

# Professional Standards Topics and Training Hours for the Determining Eligibility 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 HFFKA 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. This document summarizes the training hours and professional standards topics provided by the CSDE’s training program, *Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs and Summer Food Service Program*.

## Training Description

The CSDE’s *Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs and Summer Food Service Program* training program is a series of recorded modules that provide comprehensive guidance on complying with the USDA regulations for determining a child’s eligibility for free or reduced-price meals or free milk in the school nutrition programs and free meals in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). This training program is intended for the staff responsible for approving applications for free and reduced-price meals or free milk, conducting direct certification, and ensuring the accuracy of eligibility determinations through the verification process.

## USDA Key Areas and Training Topics

The CSDE’s *Determining Eligibility* training program meets the USDA’s Professional Standards training topics for the key area of 3000 “Free and Reduced-price Meal Benefits.” This key area includes the training topics below.

- 3110 Eligibility
- 3120 Direct Certification

## Training Hours

Table 1 summarizes the training hours in each module. Completing all seven modules of the CSDE’s *Determining Eligibility* training program provides **4.75 training hours** toward the annual training requirements of the USDA’s Professional Standards. Completing less than seven modules provides the specific training hours indicated for each module (refer to table 1). For example, a person who only completes modules 1 and 2 earns 1.5 training hours.

## Professional Standards Topics and Training Hours for the Determining Eligibility Training Modules

**Table 1: Professional Standards Contribution of  
CSDE's Determining Eligibility Training Modules**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Training hours *</b>	<b>Description</b>
1: Introduction to Application Certification and Verification (length: 25:27)	<b>0.25</b>	Introduces the training modules, provides an overview of the application and verification process, identifies important terms and documents, and highlights relevant resources for managing requirements and deadlines.
2: Processing Applications (length: 1:22:12)	<b>1.25</b>	Reviews the requirements for processing free and reduced-price meal or milk a applications including flagging applications, error-prone applications, notifying households of eligibility, application addenda, processing timeframes, carryover and transfer of eligibility, requirements for a complete application, calculating income on an application, applications for foster children, handling written SNAP or TFA case numbers, web-based applications, verification for cause, benefit issuance document, independent review of applications, records retention, and appeal procedures.
3: Direct Certification (length: 44:37)	<b>0.5</b>	Reviews the requirements for the direct certification process, including the types of direct certification, hierarchy of eligibility, CSDE's Direct Certification Web Application, direct certification of foster children, and records retention for direct certification. Also includes "DC or Not DC," a quiz to test participants' knowledge about direct certification.
4: Test Your Knowledge About Processing Applications (length: 30:55 plus 30 minutes for worksheet activity)	<b>1.0</b>	Provides an activity to test participants' knowledge about processing applications by reviewing seven examples of a completed Application for Free and Reduced-price School Meals or Free Milk. This module is based on the information provided in modules 1-3.
5: Confidentiality and Disclosure (length: 21:20)	<b>0.25</b>	Reviews the confidentiality requirements for directly certifying students and processing applications, including preventing overt identification of students' eligibility status and restrictions for disclosing student's personal information.

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Module	Training hours *	Description
6: Verification and 7: Completing the FNS 742 Verification Summary Report <i>CSDE's Verification Webinar,</i> 9-27-2022 (length:1:01:48)	1	Reviews the requirements for conducting the annual verification process and completing the FNS 742 Verification Summary Report.
* Completing all seven modules provides 4.75 training hours. Completing less than seven modules provides the specific training hours indicated above for each module.		

### Resources

Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs and Summer Food Service Program (CSDE's Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials>

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

[https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/Professional\\_Standards\\_Guide.pdf](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](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](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>

# Professional Standards Topics and Training Hours for the Determining Eligibility Training Modules



For more information, visit the CSDE's [Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs and Summer Food Service Program 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/Training/DeterminingEligibility/Determining\\_Eligibility\\_Meeting\\_USDA\\_Professional\\_Standards.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/DeterminingEligibility/Determining_Eligibility_Meeting_USDA_Professional_Standards.pdf).

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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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