

Do I Need a Proctor?

A quick answer for each ServSafe certification — so you're not guessing before you register.

If you're getting ready to take a ServSafe exam, this is one of the most common points of confusion. The honest answer: **it depends on which certification you're after**. Here's the breakdown.

ServSafe Manager Certification

YES, ALWAYS

There's no way around this one. ServSafe requires every Manager exam to be administered under the supervision of a registered ServSafe Proctor — full stop. You cannot self-administer this exam, even if you're a certified proctor yourself (ServSafe explicitly calls that a security violation).

You have two ways to satisfy this:

- **In person** — a registered proctor or instructor administers a paper exam and returns it to ServSafe for scoring.
- **Online, live-proctored** — a registered proctor monitors you remotely (webcam) while you take the exam on your own computer.

Either way, a proctor is part of the process. There is no unproctored path for the Manager exam.

ServSafe Food Handler Card

USUALLY NOT

The standard Food Handler exam is a 40-question, non-proctored test — you can typically take the course and exam entirely on your own, on your own schedule, with no one watching over your shoulder.

The catch: this varies by state and sometimes by employer. A handful of states or local health departments require the course and/or exam to be completed in a proctor's presence. Check your state's specific requirement before you assume you can do this solo.

ServSafe Alcohol

DEPENDS — CHECK FIRST

This one sits in the middle. ServSafe actually sells two different versions of the Alcohol course and exam — one proctored, one not — because the requirement depends on your state's regulations and, in some cases, your employer's policy.

Don't guess on this one. Confirm with your state's alcohol licensing/regulatory body (or your employer, if they're requiring the certification) before you pick which version to buy.

CERTIFICATION	PROCTOR REQUIRED?
ServSafe Manager	Yes — always, no exceptions
ServSafe Food Handler	Usually not — confirm for your state
ServSafe Alcohol	Depends — confirm for your state/employer

Need a proctor for your exam?

Search our free directory to find one near you — or one who proctors online.
foodsafetymadeeasy.com/find-a-proctor-or-instructor