

Professional Standards Topics and Training Hours for the Complying with Healthy Food Certification Training Modules

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) final rule, *Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the HHFKA of 2010*, requires minimum education standards and annual training standards for school nutrition professionals who manage and operate the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#) and [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#). These standards ensure that school nutrition personnel have the knowledge, training, and tools needed to plan, prepare, and purchase healthy products to create nutritious, safe, and enjoyable school meals.

Connecticut public schools that participate in the NSLP and choose to implement the healthy food option of [Healthy Food Certification \(HFC\)](#) under [Section 10-215f](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) must comply with the [Connecticut Nutrition Standards \(CNS\)](#) for competitive foods. The CNS applies to all foods available for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals and all foods served in the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP).

The USDA requires that schools participating in the NSLP and SBP must comply with the [Smart Snacks nutrition standards](#) for all competitive foods sold on school campus during the school day. HFC schools comply with Smart Snacks because the CNS is stricter and meets or exceeds the Smart Snacks food standards. As a result, HFC training counts as training for Smart Snacks. School nutrition personnel in HFC public schools may use the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Complying with Healthy Food Certification](#) training program to count toward the annual training hours required by the USDA's [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Program Professionals](#).

Training Description

The CSDE's [Complying with Healthy Food Certification](#) training program is a series of recorded modules that provide guidance on how to meet the requirements for HFC under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes and the related state and federal laws for competitive foods in schools. This training program is intended for the district's designated HFC contact person and individuals who coordinate sales of competitive foods to students on school premises. Examples include school food service staff and coordinators of food and beverage sales such as fundraiser coordinators, school store operators, vending machine operators, teachers and other school staff, athletic directors, and leaders of student organizations and parent groups.

USDA Key Areas and Training Topics

The CSDE's [Complying with Healthy Food Certification](#) training program meets the USDA's Professional Standards training topics below.

- **Key Area:** Administration – 3000
- **Training Topic:** Healthy School Environment (3230)

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Training Hours

The chart below provides a description of each module and indicates its length. Completing all six modules of the CSDE's *Complying with Healthy Food Certification* training program provides **5.75 training hours** toward the USDA's Professional Standards annual training requirements. Completing less than six modules provides the specific training hours indicated for each module in the second column.

Professional Standards Contribution of CSDE's Complying with HFC Modules

Module	Training hours	Module description
Module 1: Introduction to Training and HFC (length 30:15)	0.5	Introduces the training modules, provides an overview of HFC and the CNS, and highlights key resources for more information.
Module 2: HFC Requirements (length 56:11)	0.75	Reviews the HFC requirements including when the CNS applies to different sources of food sales and the exemption criteria for noncompliant foods. Includes a knowledge about when the CNS applies to different sources of foods available in schools.
Module 3: Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) (length 1:00:48)	1.0	Reviews the CNS for the six food categories including the general nutrition standards, nutrient standards, and prohibited ingredients. Includes knowledge checks about the CNS entree definition and the food group general standard.
Module 4: Evaluating Foods for CNS Compliance (length 45:25)	0.75	Explains how to evaluate foods for CNS compliance, including commercial products and foods made from scratch, and identifies compliance strategies to ensure that all foods comply with the CNS.
Module 5: Laws for Foods and Beverages in HFC Schools (length 1:06:07)	1.0	Reviews the federal and state laws that apply to foods and beverages in HFC schools, including the USDA's Smart Snacks beverage standards, the state beverage statute, the state statute requiring nutritious and low-fat foods, and the state competitive foods regulations. Includes a knowledge check about when the laws apply.

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Module	Training hours	Module description
Module 6: Fundraisers (length 1:24:13)	1.25	Addresses the three categories of allowable fundraisers that may sell foods and beverages to students on school premises, identifies the requirements for different types of fundraisers and provides guidance on how they can comply with these requirements, describes compliance strategies that districts can use to ensure that all fundraisers meet the state and federal laws for HFC schools. Includes a knowledge check about allowable fundraisers.

Resources

Complying with Healthy Food Certification (CSDE training program):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/healthy-food-certification/related-resources#ComplyingHFC>

Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/Professional_Standards_Guide.pdf

Professional Standards (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/professional-standards>

Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Professional-Standards-for-School-Nutrition-Professionals>

Professional Standards Learning Objectives (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/ps_learningobjectives.pdf

Professional Standards Training Topics (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/cn/ps_trainingtopics.pdf

USDA) final rule, Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the HHFKA of 2010:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/fr-030215>

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#) webpage or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/hfc/complyinghfc/complying_with_hfc_meeting_usda_professional_standards.pdf.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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