Professional Standards Learning Objectives & Training Topics

The professional standards learning objectives are a resource for school nutrition professionals and trainers. This resource lists training topics in the four key areas of nutrition, operations, administration and communications/marketing. Each key area has several training topics and specific learning objectives that will assist those who are planning or taking training. These same categories are used in the on-line database of trainings as well as in the optional professional standards training tracker tool.

Nutrition - 1000

Operations - 2000

Administration - 3000

Communications & Marketing - 4000

Key Area: Nutrition

Menu Planning - 1100

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to effectively and efficiently plan and prepare standardized recipes, cycle menus, and meals, including the use of USDA Foods, to meet all federal school nutrition program requirements, including the proper meal components.

Training Topics

- 1110- Plan menus that meet USDA nutrition requirements for reimbursable meals, including calculating meal components.
- 1120- Plan cycle menus that meet all rules. Consider cost, equipment, foods available, storage, staffing, student tastes, and promotional events.
- 1130- Utilize local food sources, especially Farm to School, when possible.

- 1140- Write standardized recipes, and use Food Buying Guide.
- 1150- Analyze menus for school meal pattern requirements.
- 1160- Plan meals to accommodate students requiring special diets, including food allergies.
- 1170- Plan for effective use of USDA Foods.

Nutrition Education - 1200

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to utilize resources to prepare and integrate age/grade appropriate nutrition education curriculum with school nutrition program.

Training Topics

- 1210- Plan age/grade appropriate nutrition education activities using USDA Team Nutrition materials when possible.
- 1220- Integrate nutrition education curriculum with school nutrition program, utilizing the cafeteria as a learning environment (include Team Nutrition resources).
- 1230- Support school gardens as a means to nutrition education.

General Nutrition - 1300

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to understand the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, USDA’s food guidance system concepts and general nutrition principles.

Training Topics

- 1310- Relate the Dietary Guidelines and USDA’s food guidance system (such as MyPlate) concepts to the goals of the school nutrition programs.
- 1320- Understand general nutrition concepts that relate to school meals, such as whole grains, sodium, etc.

Key Area: Operations

Food Production - 2100

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to effectively utilize food preparation principles, production records, kitchen equipment, and food crediting to prepare foods from standardized recipes, including

those for special diets.

Training Topics

- 2110- Understand and effectively prepare food using a standardized recipe.
- 2120- Complete a food production record and other required paperwork.
- 2130- Develop culinary skills necessary for school meal preparation.
- 2140- Properly use and care for equipment.
- 2150- Understand CN Labeling, product formulation statements and/or appropriate crediting information for school meal pattern requirements.

Serving Food - 2200

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to correctly and efficiently serve food portions to meet all USDA school meal pattern requirements and encourage healthy food selections including those for special diets.

Training Topics

- 2210- Identify/serve portions of food items according to USDA school meal pattern requirements and diet restrictions.
- 2220- Use Offer Versus Serve correctly.
- 2230- Serve food to maintain quality and appearance standards.
- 2240- Manage serving lines for clean and efficient operation.

Cashier and Point of Service - 2300

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to efficiently operate and utilize a Point of Service (POS) system, ensuring correct application of reimbursable meal components, Offer Versus Serve, and confidential student eligibility identification in a financially responsible manner.

Training Topics

- 2310- Count reimbursable meals according to meal pattern requirements (including Offer Versus Serve) and eligibility status.
- 2320- Use financial responsibility at POS.
- 2330- Apply proper measures to prevent overt identification of students receiving free or reduced price meals.

Purchasing - 2400

Learning Objective

Employee will be able to effectively and efficiently implement purchasing procedures and practices in order to appropriately and best utilize supplies and USDA Foods to meet menu requirements and comply with all federal, state, and local regulations.

Training Topics

- 2410- Develop product specifications to best meet menu requirements.
- 2420- Solicit, receive, and evaluate bids for award in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.
- 2430- Purchase food, supplies, and equipment through vendors, meeting school district specifications in compliance with federal, state, and local procurement regulations and availability of USDA Foods.
- 2440- Generate food and supply orders.
- 2450- Identify possible cooperative purchasing groups and geographic preference options.
- 2460- Develop and monitor contract(s) with a food service management company and/or others.

Receiving and Storage - 2500

Learning Objective

Employee will be able to ensure proper inventory management including correct delivery and storage of inventory, and that which has been placed on hold or recalled.

Training Topics

- 2510- Develop processes for inventory management.
- 2520- Apply safe and effective inventory receiving and storage procedures.
- 2530- Understand hold and recall procedures.

Food Safety and HACCP Training - 2600

Learning Objective

Employee will be able to effectively utilize all food safety program guidelines and health department regulations to ensure optimal food safety.

Training Topics

- 2610- Practice a HACCP-based program.
- 2620- Practice general food safety procedures.
- 2630- Practice federal, state, and local food safety regulations and guidance.
- 2640- Promote a culture of food safety behaviors in the school community (includes training on food allergens).

Key Area: Administration

Free and Reduced-Price Meal Benefits - 3100

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to effectively certify, process, and verify free and reduced-price meal eligibility benefits in accordance with Federal and State regulations related to nutrition programs. Understand and apply Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) to eliminate the administrative burden of school meal applications and be able to serve meals at no charge to the students.

Training Topics

- 3110- Certify, process, and verify free and reduced-price meal eligibility benefits in compliance with federal regulations.
- 3120- Understand and practice direct certification procedures practiced by your state.
- 3130- Understand and apply Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

Program Management - 3200

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to effectively manage staff and resources; prepare for yearly Administrative Reviews, emergency programs; and utilize standard operating procedures (SOP).

Training Topics

- 3210- Manage staff work including scheduling.
- 3220- Oversee SOPs for routine operations.
- 3230- Evaluate and utilize resources to promote a healthy school environment.
- 3240- Develop and implement emergency and disaster plans as needed.
- 3250- Manage water, energy, and waste.

- 3260- Prepare for yearly Administrative Reviews.

Financial Management - 3300

Learning Objective

Employee will be able to manage procedures and records for compliance with resource management with efficiency and accuracy in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations, as well as the Administrative Review.

Training Topics

- 3310- Implement a system of checks and balances to ensure accuracy and integrity of meal counting and claiming, funds collected, and record keeping.
- 3320- Establish and document appropriate accounting procedures for all revenues and expenses, ensuring that all procedures comply with federal, state, and local regulations and Administrative Review.
- 3330- Prepare a budget that appropriately reflects financial goals.
- 3340- Analyze financial statements and accounting procedures to make informed financial decisions and ensure alignment with budget and regulations.
- 3350- Recommend prices for meals and other food items to district authorities, maintaining compliance with federal, state, and local guidelines.
- 3360- Communicate financial goals, status, and other data to appropriate district and state authorities.

Human Resources and Staff Training - 3400

Learning Objective

Employee will be able to implement human resources management practices through maintenance and familiarity with current personnel policies and procedures and support employees through training and retention strategies.

Training Topics

- 3410- Understand and apply human resource management practices.
- 3420- Implement current personnel policies and procedures.
- 3430- Develop employee training plans, including a plan for tracking training.
- 3440- Implement a system for retention, promotion, and recognition.
- 3450- Foster employee health, safety, and wellness (includes training on First Aid and CPR).

Facilities and Equipment Planning - 3500

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to evaluate school nutrition program equipment and facilities to ensure maximum efficiency and availability of healthy food choices.

Training Topics

- 3510- Evaluate/plan facilities and equipment to meet program goals.
- 3520- Maintain plans for purchasing and maintaining equipment.

Key Area: Communications and Marketing

Learning Objective
Employee will be able to develop plans that include involvement with school and community members, empower school nutrition leaders, and address excelled customer service.

Training Topics

- 4110- Develop strategic plans and marketing plans that reflect program goals and enhance interaction with stakeholder.
- 4120- Promote the child nutrition program.
- 4130- Empower school nutrition professionals to provide excellent customer service.
- 4140- Develop communications skills.
- 4150- Communicate within the school and to the community through multiple approaches to inform and educate stakeholders.
- 4160- Create an environment that engages students to select and consume healthy foods with minimum waste, including smarter lunchroom techniques.

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