



Hello and welcome to the Nebraska Department of Education, Nutrition Service’s training on Professional Standards.

Objectives



Provide overview of hiring standards.



Review the number of annual continuing education training hours for various School Meals Program personnel.



Share resources for obtaining & tracking continuing education training hours.



The objectives of this presentation include the following:

An overview of Hiring Standards will be provided;

The number of annual continuing education training hours for various School Meals Program personnel will be reviewed;

And finally, several resources for obtaining and tracking continuing education training hours will be shared.

Professional Standards

- USDA Hiring Standards for all new food service directors (**education and experience requirements**).
- SFA's must hire staff that meet these standards and supply documentation upon request.
- New hiring exception for medium and large local education agencies – effective July 1, 2024.

Hiring Standards for New School Nutrition Program Directors

New directors — those hired on or after July 1, 2015 — are subject to the new education requirements below. Existing directors will be grandfathered in their current positions as well as in the Student Enrollment category where they currently are working. (School Nutrition Program Directors are the individuals responsible for the operation of school nutrition programs for all schools under the local educational agency (LEA).)

Minimum Requirements for Directors	Student Enrollment 2,499 or less	Student Enrollment 2,500-9,999	Student Enrollment 10,000 or more
Minimum Education Standards	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas;* OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and at least 1 year of relevant food service experience; OR Associate's degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas,* and at least 1 year of relevant food service experience; OR High school diploma (or GED) and at least 3 years of relevant food service experience.	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas;* OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major and at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition programs experience; OR Associate's degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas,* and at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition programs experience.	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas;* OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major and at least 5 years experience in management of school nutrition programs. * Specific majors/areas of concentration: food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field.
See the final rule for additional preferred educational standards for new directors	(For an LEA with less than 500 students, the State agency may approve a candidate who meets the educational standards but has less than the required 3 years experience.)		

[USDA Professional Standards Summary SNP Employees.pdf \(ne.gov\)](#)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established minimum Professional Standards for school nutrition professionals that manage and operate School Meals Programs. The Professional Standards became effective on July 1, 2015, and were a key provision of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA).

The standards identify the minimum education requirements, or hiring standards, for school nutrition directors and managers, as well as the annual training requirements for all school nutrition professionals and staff.

On this slide, we see a snippet of the Hiring Standards, which vary depending on the size of the Local Education Agency. There are both education and experience requirements for new food service directors. Please note that the final rule, entitled Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans which was published by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) on April 25, 2024, will allow a hiring exception for medium and large local education agencies. This operational flexibility will become available as of July 1, 2024.

This final rule will allow State Agency discretion to approve the hiring of an individual to serve as a school nutrition program director in a medium or large local education agency, if they have 10 or more years of school nutrition program experience but do not hold a

bachelor's or an associate's degree. Directors hired under this exception must have a high school diploma or GED.

Professional Standards: Food Safety

- **New Food Service Directors** must have at least 8 hours of food safety training.
 - Training must have been obtained not more than 5 years prior to their starting date or;
 - Training must be completed within **30 days** of their start date as the Food Service Director.
 - Must take Manager Training, **NOT** Food Handler Training.
- Food Protection Manager Certifications must be renewed every 5 years.



In addition to the hiring standards, new food service directors are required to have at least 8 hours of food safety training, either within 30 days of their start date or within the past 5 years prior to their starting date as the Food Service Director. Please note, the manager training must be taken; NOT the food handler training.

The Food Protection Manager Certificate obtained through these courses must be renewed every 5 years.

Qualifying Food Safety Courses

- [ServSafe Manager Certificate](#)
- [UNL - Nebraska Extension ServSafe® Manager Training](#)
- [Always Food Safe Food Manager Certification](#)
- Additional Information:
 - At least one person at every site is required to be Food Protection Manager Certified.
 - For questions related to food safety/HACCP, contact Beth Haas, NDE, Nutrition Services Program Specialist at beth.haas@nebraska.gov.



Qualifying Food Safety Courses include the ServSafe Manager course/certification or the Always Food Safe Food Manager course/certification. ServSafe course may be accessed either directly through ServSafe or through UNL NE Extension. Links to each of the courses shown on this slide may be accessed in the Professional Standards Training Requirements handout which can be found on the Professional Standards webpage on the NDE, Nutrition Services website (www.education.ne.gov/ns/nslp/professional-standards/).

School districts with multiple schools/meal sites should identify at least one person at every school/meal site to obtain a Food Protection Manager Certification through one of these courses.

For specific questions related to food safety/HACCP, please contact our resident food safety expert, Beth Haas at the email address shown on this slide.

Professional Standards Overview

- Annual Professional Standards Continuing Education Training Hours for **all** school nutrition professionals/staff.
- All training **must** be documented on a training tracker/ log.
- Continuing education training hours should be obtained during the program year which runs July 1-June 30.
- Training hours earned in excess of the annual requirement may be applied to the school year directly preceding or directly following the date of training; however, some training hours must be completed each year.



As previously mentioned, the Professional Standards also identify the annual training requirements for all school nutrition professionals. Required training hours and topic areas will vary according to position and job requirements. It is important that all training be documented on a training tracker or log; we will review a few options for tracking training hours in a few more slides.

Training hours should be obtained during the program year which runs July 1-June 30; however, training hours earned in excess of the annual requirement may be applied to the school year directly preceding or directly following the date of training. For example, if a Program Director needs 12 hours and obtained 18 hours, the additional 6 hours may be applied to either the previous program year if the Director was short on hours that year OR the hours can be applied to the next school year. That said, some training hours must be completed each year.

Position Descriptions

The following position descriptions aid in determining the training requirements needed each year. These definitions apply whether or not a School Food Authority (SFA) is operated by a food service management company.

Program Director The individual who is directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for all participating schools under the jurisdiction of the SFA. This definition also applies to those SFAs with just one school. Each SFA is required to identify the individual acting in the capacity of the school nutrition program director. In many instances across the state, the person fulfilling the responsibilities of this position will have a different title such as food service manager.

Program Manager The individual who is directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school under the direction of the Program Director.

Program Staff Those individuals without managerial responsibilities who are involved in day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school. This includes employees who prepare and serve meals and process transactions at point of service.

Before discussing the number of training hours required for various positions, we first wanted to review some position descriptions. These descriptions will be helpful in determining the training requirements each employee must obtain each year.

A program director is directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for all participating schools under the jurisdiction of the SFA. This definition also applies to those SFAs with just one school or those SFAs that are vended sites and receive meals from another SFA. Each School Food Authority is required to identify the individual acting in the capacity of the school nutrition program director; this would also be the individual listed as the Food Service Director/Manager contact in the Sponsor Application in CNP. In many instances across the state, the person hired to fulfill the responsibilities of this position will have a different title such as food service manager, but they still perform all duties of a director.

A program manager is directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school under the direction of the Program Director. For example, districts with multiple schools may have a program director at the district level but each school/meal site may have a program manager.

Program staff include those individuals without managerial responsibilities who are

involved in day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school. This includes employees who prepare and serve meals and process transactions at point of service.

Position Descriptions

The following position descriptions aid in determining the training requirements needed each year.

Vended Site Director/Manager (onsite meal service)	The individual who is directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for a site that receives vended meals from another SFA/vendor.
Vended Program Staff	Those individuals without managerial responsibilities who are involved in day-to-day operations of school food service for a site that receives vended meals from another SFA/entity. This includes employees who serve meals and process transactions at point of service.



Several School Food Authorities (SFAs) across Nebraska purchase meals from another SFA/vendor – these are referred to as vended programs. The SFA that sells meals to another SFA is known as the host school and the SFA receiving meals is known as the recipient school. In many instances meals prepared by the host school are delivered or picked up and the students at the recipient school eat at their own school. In this scenario, the recipient school would still have a Program Director/Manager. The Program Director/Manager of a vended site is the individual that is directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service at their site.

In addition to the Program Director/Manager, vended sites or recipient schools likely also have program staff to assist with meal service. These individuals are involved in day-to-day operations of school food service but do not have managerial responsibilities.

Now that we have defined position descriptions, let's look at the number of continuing education hours needed for each position.

Annual Training Requirements

Professional Standards – Annual Training Requirements	
Program Director	12 hours
Program Manager	10 hours
Program Staff (20 or more hours per week)	6 hours
Program Staff (less than 20 hours per week)	4 hours
Vended Site Director/Manager (onsite meal service)	10 hours
Vended Site Staff (20 or more hours per week)	6 hours
Vended Site Staff (less than 20 hours per week)	4 hours



The number of training hours required for various school nutrition positions is shown on this slide. As you can see, Program Directors must obtain 12 hours annually while Program Managers must obtain 10 hours. The Director/Manager of a Vended Site with onsite meal service must obtain 10 hours annually. Program staff (including vended site staff) that work 20 or more hours per week are required to have 6 hours of annual continuing education training. Program staff (again, including vended site staff) that work less than 20 hours per week must obtain 4 hours annually. If school nutrition professionals or staff are hired on or after January 1, only half of the required training hours must be completed for that program year which would end on June 30th.

Volunteers, temporary, or substitute employees, including teachers, paraeducators and other school staff who perform tasks for the school lunch program but are not considered to be full time or part-time staff should receive appropriate and adequate training to complete their duties; however, there are no minimum annual training requirements. As a best practice, full time substitutes should follow training requirements for full time staff. It is also highly recommended that part-time substitutes and volunteers who are involved in the school lunch program on a regular basis receive training each year according to their specific duties.

Program staff that provide support to the school nutrition program for a short period of

time each year, such as office staff members that process free and reduced-price meal applications or that provide other support for the school nutrition program are not required to meet the annual training standards. However, these individuals should also receive adequate training specific to the task(s) they will perform.

Temporary or acting school nutrition program directors or managers are not required to meet the annual training standards for those positions unless they are expected to be in the position more than 90 days.

The only exception is that all frontline staff who interact with program applicants or participants and those who supervise frontline staff must receive civil rights training annually. New employees, volunteers, temporary employees, or other school staff should also receive civil rights training prior to involvement in program activities.

Vended Sites: No Onsite Meal Service

Scenario: Students from a recipient SFA eat meals at another SFA (host) and the recipient school does not provide any meal service onsite.

The authorized representative and claim contact should still participate in applicable annual training such as:

- NDE Bookkeeper Training
- Civil Rights Training
- Portions of the NDE Food Service Training
 - Meal pattern requirements
 - Other applicable topics may vary by site
- Wellness Policy
- Smart Snacks/Competitive Foods (if applicable)



The previous slide provided clear requirements for the number of annual training hours needed for school nutrition professionals in many SFAs across the state. However, we also wanted to provide guidance on a particular vended site scenario in which two SFAs have a meal service agreement that allows students from the recipient school to eat meals at the host school.

While the recipient school does not provide any meal service onsite, the authorized representative and claim contact for the recipient school will still need to participate in applicable annual training. Such training may include but is not limited to the NDE bookkeeper training, annual Civil Rights training, and portions of the annual NDE food service training such as the meal pattern requirements overview, and other topics as necessary (e.g., Wellness Policy). The individual listed as the Food Service Director/Manager in the recipient school's sponsor application will be the individual responsible for obtaining annual training according to professional standards. In many cases, the Food Service Director/Manager for the host school is listed as the Food Service Director/Manager for the recipient school. If that is the case, the recipient school will need to obtain copies of annual training logs from the host school in order to provide this documentation during an administrative review. The authorized representative and claim contact for the recipient school would follow annual training requirements for vended program staff and these hours may vary depending on the number of hours they spend

each week on duties related to the School Meals Program.

If you have specific questions about annual training hour requirements as a vended site, please reach out to NDE, Nutrition Services.

Professional Standards: Key Areas & Training Topics

Key Areas	Topics
Nutrition – 1000	Menu Planning (1100)
	Nutrition Education (1200)
	General Nutrition (1300)
Operations – 2000	Food Production (2100)
	Serving Food (2200)
	Cashier and Point of Service (2300)
	Purchasing/Procurement (2400)
	Receiving and Storage (2500)
Administration – 3000	Food Safety and HACCP (2600)
	Free and Reduced-Price Meal Benefits (3100)
	Program Management (3200)
	Financial Management (3300)
	Human Resources and Staff Training (3400)
Communications and Marketing - 4000	Facilities and Equipment Planning (3500)
	Communications and Marketing (4100)



Annual training obtained by school nutrition professionals should be job-specific. Directors may help determine appropriate training topics for program staff. On this slide, we see that training topics fall within 4 key areas – nutrition, operations, administration, and communications and marketing. It is not mandatory that all employees receive training from all four categories, but training should be relevant to the position and job duties.

Training Resources

- NDE, Nutrition Services School Meals Program Training Page
 - <https://www.education.ne.gov/ns/training/national-school-lunch-program/>
- Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) iLearn Portal
 - <https://theicn.docebos.com/learn>
- School Nutrition Association (SNA)
 - <https://training.schoolnutrition.org/>

USDA, Food & Nutrition Service (FNS) Resources

- Database of Professional Standards Trainings
 - <https://professionalstandards.fns.usda.gov/>
- USDA/FNS YouTube Channel
 - <https://www.youtube.com/user/USDAfoodandnutrition>
- Team Nutrition
 - <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/school#S9>



There are several great training resources available to help school nutrition professionals meet their annual training requirements while also elevating School Meals Program and ensuring compliance with regulations. The online training resources shown on this slide, offer access to a wide array of free or low-cost webinar recordings. These resources may be accessed via the links provided on this slide or in the Professional Standards Training Requirements resource located on the NDE, Nutrition Services Professional Standards webpage.

Once again, training should be relevant to the position and job duties. Additional continuing education may be obtained by attending the Nebraska School Nutrition Association annual conference or other state, regional, or national conferences. Generally, training costs are an allowable use of an SFA's school food service funds.

Recordkeeping

- Training records should include:
 - Employee's first & last name
 - Employer/school name
 - Training title
 - Topic/objectives
 - Training source
 - Date or dates of training
 - Total training hours
- Retain training records for 3 years plus the current school year.



For any training attended, the first and last name, employer/school name, training title(s), topic/objectives, training source (e.g., NDE, Nutrition Services or ICN), date(s) of training and total training hours should be recorded. Training records should be retained on file for 3 years plus the current school year and must be readily accessible and provided to State Agency staff upon request, such as during an Administrative Review. There are a number of ways that annual professional standards training requirements can be tracked.

Recordkeeping Methods

Certificate of Training



Verification of Approved Continuing Education Units for
Professional Standards - NSLP



Title of Activity: Child Nutrition Programs - Civil Rights Training	Participant Name: [Redacted] [Redacted] Last First
Educational Provider: Nebraska Department of Education - Nutrition Services	SNA Membership ID # (if applicable): [Redacted]
Location (City and State): Online Training	CEU's Earned: 1 hour
Training Completion Date: [Redacted]	Learning Codes: Administration (3000) - Policies and Procedures - 3420
Signature of Educational Provider: <i>Kayla Patten</i>	



Many trainings/conferences will provide a certificate of training. The example provided on this slide is for the Civil Rights Training available on the NDE, Nutrition Services Civil Rights webpage. Upon completion of the annual Civil Rights training, each member of the School Meals Program team would complete this fillable training certificate and retain on file.

If a certificate is not available or not provided for a training, professional standards training logs may be utilized.

Recordkeeping Methods

Annual Training Log

Year _____	Date _____	Hours	Training Title	Total Annual Training Hours
Annual Training Log All NSLP Employees				
Employee Name				

[https://www.education.ne.gov/
ns/nslp/professional-standards/](https://www.education.ne.gov/ns/nslp/professional-standards/)

NDE Tracker Tool

INSTRUCTIONS: Enter staff names in the first column to the right of the name in the column below. After the training has ended, approval and certificates should be kept on file for all training events. Enter training hours in the corresponding column of staff members who attended the specific training.

Staff Name	Hours	Staff Name	Hours	Staff Name	Hours	Staff Name	Hours	Staff Name	Hours
Working Title	Hours	Working Title	Hours	Working Title	Hours	Working Title	Hours	Working Title	Hours

Event Training Log - NSLP Professional Standards

Type of training: Conference District Meeting Food Show NDE Sponsored OFA Sponsored Self-Study Other

Training Title* _____ **Date** _____

*Attach agenda, brochure, certificate or flyer.

Training Topic (Learning Code(s))

1000 - Nutrition 3000 - Administration
 2000 - Operations 4000 - Communications/Marketing

Length of Training (hours) _____

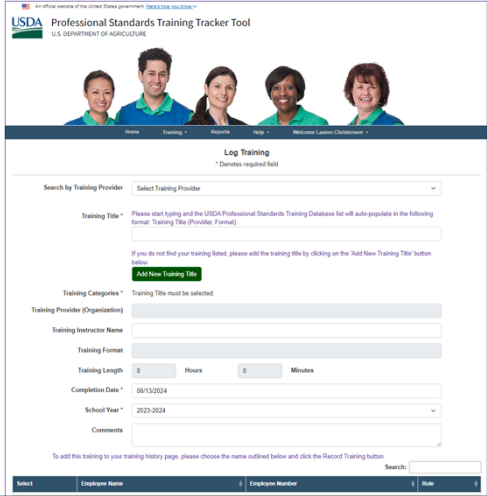
Attendees:	Employee Name	Position Title

Single Event Training Log

NDE, Nutrition Services has developed a few options to help School Meals Program staff track annual professional development training hours. Training agendas and certificates (if available) should be kept alongside these logs. The Annual Training Log shown on the left side of the slide, is most commonly used; however, the NDE Tracker Tool (top right) and Single Event Training Log (bottom right) are also good options. The Annual Training Log, NDE Tracker Tool, and Single Event Training Log may be accessed and downloaded from the NDE, Nutrition Services Professional Standards webpage listed on this slide.

Recordkeeping Methods

USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT):
<https://pstrainingtracker.fns.usd.gov>



The screenshot shows the 'Log Training' form on the USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) website. The form is titled 'Log Training' and includes a sub-header '* Denotes required field'. The form fields are as follows:

- Search by Training Provider:** A dropdown menu labeled 'Select Training Provider'.
- Training Title:** A text input field with a note: 'Please start typing and the USDA Professional Standards Training Database list will auto-populate in the following format: Training Title (Provider, Format)'. Below the field is a green button labeled 'Add New Training Title'.
- Training Categories:** A dropdown menu with the note 'Training Title must be selected'.
- Training Provider (Organization):** A text input field.
- Training Instructor Name:** A text input field.
- Training Format:** A text input field.
- Training Length:** Two input fields for 'Hours' and 'Minutes', each with a '0' value.
- Completion Date:** A date input field showing '06/13/2024'.
- School Year:** A dropdown menu showing '2023-2024'.
- Comments:** A text area for additional notes.

At the bottom of the form, there is a note: 'To add this training to your training history page, please choose the name outlined below and click the Record Training button.' Below this note is a table with columns for 'Employee Name' and 'Employee Number', and a 'Search' button.

Alternatively, the USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) may also be used. An USDA e-Authentication or Login.gov account is required to access this tool, but creating an account is free. To learn more about this tool and to begin using it to log annual training hours, please visit the link provided on this slide (<https://pstrainingtracker.fns.usd.gov>). Once you have either logged in or have created an account, you may access various tutorials that explain how to utilize the PSTTT by clicking the Help tab and selecting Training Video.

Resources

- Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs
 - https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/Professional_Standards_Guide.pdf
- USDA, FNS Memo SP 05-2020: Questions & Answers Regarding Professional Standards for Stat and Local School Nutrition Program Personnel
 - <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/SP05-2020os.pdf>



Two additional resources related to professional standards that may be useful for School Meals Program staff include the Guide to Professional Standards and the USDA Q&A on Professional Standards, both of which are linked on this slide.

Questions? Contact Nutrition Services:

402-471-2488

or

800-731-2233

(outside Lincoln)

nde.nsweb@nebraska.gov



Thank you for your participation in this training module. If you have any questions regarding Professional Standards hiring standards and/or annual training requirements, please contact NDE, Nutrition Services at 402-471-2488 or 800-731-2233. Questions may also be directed via email to nde.nsweb@nebraska.gov.

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: AD-3027, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington,
D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov

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