



DESIGNING YOUR **EMPLOYEE TRAINING PLAN**

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION DIRECTORS

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Designing Your Employee Training Plan

A Course for School Nutrition Directors



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



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Table of Contents

Introduction

- Key Terms

Pages 4-9

Pages 6-9

Chapter 1: Hiring Standards

- Education Standards for School Nutrition Program Directors
- Food Safety Training Requirement
- Directors Hired Before July 1, 2015
- Job Title vs. Job Category
- Hiring Supporting Documentation

Pages 10-13

Page 10

Page 12

Page 12

Page 12

Page 13

Chapter 2: Training Standards

- Minimum Training Hours for Each Job Category
- USDA Job Categories of School Nutrition Employees
- Key Areas and Learning Objectives
- Methods of Allowable Instruction
- Training Resources: Where to Find Training

Pages 14-18

Page 14

Page 15

Page 16

Page 17

Page 18

Chapter 3: Tracking Trainings

- ADE Professional Standards Training Tracker Forms
- USDA Training Tracker Tool
- USDA Training
- Administrative Reviews

Pages 19-23

Pages 19-20

Page 21

Page 22

Page 23

Chapter 4: Management Companies

- Contracts, Hiring Standards, and Training Standards

Page 24

Page 24

Conclusion

Page 25

Introduction



THIS TRAINING RESOURCE

This training resource is designed as a comprehensive planning tool with the dual purpose of detailing the regulatory requirements of Professional Standards as well as designing your employee's training plans- aligning your staff to receive the most effective training for their job requirements. This resource is a supplement to the online course: [How to Design your Employee Training Plan](#).

WHAT ARE THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS?

Generally speaking, comprehensive training in a school nutrition program is critical to whether or not the program succeeds in meeting the administrative compliance and the nutritional needs of the children. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 instituted minimum hiring standards for new State and local school nutrition directors and established annual training standards for all school nutrition professionals. These standards will ensure school nutrition personnel have the knowledge, training, and tools they need to plan, prepare and purchase healthy products to create nutritious, safe, and enjoyable school meals.

REGULATION: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In addition to this resource and the accompanying online course, operators are encouraged to review [SP 05-2020: Questions & Answers Regarding Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Program Personnel](#) for further guidance on hiring standards.

Introduction

WHO DO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS APPLY TO?

Professional Standards apply to all school nutrition employees in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, whether the Local Education Agency (LEA) operates the school nutrition program or contracts with a food service management company.

USDA has created job categories to encompass the diverse job titles LEAs provide to their school nutrition employees. The job categories (Director, Manager, Staff) are general enough to cover most school nutrition program employees and will ensure LEAs are able to identify which of the Professional Standards requirements are required for each of their employees. Job categories are determined by an employee's job duty rather than their job title. Job categories are defined below.

- **Director:** Directors are the individuals responsible for the operation of school nutrition programs for all schools under the LEA. This is the individual who plans, administers, implements, monitors, and evaluates all aspects of the school nutrition program. Duties generally include: sanitation, food safety, employee safety, nutrition and menu planning, food production, facility layout and design, equipment selection, procurement, financial management, record keeping, program accountability, marketing, customer service, nutrition education, general management, personnel management and computer technology.
 - Hiring standards and annual training standards.
- **Manager:** Managers have direct responsibility for managing the day-to-day food service operations at one or more sites at the LEA.
 - Annual training standards.
- **Other Staff:** A staff person (full-time and part-time) involved in the operation of food service, (i.e. prepare and serve meals, process transactions at point of service, and review the free/reduced price applications, along with other routine work). Typically, staff do not have management responsibilities.
 - Annual training standards.
- **Non-Program Staff:** A person who provides support to, but is not specifically involved in, the operation of the school nutrition program, such as the cleaning custodian.
 - Non-program staff members that work part-time on school nutrition program activities throughout the school year must also comply with the training requirements.

Key Terms

In order to ensure Professional Standards regulations are understood, School Nutrition Program Directors must have knowledge of basic key terms related to the Professional Standards.

Associates Degree	A two-year degree comprised of at least 60 college credits.
Allowable and Non-Allowable Training Expenses	Costs associated with training that are allowable or not allowable uses of the non-profit school food service account. Director, manager, and staff training is an allowable use of the non-profit school food service account. College tuition and expenses to help a newly hired director meet hiring requirements are not allowable expenses.
Bachelor's Degree	A four-year degree comprised of at least 120 college credits.
"Back to School" Training	Training on security procedures, building operations, etc. that does not count toward the annual Professional Standards training standards. Only training that fosters proper administration and operation of the school nutrition programs would count toward training standards.
Civil Rights Training	Annual required training for school nutrition program staff that covers the Civil Rights Provision in CFR 210.23(b) of the NSLP regulations, the FNS Instruction 783.2, meal substitutions for medical or other special dietary needs, and issues that limit equal access to school meals. These trainings may contribute towards the annual training standards.
Equivalent Education Experience	Term refers to college credits completed by an individual who does not possess a Bachelor's or Associates degree. For example, to meet the hiring standard of an Associates degree, a person would be expected to have at least 60 college credits, which is generally the number of credits required by a college or university to confer an Associates degree.
FNS (USDA) Training Tracking Tool	A Microsoft Access user-friendly tool designed and maintained by USDA that does not require internet access. This free tool is available to download and will let users record the annual training hours for all school nutrition program directors, managers and staff.
Food Delivery Staff	A person who monitors refrigeration, food temperatures, inventory/delivery sheets, and is expected to complete annual training on topics such as proper handling, delivery and storage of perishable food products to ensure safety of school meals and prevent food waste.
Food Safety Training	Eight hours of food safety training, every 5 years, is required for program directors.

Key Terms

Food Service Management Company (FSMC)	A commercial enterprise or a non-profit organization that acts on behalf of a SFA by managing or directing any aspect of the school meal program(s) and must meet applicable program requirements. The SFA must request documentation from the FSMC to show compliance with the Professional Standards.
Full-Time Employee	An employee that works more 20 or more hours per week.
General Education Degree (GED)	"General Education Degree" or "General Education Diploma" is an optional high school equivalency credential for those who do not have a high school diploma.
Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010	Improving child nutrition is the focal point of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The legislation authorizes funding and sets policy for USDA's core child nutrition programs: the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Summer Food Service Program, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act allows USDA, for the first time in over 30 years, opportunity to make real reforms to the school lunch and breakfast programs by improving the critical nutrition and hunger safety net for millions of children.
Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN)	Formerly known as the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI), is the only federally funded national center dedicated to applied research, education and training, and technical assistance for child nutrition programs.
Interactive Training	Training relevant to job duties focused on the specific Professional Standard learning objectives for school nutrition programs. These trainings may include conference calls, live or pre-recorded webinars, online courses, in-person trainings, and non-interactive training such as informational articles with a self-administered quiz. Training activities lasting 15 minutes or more may be recorded for Professional Standards compliance.
Job Category	The job categories (Director, Manager, and staff) developed by USDA for school nutrition program staff for the purposes of employees identifying which Professional Standards requirements are required.
Job Description	A list that a person might use for general tasks, or functions, and responsibilities of a position. It may often include to whom the position reports, specifications such as the qualifications or skills needed by the person in the job, and a salary range.
Job Duty	Eight hours of food safety training, every 5 years, is required for program directors.

Key Terms

Local Education Agency (LEA)	Local Education Agency means a public board of education or other public or private non-profit authority legally constituted within a State having administrative control of schools.
Learning Objectives	Specific objectives/topics defined by USDA for continuing education/training standards for all school nutrition personnel. The learning objectives consist of the four key areas.
Learning Topic Code	The numerical code assigned to learning topics under the key areas of Professional Standards.
Mid-Year Hire	An employee who is hired later in the school year, typically January 1 or later.
Non-Interactive Training	Miscellaneous activities where information, materials or equipment relative to the core training topics is provided or displayed. These activities may count toward no more than 2 hours of annual training.
Non-Profit School Food Service Account	Non-profit school food service account means the restricted account in which all of the revenue from all food service operations conducted by the school food authority principally for the benefit of school children is retained and used only for the operation or improvement of the non-profit school food service. This account shall include, as appropriate, non-Federal funds used to support paid lunches as provided in §210.14(e), and proceeds from non-program foods as provided in §210.14(f).
Non-Program Staff	A person who provides support to but, is not specifically involved in, the operation of the school nutrition program, such as the cleaning custodian.
Part-Time Employee	In the context of professional standards, means staff working less than 20 hours per week. Part-time staff must have at least 4 hours of training annually. Staff working less than 40 hours weekly may be considered part-time by the LEA. However, staff regularly working 20 hours or more weekly must complete at least 6 hours of training annually.
Related Field	Refers to other college majors that would provide an applicant specific knowledge and skills that are relevant for a school nutrition program director. Possible majors would include but are not limited to food science, community nutrition and marketing and hospitality management.
Relevant School Nutrition Programs Experience	Typically this phrase refers to previous work experience in NSLP and SBP, as well as, experience in other child nutrition programs (CACFP, SFSP) if the later experience is gained from working in a school.

Key Terms

School Food Authority (SFA)	The governing body responsible for the administration of one or more schools and with the legal authority to operate the school nutrition program therein or be otherwise approved to operate this program by FNS.
School Nutrition Association (SNA)	The National body of school nutrition providing information, education, recipes and membership.
School Nutrition Program Director	The individual who plans, administers, implements, monitors, and evaluates all aspects of the school nutrition program. Duties generally include sanitation, food safety, employee safety, nutrition and menu planning, food production, facility layout and design, equipment selection, procurement, financial management, record keeping, program accountability, marketing, customer service, nutrition education, general management, personnel management and computer technology.
School Nutrition Program Manager	Individuals directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school(s).
School Nutrition Program Staff	Individuals, without managerial responsibilities, involved in day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school(s).
Temporary/ Substitute or Acting Staff	Generally, the terms apply to employees who are only involved with the meal programs and are expected to work in these positions for more than 30 business days. Training standards can be extended to acting/temporary personnel, substitutes and volunteers by the discretion of the SFA.
Training Topics	Program subject matter within each key area. For example, under the key area of Nutrition, training topics include menu planning, nutrition education and general nutrition.
Vended Meal Provider	A commercial entity off site from the school food service that provides pre-plated meals, i.e. a caterer.
Volunteers	An individual performing school nutrition program duties without compensation between 0-40+ hours per week. Training standards can be extended to volunteers by the discretion of the SFA.
Webinar	A web-based seminar that may either be interactive or pre-recorded.

Chapter 1: Hiring Standards

INTRODUCTION

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must ensure that all school nutrition program directors hired on or after July 1, 2015 meet the Professional Standards hiring education standards as well as the required training hours in food safety.

These hiring standards are dependent on the enrollment of the LEA and are divided into three LEA size categories:

- fewer than 2,500 students;
- 2,500-9,999 students; and,
- 10,000 or more students.

Additionally, the Director, regardless of LEA size, must have either completed at least eight hours of food safety training prior to their starting date or completed within 30 days of their start date.

In order to be in compliance, LEAs must retain documentation for their newly hired Directors that support their education and work experience (i.e. transcripts, resumes etc.), and food safety training.



Chapter 1: Hiring Standards

I. EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION DIRECTORS

Student Enrollment 2,499 or less	Student Enrollment 2,500-9,999	Student Enrollment 10,000 or more
Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas; OR Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience*, with any academic major or area of concentration, and at least 1 year of relevant food service experience OR Associates degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas, and at least one year of relevant food service experience; OR High school diploma (or GED) and at least three years of relevant food service experience; (LEAs with less than 500 students: State agency may approve a candidate that meets the educational standards but has less than three years experience.)	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major and at least two years of relevant school nutrition programs experience; OR Associates degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas,* and at least two years of relevant school nutrition programs experience.	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major and at least five years experience in management of school nutrition programs.

- **Equivalent education experience:** Term refers to college credits completed by an individual who does not possess a Bachelor's or Associates degree. For example, a new director of school nutrition programs would be expected to have at least 60 college credits which is generally the number of credits required by a college or university to confer an Associates degree. (Bachelor's degree is generally at least 120 college credits.)
- **Specific majors/area of concentration:** Refers to other college majors that would provide an applicant specific knowledge and skills that are relevant for a school nutrition program director. Possible majors would include but are not limited to food science, community nutrition and marketing and hospitality management.
- **State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors:** Not applicable in the state of Arizona.

Chapter 1: Hiring Standards

II. FOOD SAFETY TRAINING REQUIREMENT

Food safety is a critical aspect of the Food Service operation that could affect thousands of students if there are any problems. At least eight hours of food safety training is required every five years prior to the Director's starting date or completed within 30 days of the their start date. As best practice, all School Nutrition Directors, regardless of hire date, should comply with the requirement of eight hours of food safety training every five years.

III. DIRECTORS HIRED BEFORE JULY 1, 2015

The Professional Standards regulation states that current (hired prior to July 1, 2015) School Nutrition Program Directors will be grandfathered in, and thus, will not be required to meet the new hiring standards and may continue to serve in their current positions.

Directors hired prior to July 1, 2015:

- Can remain in their current positions without meeting the hiring standards.
- May fill a new Director position for the same LEA enrollment category or smaller without meeting the hiring standards. For example, a move from an LEA with 4,000 students (the 2,500–9,999 category) to an LEA with 7,000 students (the 2,500–9,999 category).
- Must meet the hiring standards for the larger LEA enrollment category when applying for a director position within that larger enrollment category. For example, to move from an LEA with 4,000 students (the 2,500–9,999 category) to an LEA with 12,000 students (the 10,000 or more category), a grandfathered Program Director must meet the hiring standards established for the larger LEA.

IV. JOB TITLE VS. JOB CATEGORY OF A SCHOOL NUTRITION DIRECTOR

USDA has created general job categories to encompass the diverse job titles provided by LEAs to school nutrition employees. Each employee must be assigned a job category determined by their job duties rather than their job title. School Nutrition Program Directors are the individuals responsible for the operation of school nutrition programs for all schools under the local educational agency (LEA).

It is not necessary for current staff persons without the job title of Director that perform the role of the school nutrition director to change their job title, but it is required that the LEA recognize that the staff member is performing Director duties and would be assigned the USDA job category of Director and must comply with Professional Standards.

Chapter 1: Hiring Standards

For example, if the school is hiring for a food service coordinator yet the job duties align with the category of School Nutrition Director, it is not necessary to have “director” in the job title. For purposes of Professional Standards, the school must recognize this position is fulfilling the category of the School Nutrition Director and therefore must comply with the Director hiring requirements.

V. HIRING SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

All School Nutrition Program Directors hired on or after July 1, 2015, must present supporting documentation verifying minimum education standards and food safety training requirements have been met. The LEA must keep this documentation on file at all times to validate compliance.

The ADE New Director Hiring Forms are specific to district size and can be found at <http://www.azed.gov/hns/nslp/forms>. The form will outline the applicants job title, hire date, food safety certification, education standards and previous experience. As best practice, LEAs should use this form to ensure all hiring standards have been met. This form can be filed with the applicant’s hiring packet (i.e. resume, transcripts, etc.) and can be used to demonstrate compliance with the hiring standards.

NEW DIRECTOR HIRING FORM
LEA OCTOBER ENROLLMENT: 2,500-9,999
USDA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DIRECTOR HIRING STANDARDS

New School Nutrition Program Directors – those hired on or after July 1, 2015 – are subject to the new education requirements below. Existing School Nutrition Program Directors will be grandfathered in their current positions as well as in the Student Enrollment category when they currently are working. School Nutrition Program Directors are the individuals responsible for the operation of school nutrition programs for all schools under the Local Educational Agency (LEA).

Complete this form and attach all supporting education/work experience to document Director hiring compliance with the USDA Professional Standards Final Rule, effective July 1, 2015.

GENERAL INFORMATION

LEA Director Enrollment: _____

Job Title: _____ Job Description Attached: ☐

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant's Name: _____

Highest Level of Education: _____ Years of School Nutrition Experience: _____

Academic Major: _____

EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR 2,500-9,999 STUDENT ENROLLMENT CATEGORY

The Applicant must qualify for one of the Education Standards for LEAs with 2,500-9,999 students. (Check one)

☐ Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience*, with academic major in specific areas**

☐ Bachelor's degree in any academic major and at least two years of relevant school nutrition programs experience

☐ Associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience*, with academic major in specific areas**, and at least two years of relevant school nutrition programs experience

☐ Applicant does not meet criteria

*Equivalent educational experience refers to college credits completed by an individual who does not possess a bachelor's or an associate's degree.

**Specific experiences of concentration: food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family/consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, foodways, or a related field.

SUPPORTING EDUCATION/WORK EXPERIENCE DOCUMENTATION

NEW HIRE INFORMATION

Name/Title: _____ Hire Date: _____

☐ It is understood that the LEA must have documentation readily available for the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) that supports how the new hire has met the education standards.

☐ It is understood that if the new hire does not have eight hours of food safety training within the past five years, the new hire must complete eight hours within 30 calendar days of start date.

☐ New hire completed eight hours of food safety training on _____ Attached Training Records: ☐

☐ New hire will need to complete eight hours of food safety training by _____ Attached Training Records: ☐

☐ It is understood this new hire will need to complete and document 12 hours of job-specific training each program year.

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NEW DIRECTOR HIRING FORM
LEA OCTOBER ENROLLMENT: 2,499 OR LESS
USDA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DIRECTOR HIRING STANDARDS

New School Nutrition Program Directors – those hired on or after July 1, 2015 – are subject to the new education requirements below. Existing School Nutrition Program Directors will be grandfathered in their current positions as well as in the Student Enrollment category when they currently are working. School Nutrition Program Directors are the individuals responsible for the operation of school nutrition programs for all schools under the Local Educational Agency (LEA).

Complete this form and attach all supporting education/work experience to document Director hiring compliance with the USDA Professional Standards Final Rule, effective July 1, 2015.

GENERAL INFORMATION

LEA Director Enrollment: _____

Job Title: _____ Job Description Attached: ☐

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant's Name: _____

Highest Level of Education: _____ Years of School Nutrition Experience: _____

Academic Major: _____

EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR 2,499 OR LESS STUDENT ENROLLMENT CATEGORY

The Applicant must qualify for one of the Education Standards for LEAs with 2,499 or less students. (Check one)

☐ Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience*, with academic major in specific areas**

☐ Associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience*, with academic major in specific areas**, and at least one year of relevant school nutrition programs experience

☐ High School Diploma or GED, and at least three years of relevant food service experience

☐ For LEAs with less than 500 students only: ADE approval letter in response to the LEA's request for a candidate that meets the educational standards but has less than three years' experience

☐ Applicant does not meet criteria

*Equivalent educational experience refers to college credits completed by an individual who does not possess a bachelor's or an associate's degree.

**Specific experiences of concentration: food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family/consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, foodways, or a related field.

SUPPORTING EDUCATION/WORK EXPERIENCE DOCUMENTATION

NEW HIRE INFORMATION

Name/Title: _____ Hire Date: _____

☐ It is understood that the LEA must have documentation readily available for the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) that supports how the new hire has met the education standards.

☐ It is understood that if the new hire does not have eight hours of food safety training within the past five years, the new hire must complete eight hours within 30 calendar days of start date.

☐ New hire completed eight hours of food safety training on _____ Attached Training Records: ☐

☐ New hire will need to complete eight hours of food safety training by _____ Attached Training Records: ☐

☐ It is understood this new hire will need to complete and document 12 hours of job-specific training each program year.

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NEW DIRECTOR HIRING FORM
LEA OCTOBER ENROLLMENT: 10,000 OR MORE
USDA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DIRECTOR HIRING STANDARDS

New School Nutrition Program Directors – those hired on or after July 1, 2015 – are subject to the new education requirements below. Existing School Nutrition Program Directors will be grandfathered in their current positions as well as in the Student Enrollment category when they currently are working. School Nutrition Program Directors are the individuals responsible for the operation of school nutrition programs for all schools under the Local Educational Agency (LEA).

Complete this form and attach all supporting education/work experience to document Director hiring compliance with the USDA Professional Standards Final Rule, effective July 1, 2015.

GENERAL INFORMATION

LEA Director Enrollment: _____

Job Title: _____ Job Description Attached: ☐

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant's Name: _____

Highest Level of Education: _____ Years of School Nutrition Experience: _____

Academic Major: _____

EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR 10,000 OR MORE STUDENT ENROLLMENT CATEGORY

The Applicant must qualify for one of the Education Standards for LEAs with 10,000 or more students. (Check one)

☐ Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience*, with academic major in specific areas**

☐ Bachelor's degree in any academic major and at least five years of experience in management of school nutrition

☐ Associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience*, with academic major in specific areas**

☐ Associate's degree in any academic major and at least five years of experience in management of school nutrition

☐ Applicant does not meet criteria

*Equivalent educational experience refers to college credits completed by an individual who does not possess a bachelor's or an associate's degree.

**Specific experiences of concentration: food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family/consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, foodways, or a related field.

SUPPORTING EDUCATION/WORK EXPERIENCE DOCUMENTATION

NEW HIRE INFORMATION

Name/Title: _____ Hire Date: _____

☐ It is understood that the LEA must have documentation readily available for the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) that supports how the new hire has met the education standards.

☐ It is understood that if the new hire does not have eight hours of food safety training within the past five years, the new hire must complete eight hours within 30 calendar days of start date.

☐ New hire completed eight hours of food safety training on _____ Attached Training Records: ☐

☐ New hire will need to complete eight hours of food safety training by _____ Attached Training Records: ☐

☐ It is understood this new hire will need to complete and document 12 hours of job-specific training each program year.

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Chapter 2: Training Standards

INTRODUCTION

Each LEA must ensure that all new and current school nutrition program staff meet minimum annual training requirements, with the intent of helping employees enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities particular to their position.

All school nutrition program staff will be identified in each job category and must complete their required minimum number of training hours per year. Keep in mind:

- Trainings must align with the employee's job duties.
- Trainings must achieve one of the USDA Learning Objectives).
- USDA suggests at least 15 minutes per training segment.
- Training needs are best assessed by an employee in consultation with his or her manager or director.

I. MINIMUM TRAINING HOURS FOR EACH JOB CATEGORY

All Directors	12 hours minimum of annual continuing education/training. **This required education/training is in addition to the food safety training required in the first year of employment.
All Managers	10 hours minimum of annual continuing education/training.
Other Program Full-Time Staff	6 hours minimum of annual continuing education/training.
Other Program Part-Time Staff	4 hours minimum of annual continuing education/training.
Non-Program Staff	4 hours minimum of annual continuing education/training required only for those non-program staff members that provide support to school nutrition programs THROUGHOUT the school year.

*Mid-year hires (any School Nutrition Employees hired January 1 or later), must complete one-half of the annual training hour requirements for that job category.

Chapter 2: Training Standards

II. USDA JOB CATEGORIES OF SCHOOL NUTRITION EMPLOYEES

USDA has created *job categories* to encompass the diverse job titles LEAs provide to their school nutrition employees. Job categories are determined by an employee's *job duty* rather than their job title. Job categories are defined below.

Director: Directors are the individuals responsible for the operation of school nutrition programs for all schools under the LEA. This is the individual who plans, administers, implements, monitors, and evaluates all aspects of the school nutrition program. Duties generally include sanitation, food safety, employee safety, nutrition and menu planning, food production, facility layout and design, equipment selection, procurement, financial management, record keeping, program accountability, marketing, customer service, nutrition education, general management, personnel management and computer technology.

The person performing the majority of these duties must meet the training standards for program directors. If director duties are performed by a staff member without the title of Director, that staff member for purposes of Professional Standards, must be recognized by the LEA as performing Director duties and must comply with Professional Standards.

Manager: Managers have direct responsibility for managing the day-to-day food service operations at one or more sites at the LEA.

Other Staff: A staff person involved in the operation of food service, (i.e. prepare and serve meals, process transactions at point of service, and review the free/reduced price applications, along with other routine work). Typically, staff do not have management responsibilities.

- Staff working on program activities for 20 or more hours per week must comply with the full-time training requirements.
- Staff working on program activities less than 20 hours per week must comply with the part-time training requirements

Non-Program Staff: Non-program staff members that work part-time on school nutrition program activities throughout the school year must also comply with the part-time training requirements. Non-program staff members that work on school nutrition program activities for a short period of time during the school year are not required to meet the annual training standards; however, these individuals should receive adequate training specific to the task they will perform.

Chapter 2: Training Standards

III. KEY AREAS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

USDA has organized training topics to fall under four Key Areas: Nutrition (1000), Operations (2000), Administration (3000) and Communications/Marketing (4000). Each Key Area has several Training Topics (listed below) that contain Learning Objectives to assist those who are planning trainings or for attendees to determine which training they should register for.

Key Areas	Training Topics
Nutrition– 1000	Menu Planning (1100) Nutrition Education (1200) General Nutrition (1300)
Operations– 2000	Food Production (2100) Serving Food (2200) Cashier and Point of Service (2300) Purchasing/Procurement (2400) Receiving and Storage (2500) Food Safety and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) (2600)
Administration- 3000	Free and Reduced-Price Meal Benefits (3100) Program Management (3200) Financial Management (3300) Human Resources and Staff Training (3400) Facilities and Equipment Planning (3500)
Communications and Marketing- 4000	Communications and Marketing (4100)

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graph LR; A(1000 - NUTRITION) --> B(1100- MENU PLANNING); B --> C(1170- PLAN FOR EFFECTIVE USE OF USDA FOODS)
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In order for training to count towards the employee's Professional Standards hours, the training attended must reinforce the employee's specific job skills and meet at least one of the 65 Professional Standards learning objectives. Directors should remind their employees to always seek guidance from a supervisor before taking a specific training course to meet the Professional Standards Requirements.

Chapter 2: Training Standards

IV. TYPES OF INSTRUCTION

Instruction	Restrictions	Minimum Length of Training Segment
Interactive Activity		
Conference Calls		15 minutes
Live or Pre-recorded Webinars		15 minutes
Online Classes		15 minutes
In Person Trainings		15 minutes
Classroom		15 minutes
Self-directed Training with a self-administered Quiz		15 minutes
Non-Interactive Activity	May count toward no more than two hours of annual training.	
Self-directed Training without a self-administered quiz		15 minutes
Observing a Product Food Demo/Industry Exhibit		15 minutes
Instruction that does not count towards training standards		
Back to school training on security procedures, building operations, etc.	Does not fulfill the requirements. Only training that fosters proper administration and operation of the school nutrition programs.	
School Nutrition Association Leadership	Does not fulfill the requirements.	
Motivational Speaker	Does not fulfill the requirements.	

*All School Nutrition Program employees are required to complete Civil Rights Training regardless of job duties. This training will contribute toward annual training hours.

*For all LEAs that operate Offer vs. Serve (OVS) , OVS training will count toward annual training hours.

Chapter 2: Training Standards

V. TRAINING RESOURCES: WHERE TO FIND TRAINING

Here is a list of the many choices of free or low-cost training resources. Some training costs may not be an allowable expense from the non-profit school food service account. Check with ADE if you have any questions about specific trainings you want to fund through your program.

- **USDA FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE (FNS):** The USDA FNS online library of available trainings is updated regularly. You can search by key areas, topics, type of training, and more. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-professional-standards-school-nutrition-programs>
- **INSTITUTE OF CHILD NUTRITION (ICN):** The ICN offers free training, both online and in person. You can also download and use its resources for in-service training. <http://www.theicn.org>
- **ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ADE) SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS:** ADE trainings offer a variety of Learning Topics that fulfill the USDA Professional Standards Rule. These trainings are given in multiple formats and can be found/registered for at: <https://www.azed.gov/hns/nslp/training>
- **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** Professional organizations are another option for training. Attend local chapter activities and, when possible, participate in State or national meetings.
- **LOCAL IN-SERVICE TRAINING:** Rely on experts within your own district or community. For example, invite district experts to provide 15-minute mini-lessons on various topics each month as part of staff meetings. Or organize a special training session with an outside speaker, such a local Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist (RD/RDN) or your kitchen equipment representative.
- **FOODSERVICE SUPPLIERS:** Check out training sessions sponsored by companies and trade groups. See if events offered by manufacturers, distributors, and brokers or commodity-promotion groups meet your training needs.
- **EXHIBITS AT CONFERENCES:** At the discretion of ADE, attending exhibits may count up to 2 hours of exhibits toward annual training time as long as they are relevant to core training topics. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) located at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/questions-answers-regarding-professional-standards-state-and-local-school-nutrition> provide more detail on how to acquire training hours through exhibits.
- **OTHER RESOURCES:** Universities and community colleges are other training options. College courses can count when the course meets job-specific needs. Also, Cooperative Extension or non-profit groups within Arizona or your community may offer related training programs.

Chapter 3: Tracking Training

INTRODUCTION

Each Local Education Agency (LEA) must ensure that all Professional Standards requirements are met each school year. In order to validate compliance with these standards, proper tracking is essential. In Chapter 1, we discussed documentation required for hiring. In this chapter you will learn how to use Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Training Tracker forms to track and evaluate employee training plans. You will also be given comprehensive instruction on completing the USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool.

The Professional Standards regulation does not specify the kind of records that must be kept. Records that list the employee name, position title, employer/school, training title, topic/objectives, training source, dates and total training hours would be appropriate to demonstrate training completion.

Records should be able to support that:

- minimum training hours have been met;
- trainings attended are job specific; and
- only allowable training formats contributed to minimum training hours.

Documentation of Professional Standards training is now part of the Administrative Review, so while it is ideal for individual staff members to keep track of their own training, the LEA must ensure it is available for ADE or auditors to review upon request. Whichever record keeping method used, LEAs must keep training records for five years plus the current school year. For open audits, keep training records for five years or longer as needed for audit resolution.



Chapter 3: Tracking Training

II. USDA TRAINING TRACKER TOOL

The Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) for USDA child nutrition programs helps school nutrition professionals monitor their mandatory yearly training hours. This web-based tool, known as PSTTT, is free to use and offers simple navigation and user-friendly features to save time.

 An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ✓



Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool

OMB Number: 0584-0626
Expiration Date: 09/30/2026

The USDA Child Nutrition Program's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) is designed to assist School Nutrition Professionals in keeping track of their annually required training hours. For additional information on Professional Standards, please visit USDA Professional Standards site at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/professional-standards>.

PLEASE NOTE: An USDA eAuthentication or Login.gov account is needed to access the tool. New and existing users who have either of the accounts can proceed to the Tool by clicking on the 'Login or Create a Profile' button.

If you do not have an USDA eAuthentication Account or a Login.gov account, go to [Create Account](#) and you will be directed to create a Login.gov account. You will immediately receive an email with a link to activate your account with one simple click.

Contact cnptab@usda.gov for assistance in accessing the site.

Login or Create a Profile

USDA TRAINING TRACKER TOOL USER SUPPORT

USDA has released several resources to aid SFAs in getting started with Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) which can all be found at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/professional-standards-training-tracker-tool>.

The resources consist of the following items:

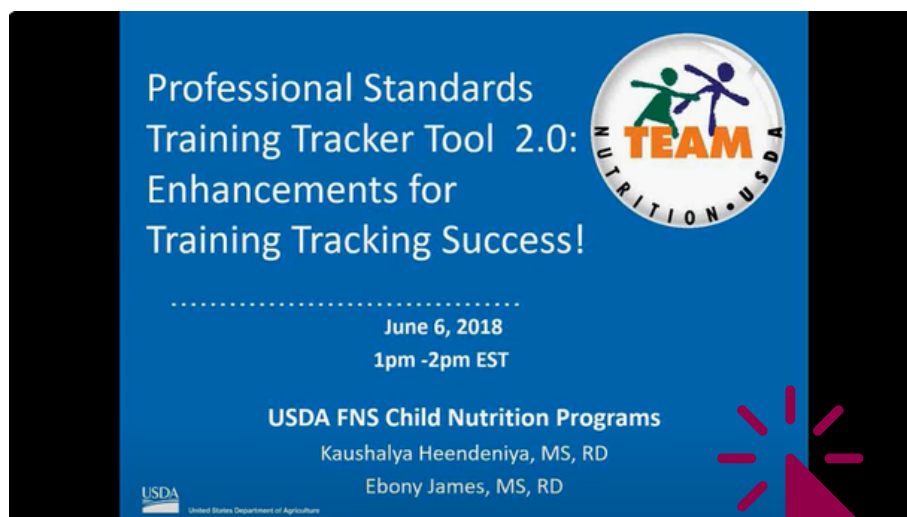
- [Professional Standards: Resources](#)
- [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool Brochure](#)
- [Professional Standards Training Database](#)
- [Webinar: Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool 2.0 Enhancements](#)
- [Webinar: Track Training Like a Star with the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool!](#)

Chapter 3: Tracking Training

USDA TRAINING

The USDA has released two webinars highlighting the latest updates, including a simplified method for inputting training titles, the option to deactivate employees, and the opportunity to receive badges upon finishing one or multiple trainings within a particular key area, as well as completing trainings across multiple key areas.

To watch the webinars select one of the following images.



Chapter 3: Tracking Training

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS

The Professional Standards regulations do not require specific records or a specific recordkeeping system. According to the Administrative Review Manual, supporting documentation for all completed trainings, such as agendas, sign-in sheets, certificates of completion, etc., must be maintained on file and may be used to demonstrate compliance with the annual training standards. Reports from the USDA training tracking tool (or similar alternative training tracking tool) also are acceptable documentation to demonstrate compliance.

SFAs but must include at a minimum the required fields listed in the USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool. These fields would include Key Areas, Key Topics and Training.

See the professional standards review module in the Administrative Review Manual for more guidance.

Chapter 4: Management Companies

INTRODUCTION

Food Service Management Company (FSMC) is a commercial enterprise or a non-profit organization that acts on behalf of a School Food Authority (SFA) by managing or directing any aspect of the school meal program(s) and must meet applicable program requirements. The LEA must request documentation from the FSMC to show compliance with the Professional Standards.

I. CONTRACTS

In the state of Arizona, when contracting with a FSMC, LEAs must be aware of the rules written into the FSMC contract:

“The Food Service Director assigned to the SFA if awarded the contract, must meet the minimum education and training standards for School Nutrition Program Directors set forth in Public Law 111-296, Section 306, paragraph (g) (2015). The SFA reserves the right to approve the selection of the FSMC’s personnel and to refuse any applicants recommended by the FSMC to which the SFA objects.”

Beginning SY 15-16 contracts that do not include additional language to reflect compliance with Professional Standards requirements, will need to be amended.

II. HIRING STANDARDS

There are varying structures within each SFA; therefore, the definitions for directors, managers, and staff are intended to be general and describe the function/role in broad terms to be applicable to most LEAs. These definitions apply whether or not an LEA is operated by a FSMC. Therefore, Director hiring standards apply to FSMC employees performing School Nutrition Director type duties.

III. TRAINING STANDARDS

All Professional Standards training requirements apply to all FSMC employees providing services for the school meals program. The LEA must ensure that the FSMC employees have met the required annual training requirements. Therefore, the LEA must require the FSMC to provide documentation showing the training hours and topics completed by the employees. The LEA must ensure that the FSMC staff has the knowledge and skills to supply safe and nutritious meals that meet the meal requirements.

When a FSMC staff person performs School Nutrition Director type duties, but reports, for example, to a district Business Manager who is responsible for the school district’s school food service activities, both individuals would be responsible for meeting the training standards for program Directors.

Conclusion



The Professional Standards for all school nutrition employees help ensure a capable workforce. Tiered training requirements were developed to match the needs of employees. Hiring standards for new local program directors assist local districts in recruiting and hiring qualified leaders. Both the State agencies and USDA provide support and resources to the SFAs to meet training and hiring standards. Most importantly, Professional Standards help all schools to provide safe, nourishing meals that model and foster wise food choices in children today for a healthier tomorrow.

Thank you!

In accordance with federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, [AD-3027](#), found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. **Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. **Fax:** (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov.

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