

Professional Standards Rule Frequently Asked Questions

Hiring Standards:	
1. Q:	Will Child Nutrition Services (CNS) eliminate State certificate from the hiring standards?
	A: CNS does not offer a state certificate therefore, this question is not applicable to the state of Washington.
2. Q:	Will CNS require current food service directors to obtain food safety certificates/training every five years?
	A: CNS recognizes that food safety training is important training and best practice is to update training periodically. The intent of food safety training is for the hiring standards for new directors. New directors without training in the past five years prior to hire must receive training within the first thirty days of hire as a local education agency (LEA) food service director.
3. Q:	Will CNS require that temporary directors meet the hiring standards?
	A: A waiver for the hiring standards is provided for the length of the food service director absence. However, a temporary director that does not meet the hiring standards could not assume the position of food service director in situations where the food service director does not return.
Training Requirements:	
1. Q:	Will CNS allow training hours to be carried over a second year?
	A: Yes, hours in excess of the requirement may be carried over to the immediate subsequent school year only. LEAs must have a planned process in place to adequately track hours that were carried over. Tracking tools should identify the school year the training applies to.
2. Q:	Will CNS allow some training hours towards viewing of exhibits at food shows?
	A: CNS will allow 2 hours total per year to meet the training requirements.
3. Q:	Will CNS require program/parent volunteers, acting/temporary directors, and substitutes to meet the training requirements?
	A: Program and parent volunteers are not required to meet the training requirements. Acting/Temporary Directors expected to work in their positions 6 months or longer must meet the training requirements. Substitutes consistently working 20 hours per work or more must meet the training requirements.
4. Q:	Who is responsible for the training requirements in LEAs with interagency agreements?
	A: The responsibility for meeting the training requirements lies with the receiving LEA.
5. Q:	Will CEU courses, etc. for Registered Dietitians count towards the training requirements?
	A: Courses, etc. specific to operating USDA Child Nutrition Programs can be counted.
6. Q:	Our district offers several trainings during the year and they are not directly for food services employees however, portions of the training may relate in some way. For example, blood borne pathogens, first aid, CPR, anti-bullying. How can we determine if these topics will meet the training requirements?
	A: Generally, employer required training (LEA) could not be counted towards the training requirements. Training that could be counted is time spent getting a food handlers permit, student safety with cafeteria specific objectives, goal setting if specific to the food service department. Training must be related to the employee's job duties and responsibilities.

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7. Q: Can we count training received on a new food service equipment, annual trainings or trainings that repeat themselves such as Annual Program Update Training, and task specific system training?
A: Yes, however, training should be job specific and pertain to an employee's job duties responsibilities.
8. Q: Some training provided by the district includes objectives related to Civil Rights. Can this training be counted towards the training requirements?
A: Civil Rights training must be specific to Child Nutrition Programs and include civil rights provisions in 7 FR 210.23(b) and FNS 783.2, meal substitutions for medical or other special dietary needs, and issues that limit equal access to school meals.
9. Q: How is training for new employees calculated?
A: Employees hired after January 1 of each year need to complete half of the required training hours.
10. Q: How will CNS evaluate the training requirements for staff that no longer work in the district?
A: The training requirements apply to all school nutrition program employees beginning July 1, 2015. During an Administrative Review, the LEA must be prepared to provide documentation for current employees.
11. Q: What happens when a local education agencies does not meet the training requirements?
A: Professional standards are part of the Administrative Review. CNS will provide technical assistance and require corrective action to bring the LEA into compliance.
12. Q: What happens when employees don't meet the training requirements?
A: Appropriate action would be determined at the local level most likely with the involvement of the LEA Human Resources Department.
13. Q: What are the training requirements for a full time school secretary that only conducts verification of meal applications?
A: CNS will review training for school nutrition program employees. Office staff that provide support for a short period of time during the school year are not required to meet the training requirements.
14. Q: Can you further define the difference between a manager and a lead cook?
A: Managers are directly responsible for the day to day operations of the school nutrition program for a participating school or, schools. They have planning and managerial responsibilities. School nutrition program staff are individuals without managerial and planning responsibilities and could include a lead cook. Job descriptions can further define the employee's role and the training requirements that must be met.
15. Q: What level of detail is needed for tracking using the coding system?
A: LEAs must track, at a minimum, the required fields listed in the USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool. These fields include key areas, key topics, and training subjects as listed in the Professional Standards Learning Objectives and Topics with codes.
16. Q: Do the training requirements apply to employees that only transport food?
A: The employee's job description will help define the training requirements. Generally, an employee that provides support to the food service operation but is not specifically involved in the operation of the program does not need to meet the training

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requirements. If the food transport employee monitors refrigeration, food temperatures, inventory/delivery sheets, the training requirements must be met.

17. Q: Where can we find resources for free training?

A: Currently, the [USDA webpage for Professional Standards](#) is the largest resource for free training.

18. Q: How do the training requirements work when multiple people have director responsibilities or titles?

A: Through evaluation of job descriptions, the LEA is responsible for identifying the employee(s) that best meet the definition of food service director. Each LEA is expected to identify this person(s). The training requirements apply to the person who performs a majority of the duties.

This is not an all-inclusive list of questions and answers. USDA policy [SP39-2015](#) provides additional details, questions, and answers.