

## Topic: Professional Standards

### Overview:

Each School Food Authority (SFA) that operates the NSLP/SBP must meet the requirements of the Professional Standards as established in the final rule, *Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010*. These standards ensure school nutrition professionals have the knowledge and training they need to plan, prepare, and purchase healthy products to create nutritious, safe, and enjoyable school meals.

### Hiring Standards for New School Nutrition Program Directors:

- ✓ Standards apply to all directors appointed after July 1, 2015.
- ✓ Those in their role as a director prior to this date are exempted from meeting hiring standards and “grandfathered” into their current position or the same position in an SFA in the same category size or smaller.
- ✓ Definition of “Director” is not based on the position title, but rather the role and responsibilities. The director is the individual who plans, administers, implements, monitors, and evaluates all district-wide aspects of the school nutrition program. This person is designated in CNPweb as the CNP Program Manager.
- ✓ Minimum education standards are based on student enrollment. See [7 CFR 210.30](#).
- ✓ Additional flexibility for school nutrition program directors was provided by the *Hiring Flexibility Under Professional Standards Rule* issued in March 2019.
- ✓ Food safety training requirement: At least eight hours food safety training in the past five years or within 30 days of hire.
- ✓ If a director moves to a new SFA, the director would need to meet hiring requirements based on enrollment at the new SFA. (unless grandfathered in).

### Training Requirements for All School Nutrition Program Employees:

- ✓ Requirements are set by job category. Job category definitions are defined by job role and responsibilities rather than title.  
**Director:** Individual(s) directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of the school nutrition programs for all participating schools under the jurisdiction of the school food authority. This role is required by USDA.  
**Manager:** Individual(s) directly responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school nutrition programs for a participating school(s). This is not a required role.  
**School Nutrition Program Staff:** Individuals without managerial responsibilities who are involved in routine operations of the school nutrition programs for a participating school. This may include individuals who prepare and serve meals, process transactions at the point of service, and review the free/reduced price applications.

- ✓ Yearly requirements (school year)
  - Director- minimum of 12 hours
  - Manager- minimum of 10 hours
  - All other staff- minimum of 6 hours
  - Part-time staff, working on average less than 20 hours per week in the nutrition program- minimum of 4 hours
- ✓ If hired January 1 or later, an employee is only required to complete half of the required training hours for that school year.
- ✓ Training is required to be in one of the four Professional Standards Key Areas. Key topics and specific training subjects with objectives further define each key area. Key areas include:

<p><b>Nutrition-1000</b> Menu planning Nutrition education General nutrition</p>	<p><b>Administration- 3000</b> Free and reduced price meal benefits Program management Financial management Human resources and staff training Facilities and equipment planning</p>
<p><b>Operations- 2000</b> Food production Serving food Cashier and point of service Purchasing/procurement Receiving and storage Food safety</p>	<p><b>Communication/Marketing- 4000</b> Communications and marketing</p>

#### Record Keeping Requirements:

- Documentation to show completion of professional standards training must be available to the state agency for review. Documentation must be retained for three school years plus the current school year.
- The tracking tool should identify the school year the training applies to, the training date, the training topic, and the number of training hours.
- Several tools are available to assist in tracking staff training:
  - [USDA Professional Standard Training Database](#)
  - [Tracking Tool](#)
  - [School Nutrition Association Tracking Tool](#) (SNA member access only)

#### Helpful Resources:

- ✓ [USDA Professional Standards Webpage](#)
- ✓ [Professional Standards Summary of Updates](#)

Regulatory Reference:

- ✓ [7 CFR 210.30](#)
- ✓ [Hiring Flexibility Under Professional Standards](#)
- ✓ [USDA Memo SP5-2020](#)

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**Acronym Reference and Definitions**

-CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
-NSLP	National School Lunch Program
-SBP	School Breakfast Program
-SFA	School Food Authority
-USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction created this document. The Oregon Department of Education modified the document to apply to Oregon.