



State of New Jersey


DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Division of Food & Nutrition
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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: July 27, 2015

Subject: Required Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel - Guidance for Implementation

The Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 Final Rule was published in March of 2015, and compliance with the provisions of this rule began on July 1, 2015. The Final Rule, Questions & Answers, and exact details regarding hiring standards and required training hours can be found on the Professional Standards website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/professional-standards>. The New Jersey School Nutrition Programs will adhere to the Professional Standards, and will not be establishing additional procedures.

Hiring Standards: The final rule establishes minimum hiring standards for **new** State and local directors of school nutrition programs effective July 1, 2015. State and local directors hired before this date are grandfathered in and do not need to meet minimum hiring standards.

Training Standards: Training standards apply to all personnel involved with the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, including food service directors, managers, full-time staff, part-time staff, school employees and Food Service Management Company (FSMC) employees responsible for any aspect of day to day program operations.

Templates for job descriptions for Program Directors and Program Managers can be found on the Institute of Child Nutrition (formerly National Food Service Management Institute) website; however, job duties and job titles may differ from district to district. If the school nutrition program director duties are performed by the program manager, then both the director and the manager would be responsible for meeting the training standards for the program directors.

Training standards also apply to all Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) regardless of the type of meal service (i.e. self-op, vended, satellite, etc.) implemented.

To count under the Professional Standards training hours, training topics must fall under the four key areas of nutrition, operations, administration and communication/marketing. School Nutrition Program personnel should select the topics that are most relevant to their job duties. Please note that all State Agency trainings and webinars offered throughout the year will count towards Professional Standards requirements.

The training standards for LEAs are being phased in; therefore, reduced numbers of annual training hours are required for the first year of implementation. Please refer to the chart below:

| | School Year 2015 – 2016: | School Year 2016 – 2017: |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Program Directors | 8 hours | 12 hours |
| Program Managers | 6 hours | 10 hours |
| Program Staff | 4 hours | 6 hours |

Any training provided or received between April 1, 2015 and June 30, 2015 can count towards the School Year 2015-16 requirements. School Nutrition Personnel may also carry excess training hours over to an immediately previous or an immediately subsequent school year. An employee hired on January 1st or later must complete half of required training hours.

Tracking: Each LEA is responsible for maintaining a log and appropriate documentation showing the successful completion of Professional Standards trainings. Acceptable tracking methods include, but are not limited to, an Excel Spreadsheet or the USDA tracking tool available at: http://www.fns.usda.gov/trainingtracker/TrainingTracker_ver1.0.accdb.

Food Service Management Companies (FSMC): Food Service Management Companies must provide documentation showing the training hours and topics completed by the employees to the LEA. Contracts for SY 2015-2016 may be amended to include additional language reflecting compliance with these requirements.

Oversight: The State Agency will review compliance with Professional Standards during the Administrative Review. Technical assistance and corrective action plans will be used to address noncompliance.

Direct any questions regarding Professional Standards 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.