



# State of New Jersey


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To: School Business Administrators, Charter School Leads; Non Public School Administrators; Food Service Directors of Schools Participating in the School Nutrition Programs

From: Arleen Ramos-Szatmary, Coordinator   
School Nutrition Programs

Date: September 7, 2016

Subject: Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel - Guidance and Clarification for School Year 2016-2017

Compliance with the Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel has now been in effect for one year. This memo is being issued in order to clarify specific concerns and questions that have arisen during the first year of implementation.

**Food Safety Certification for Food Service Directors:** The Professional Standards Final Rule established the requirement for all Food Service Directors hired after July 1, 2015 to receive food safety certification in the five years previous to hire or within 30 days after the date of hire. It also gave the State Agency the discretion to require current SFA directors to obtain food safety certification every five years.

*In New Jersey, all Food Service Directors, regardless of the date of hire and size of district, must have completed at least eight hours of food safety training within the last five years.* Although food safety training can be obtained through a variety of sources, a free, online food safety course is available from the Institute of Child Nutrition to assist Food Service Directors in fulfilling this important requirement to ensure the safety of all food provided to New Jersey students. The hours obtained from the food safety training can be allotted to the Professional Standards training hours for Food Service Directors.

Food safety training for Food Service Directors will be monitored on the Administrative Review.

**Professional Standards and Teachers implementing the Breakfast in the Classroom Foodservice Model:** Breakfast participation in New Jersey has increased significantly in the past several years due to efforts by School Nutrition Professionals, School Administrators and Advocacy Groups throughout the state. The “Breakfast in the Classroom” model of implementation has also allowed a greater number of students to begin their day with a healthy breakfast by expanding both access and availability of this important meal. To this end, questions have arisen whether teachers who are assisting in the provision of the “Breakfast in the Classroom” model by counting and claiming at the point of service are required to meet the four hour training required for part-time staff under the Professional Standards Final Rule.

Although teachers assisting in the provision of the “Breakfast in the Classroom” foodservice model are **not** mandated to fall under Professional Standards training requirements, all professionals involved in School Nutrition Programs must receive **appropriate** and **sufficient** training in order to be able to fulfill relevant job duties and claim reimbursable meals according to National School Breakfast Program

regulations. Decisions on what constitutes appropriate and sufficient training are driven by the variables related to each School Food Authority’s specific breakfast service situation. Appropriate training for teachers involved in the “Breakfast in the Classroom” model may include, but not be limited to, topics related to food safety, the identification of a reimbursable meal, point of service meal counting, offer–vs.–serve and civil rights. Please note that incomplete or insufficient meals noted on review, regardless of implementation model, will result in an overclaim and loss of reimbursement.

**Required Hours for School Year 2016-2017:** Beginning in School Year 2016-2017, Program Directors, Managers and Staff are required to fulfill the following annual training hours:

	<b>Annual Training Hours</b>
Program Directors	12 hours
Program Managers	10 hours
Program Staff	6 hours
Part-Time Staff (<20 hours per week)	4 hours

**Online Administrative Review Process & Tracking Methods:** Beginning in School Year 2016-2017, the School Nutrition Programs Unit will be implementing the Schools Online Administrative Review System (SOARS) for all School Food Authorities (SFAs) receiving an administrative review. The online system also contains an effective Professional Standards tracking system titled “Team Work” that will assist SFAs in tracking training hours for School Nutrition Personnel. *Use of the Team Work tracking system will be mandated for SFAs for the year they are receiving an Administrative Review.* SFAs receiving an administrative review will receive notification of webinar trainings on the use of Team Work and SOARS.

**Special Milk Programs:** SFAs who participate only in Special Milk Programs do not fall under Professional Standards hiring and training requirements; however, staff involved in Special Milk Programs must receive **appropriate** and **sufficient** training in order to be able to fulfill relevant job duties and submit claims according to Special Milk Program regulations.

**Trainings & Resources:** School Nutrition Program Staff have developed additional webinars to assist School Nutrition Personnel in reaching Professional Standards training hours. A variety of webinars covering distinct learning topics can be found under the “Resources” tab in SNEARS. Please maintain the last page of the webinars in your files as proof of having accrued that number of hours toward the Professional Standards annual training requirement. SFAs are also encouraged to refer to the following websites in order to access current and applicable trainings, webinars and tracking tools:

- Institute of Child Nutrition (<http://www.theicn.org/>)
- Professional Standards website (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/professional-standards>)
- School Nutrition Association (<https://schoolnutrition.org/ProfessionalStandards/>)

The School Nutrition Programs Office looks forward to working with all SFAs for another successful year of Professional Standards. Questions regarding Professional Standards may be directed to the School Nutrition Programs office at 609-984-0692.

Thank you again for your commitment to feeding the children of New Jersey nutritious, safe and balanced meals.