

# Professional Standards: Hiring and Training Requirements for School Nutrition Programs



USDA Professional Standard:  
3430 – Training Plans and Tracking



# Objectives

- Understand what professional standards in the NSLP are and why they are important
- Discuss the resources available for meeting the requirements of professional standards
- Examine your role in ensuring all staff members meet their professional standards requirements



# Knowledge Check

How many hours of training do Food Service Directors need each school year?



# What are professional standards?

- Hiring and training standards for school nutrition program directors, managers and employees
- Hiring standards:
  - Minimum standards for hiring SFA directors based on the size of the SFA
  - No minimum standards for school nutrition program managers or for employees
- Training standards:
  - Minimum number of hours per year for directors, managers and employees



# What does it mean?

- Hiring standards should be taken into account by the leadership team at the SFA when posting a Food Service Director position
  - This means it is your responsibility to communicate this to your leadership team and provide them with language for the job description
- The Food Service Director is responsible for providing guidance and time for their manager(s) and employee(s) to complete their training each year.



# Why is it important?

- Because school nutrition personnel need:
  - The knowledge, training and tools to plan, prepare and purchase items for their students.
  - A deeper understanding of how to create a nutritious, safe and enjoyable school meal experience for their students.
  - An up-to-date understanding of, and best practices for implementing, new regulations in school nutrition.



# Hiring standards

- Applies to Food Service Directors hired on or after July 1, 2015
- There are no hiring standards for food service managers or other employees
- Different requirements based on the number of students enrolled in your SFA
  - 2,499 or fewer
  - 2,500 – 9,999
  - 10,000 or more
- Review the requirements in the handout!



# Hiring Flexibilities for Director Positions

- Established March 1, 2019 and are effective as of April 30, 2019
- The flexibilities were established to expand the pool of candidates qualified to serve as leaders in the school nutrition programs while continuing to ensure that school nutrition professionals are able to perform their duties effectively and efficiently.
- For LEAs with 2,499 or fewer students:
  - Relevant food service experience rather than school nutrition program experience may be used to qualify new directors
  - With State Agency approval, LEAs may consider documented volunteer or unpaid work as relevant experience for new directors
- For LEAs with 500 or fewer students:
  - With State Agency approval, LEAs may accept less than the required years of food service experience if the has the minimum required education for the director position.





# Who is a food service director?

**The food service director is the person who plans, administers, implements, monitors, and evaluates all district-wide aspects of the school nutrition program.**

- In DC, this role may be a part of the Business Manager or Operations Manager role or might be split between multiple positions at the SFA.
- Only the person hired to perform the majority of the food service director role duties must meet the hiring standards.
  - Every SFA needs an individual who fills this role



# Who is a food service manager?

**The food service manager is the person who works under the director and has management-level responsibilities for the food service program.**

- Not all SFAs will have a position that fills this role
- Topic areas for training may include:
  - Administrative practices around applications, certification, verification, and meal counting and claiming procedures
  - Reimbursable meal identification
  - Nutrition, health and safety standards



# Who is a full-time food service staff?

**A full-time food service staff is a person who has responsibility for school nutrition programs and works, on average, at least 20 hours per week, and is not the director or manager.**

- Not all SFAs will have a position that fills this role
- Topic areas for training may include:
  - Free and reduced price eligibility
  - Applications, certification and verification procedures
  - Reimbursable meal identification
  - Nutrition, health and safety standards



# Who is a part-time food service staff?

**A part-time food service staff is a person who has responsibility for school nutrition programs and works, on average, less than 20 hours per week.**

- Not all SFAs will have a position that fills this role
- Topic areas for training may include:
  - Free and reduced price eligibility
  - Applications, certification and verification procedures
  - Reimbursable meal identification
  - Nutrition, health and safety standards



# Training standards

- Applies to food service directors, managers and all part-time and full-time employees

Job Title	Required Training Hours
Directors	12 Hours
Managers	10 Hours
All other staff (more than 20 hours per week)	6 Hours
Part-time food service staff (less than 20 hours per week)	4 Hours



# Training Standards

- All SFAs are required to track training hours completed by directors, managers and other food service staff.
- Tracking can be done via:
  - USDA [web-based tracker](#)
  - USDA [Tracker Template](#) (Microsoft Access required)
  - SFAs own tool (such as Excel) that captures the following:
    - Trainee name and title
    - Training name, subject, and what standard it meets
    - Date of completion and number of hours and/or minutes



Explore the  
[USDA Professional Standards training website](#)



# Review

- SFAs are required to abide by the hiring and training requirements in order to be in compliance with Professional Standards.
- Training requirements must be completed yearly by all staff.
- Hiring requirements only apply to the Food Service Director position or role within a position.





# Knowledge Check

How many hours of training do Food Service Directors need each school year?



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