Training Requirements for School Nutrition Program Professionals

The United States of Department of Agriculture (USDA) has set minimum Professional Standards for professionals who work in School Nutrition Programs (SNP). This handout outlines the annual training requirements.

Annual Training Requirements for SNP Professionals

Directors & Contract Overseers	**Managers**	**Food Service Staff, Full-Time** ≥ *20 hours per week*	**Food Service Staff, Part-Time** < 20 hours per week
12 hours	10 hours	6 hours	4 hours

Note: Annual training requirements apply to the 12 months between July 1st and June 30th. If hired January 1st or later, an employee only must complete half of the required training hours.

Annual Training Topic Requirements for SNP Professionals

The following training topics below must be covered annually:

Training Topic	**Example Training**
Civil Rights	Civil Rights
Point-of-Service/Meal Counting	Point of Service (POS) Counting
Offer Versus Serve (if applicable)	Offer vs. Serve
Food Safety (refresher)	Food Safety
Procurement (if applicable)	CNP: Procurement 101

Note: The examples above are training modules offered by the Office of Nutrition Services. While the training topics are required, these specific training courses are not required. Alternative forms of training can be used to meet these requirements.

While the minimum required topics must be covered every year, the SFA and Food Service Director have the discretion to choose the remaining training topics to meet the minimal number of required hours for their SNP staff. Additional training topics should be relevant to SNP staff members duties and responsibilities.

For example, a Food Service Director may take three hours to complete the online training modules above. After meeting the minimal required topics, they could then choose other training relevant to their job to meet the additional nine hours required (e.g., SNP meal patterns, special dietary needs, Local Wellness Policy, resource management, etc.).

Training Resources

It's recommended that each training session last at least 15 minutes or longer. Acceptable training formats include in-person/live trainings, webinars, recorded/on demand, and online training modules. Here are some resources:

- ONS Online Training Modules
- USDA Professional Standards Training Database
- Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) iLearn
- School Nutrition Association (SNA) Training Zone
- School Nutrition Association of Michigan (SNAM)

Sponsors can also create their own training sessions, like back-to-school or pre-shift meetings. When doing this, it's important to keep supporting documentation, such as agendas and sign-in sheets. These records should be saved for future use.

Recordkeeping for Professional Standards

Sponsors must record and keep the following documentation for three years after submission of the final claim for reimbursement of the fiscal year:

- **Tracking tool**: Record of all School Nutrition professionals training. Schools can use the MDE Tracking Tool, USDA Tracking Tool, or their own tracking tool if it tracks the same information.
- **List of all SNP professionals**: Include name of staff person, date hired, title/position, job duties, average hours worked per week, and USDA Professional Standards job category (director, manager, full-time, and part-time staff). This can be listed in the tracking tool.
- **Training records**: Supporting documentation for training activities (e.g., certificate of completion, agendas, & sign-in sheets).

Special Scenarios

Non-SNP Support Staff

Non-SNP Support Staff (like lunch aides or custodians) do not have to meet the same training standards as those directly involved in (SNP) operations. However, the SNP director should review the job duties of staff supporting the program and determine any job-specific training they need to do their work properly and follow program rules. For example:

- In a school with breakfast-in-the-classroom, teachers should have training in civil rights, meal counting, and offer-versus-serve (if applicable).
- These staff members may not need the full four to six hours of training required for full- or part-time SNP professionals, depending on their role and employment status.

Below are examples of non-SNP support staff training:

Non-SNP Support Staff	Responsibility	Example Training(s)
Teacher	Breakfast-in-the-Classroom, Point-of-Service	SBP: Making Breakfast a Success - Teachers Edition and Breakfast in the Classroom SOP (available on SBP Forms and Breakfast website)
Boys and Girls Club Afterschool Volunteer	Point-of-Service. NSLP Afterschool Snack Program	SNP: Afterschool Snack Service Program (ASSP) for Staff

Contract Overseers

When a School Food Authority (SFA) contracts with a Food Service Management Company (FSMC) or Vended Meal Company (VMC), the SFA still has overall responsibility for the planning, administration, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the school meal programs.
Because of the nature of most FSMC contracts, both the FSMC SNP Director and the contract overseer are required to meet the annual training requirements for SNP directors, as well as the minimum hiring standards.
For more details, you can refer to the FSMC Contract Overseer Professional Standards Requirements.

Rollover of Excess Training Hours for SNP Professionals

SNP professionals can carry over excess annual training hours from one school year to the next, meaning they can meet the training requirements for a two-year period if they complete some training in each school year. If this is done, supporting documentation (such as records of completed training) must be kept for verification.

Non-Food Service and School Nutrition-Related Trainings

Not all training given to district employees will count toward the USDA Professional Standards. For example, a town credit union session during back-to-school training doesn't count. Only training that directly relates to SNP administration and operations counts toward the required training hours. Exception: The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) allows district-wide training in employee health, safety, and wellness (Learning Object Code 3450) to count for up to 25% of the annual school nutrition program training hour requirements. See Administrative Memo No. 5, School Year 2019-2020 for more information.

Additional Resources and Contact Information

For additional information, complete the Professional Standards Online Training Module and visit the Professional Standards website.

Questions regarding this memo may be directed to the School Nutrition Programs unit by e-mail to MDE-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov or phone 517-241-5374.

Resources:

1. USDA Professional Standards Summary of Updates Flyer
2. USDA SP 05-2020: Questions and Answers Regarding Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Program Personnel
3. FSMC Contract Overseer Professional Standards Requirements
4. Administrative Memo No. 5, School Year 2019-2020
5. Professional Standards Online Training Module
6. Professional Standards website