for registration as a sanitarian and take an exam within three years after sanitarian-in-training registration. Registration includes application fees of \$80 or \$160 for either a sanitarian-in-training or sanitarian role, respectively, and an examination fee of \$265 for those SITs ready to take the online test for sanitarian certification. Renewal fees for both sanitarians and sanitarians-in-training are \$90 annually. The exam and registration process allows for sanitarian

standards to be uniform across the state, and ensures that the public is receives consistent service delivery by public health professionals.

There are 1,500 active Registered Sanitarians and Sanitarians in Training in the state. The program is funded by licensure fees that are prescribed in ORC 4736.12.

### **Radon Education and Licensing Program**

5. Radon tester
6. Radon mitigation specialist
7. Radon mitigation contractor

The ODH Radon Education and Licensing Program is federally funded and works in cooperation with the US EPA and a network of local health departments across Ohio. This program licenses companies and persons directly involved with the radon testing and mitigation industry. ODH regulates contractors that install radon mitigation systems, mitigation specialists who design and supervise the installation of mitigation systems, radon testers, radon laboratories and the companies that provide required radon training.

This program is critical to protecting the public from radon gas, which is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Radon is a colorless and odorless radioactive gas that comes from the soil. The gas can accumulate inside homes. Exposure to radon can lead to lung cancer. A radon test is the only way to know how much radon is in your home. Radon can be reduced with a mitigation system.

ODH licenses radon testers, radon mitigation contractors, and radon mitigation specialists. Licensed radon professionals identify and educate about the potential health risks of radon exposure. If elevated radon levels are discovered, a radon mitigation specialist works to evaluate the results and design a mitigation system that reduces radon levels. Both testers and mitigation specialists are trained to provide post-mitigation testing. Post mitigation testing is the means by which the effectiveness of radon mitigation is evaluated. Radon contractors may be sole proprietors or may employ other licensed radon professionals.

These licenses require training and testing, continuing education, and are on a 2-year renewal cycle. The licensure fees are \$400 for radon testers, \$600 for mitigation specialists, and \$800 for contractors (waived if contractor is a sole proprietor).

Throughout the state, licensed individuals perform approximately 50,000 radon tests and design and install 10,000 mitigations systems annually. The program is funded through federal grant dollars and licensure fees. The program engages the public and industry through regular meetings, annual trainings, and trade organization conferences.

### **Lead Licensure and Accreditation Program**

8. Lead Inspector
9. Lead abatement contractor
10. Lead risk assessor
11. Lead abatement project designer
12. Lead abatement worker
13. Clearance technician license

Lead has many hazardous health effects and has been banned or significantly reduced in many products. Children can be exposed to lead in many ways, but most exposure happens when children put things into their mouths while playing. Lead was used in house paint until 1978, and any house built before that year could have lead paint. Chips from this paint can be ingested or ground into dust, which can be eaten or breathed in. Many children with lead poisoning have no signs at first, which makes it hard to diagnose and treat their poisoning early. Exposure to lead during childhood can lead to lifelong negative consequences, especially in brain development.

The ODH Lead Poisoning Prevention Program ensures that the public receives safe and proper lead abatement, detection, and analytical services. The program dispenses information and educational pamphlets about lead poisoning and its prevention upon request as well as conducts training sessions for lead professionals, real estate agents, and medical personnel.

There are 6 different occupational licensures under this program: inspector, risk assessor, abatement contractor, abatement project designer, abatement worker, and clearance technician. These licensure categories help homeowners and property owners reduce and control lead hazards.

The requirements for each 2-year license vary depending on role. For risk assessors, inspectors, abatement contractors and designers: licensure recognizes experience earned in the field or through academic or professional training. For lead abatement workers and clearance technicians, there is no prior experience requirement. These roles serve as excellent entry points into the industry. The required trainings are widely-available and offered through local health departments or through private sources. All roles require a \$70 examination fee, and a licensure fee that ranges from \$50 to \$500. Lead abatement workers have the lowest license fee at \$50. Those interested in becoming lead abatement workers and lead clearance technicians can complete training locally in one week, become licensed, and use their on-the-job experience to qualify for other lead professional roles if they so choose. During the budget process, ODH was appropriated \$225,000 per fiscal year to promote lead worker/contractor licensure.

There are approximately 1,100 licensed lead professionals in Ohio. Annually, these individuals perform over 4,000 regulated lead abatement activities around the state. The program is administered by ODH staff and is funded through federal grants and licensure fees. The program engages the public and industry through regular meetings, annual trainings, and trade organization conferences.

### **Radiologic and Radioactive Handling**

14. Radiation expert certification - therapeutic radiation- generating equipment
15. Radiation expert certification - diagnostic radiation- generating equipment
16. Radiation expert certification - mammography radiation- generating equipment

ODH certifies and licenses individuals who work with radioactive materials or machines in healthcare settings. Uncontrolled radiation poses great health risks, but radiation applied in intentional and targeted means is useful for both diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, and regulation of professionals working in this area is necessary to protect the health and safety of both patients and staff.

Radiation Expert Certification is available to qualified individuals who test radiation-generating equipment and oversee radiation protection at hospitals, and audit quality assurance programs at their facilities in the interest of patient and public safety. There are currently 260 individuals

certified in the areas of diagnostic, therapeutic, and mammography radiation-generating equipment. This certification recognizes advanced formal education obtained by individuals, as well as on-the-job experience.

The application fee is \$100 per certification category and the certification must be renewed every two years. The program's annual budget comes largely from application and renewal fees.

17. Radioactive material handler license

18. Radiologic license (X-ray machine operator, radiographer, radiation therapist, nuclear medicine technologist license)

The Radioactive Materials Program issues licenses for the handling of radioactive materials at various medical, research, academic, and industrial facilities in Ohio. Radioactive materials licenses are issued to a business entity and not to specific individuals as handlers of radioactive materials. This program operates under an agreement with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The rules for this program are required to be identical to those promulgated by the NRC.

Radiologic Licensing is required of over 16,000 individuals operating radiation-generating equipment in healthcare facilities. These individuals fall in to 4 categories: nuclear medicine technologists, Radiation Therapists, radiographers, and general x-ray machine operators. The licensure recognizes the education and training that individuals have obtained in this field and includes an exam or equivalent recognition by qualifying professional boards. The application fee is \$65, and the renewal fee is \$45 every two years.

State licensing is a proactive, preventative measure to minimize unnecessary or excessive ionizing radiation exposure to human beings by enforcing education and examination standards for those individuals medically exposing human beings to ionizing radiation. By minimizing or keeping medical radiation exposure as low as reasonably achievable reduces the likelihood of radiation induced long term health effects or injury. Errors in radiation therapy can result in injury or death. The program's annual budget is \$393,000 and comes largely from application and renewal fees.

### **Epinephrine Autoinjector (ORC 3728)**

19. Epinephrine autoinjector certification

Lastly, ODH also offers training and certification to allow individuals working at "Qualified Entities" to maintain and administer epinephrine to individuals experiencing life-threatening anaphylactic allergic reactions (via an Epi-Pen or other similar device). Qualified Entities include employers, restaurants, colleges and universities, day care centers, and other similar locations. Certification is available at no cost to individuals and is received after completing a free online training module. This certification allows an establishment to have epinephrine on hand without a specific prescription for emergency situations, in the same way that AEDs and fire extinguishers are there to protect the public's health and safety.

Chairman Wiggam and members of the Committee, the ODH team and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.