

# SNA CERTIFICATE PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## SNA Certificate in School Nutrition

1. Has SNA's Certificate Program changed with the release USDA's Professional Standard Requirements?

A: Yes, SNA made a number of changes to the certificate program to align with USDA's Professional Standard requirements. Visit [www.schoolnutrition.org/certificate](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/certificate) to see how SNA's certificate program has changed and the minimal impact it will have on your renewal requirements. For additional information on Professional Standards, please visit [www.schoolnutrition.org/ProfessionalStandards](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/ProfessionalStandards).

2. Are Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for SNA's Certificate different from annual training requirements for Professional Standards?

A. They are the same.

1 CEU = 1 hour of training for Professional Standards

3. What are the current Certificate Program fees?

A: As of October 1, 2017, the certificate program fees are:

Initial Application Fees	Member	Non-Member
Level 1	\$17.00	\$61.00
Level 2	\$22.00	\$73.00
Level 3	\$32.00	\$180.00

Renewal Fees	Member	Non-Member
Level 1	\$11.00	\$55.00
Level 2	\$13.00	\$65.00
Level 3	\$15.00	\$165.00

Reinstatement Member Fees	Initial	Annual Renewal	Total
Level 1 Member	\$17.00	\$11.00	<b>\$28.00</b>
Level 2 Member	\$22.00	\$13.00	<b>\$35.00</b>
Level 3 Member	\$32.00	\$15.00	<b>\$44.00</b>

Reinstatement Non-Member Fees	Initial	Annual Renewal	Total
Level 1 Non-Member	\$17.00	\$55.00	<b>\$72.00</b>
Level 2 Non-Member	\$22.00	\$65.00	<b>\$87.00</b>
Level 3 Non-Member	\$32.00	\$165.00	<b>\$197.00</b>

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### Applying for a SNA Certificate in School Nutrition

**4. Do I need to have a High School Diploma/GED to apply for Level 1?**

**A:** No, as of June 2014 the High School Diploma/GED requirement has been removed for Level 1. You will however, need to submit a copy of your High School Diploma/GED if applying for Levels 2 or 3.

**5. Could I send a copy of my college transcript or diploma instead of a High School Diploma/GED?**

**A:** Yes, SNA will accept a copy of your college transcript or diploma.

**6. If I am submitting my college transcripts, do I need to mail or fax in an official copy?**

**A:** No, unofficial copies of your college transcripts are accepted.

**7. Where is the Certificate Program application located?**

**A:** The Certificate Program application can be downloaded at:  
[www.schoolnutrition.org/certificate](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/certificate).

**8. Do I have to start at Level 1?**

**A:** No. You do not have to start at Level 1. [Review the requirements](#) for each level and determine if you have met the requirements for Level 2 or 3.

**9. Is there an initial application fee for the certificate program?**

**A:** Yes. Please note that the fee is non-refundable. The initial application fee covers SNA's processing cost. The initial application fees are:

Initial Application Fees	Member	Non-Member
Level 1	\$17.00	\$61.00
Level 2	\$22.00	\$73.00
Level 3	\$32.00	\$180.00

**10. Are associate members eligible to pay the member rate for the certificate?**

**A:** Yes. All current members of SNA are eligible to pay the member rate.

**11. What is the waiting period before I will receive a response for my status?**

**A:** It takes approximately 4 to 6 weeks for your application to be processed. If approved, you will receive a verification letter via mail with instructions on renewing. Members who are approved will be able to visit our website at [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org), login to My Account click on *My Account* and download their certificate at any time. SNA doesn't mail certificate cards.

If you are not approved, you will receive notice stating the reason why you did not earn your certificate. You must submit the requested documents within 30 calendar days of receipt of

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notice. **If your documents are not received within 30 calendar days, you will have to re-submit the entire application, documentation, and pay the initial application fee again.** Note that this fee is non-refundable.

### 12. Do states offer their own SNA-approved Nutrition Education and Food Safety & Sanitation Core Courses?

**A:** Yes. Some SNA State Associations offer their own SNA-approved Core Courses. To view a listing of these, please visit <https://schoolnutrition.org/Certificate/Approved-Nutrition-Education/>

### 13. I'm supposed to get a bonus or pay increase when I have achieved a certain level. How does that work and when will I get that?

**A:** SNA is not responsible for any monetary awards that you might receive related to your certificate level. These are unique agreements between you and your employer. Check with your supervisor or human resources department about documentation requirements and timelines.

## Certificate Program Renewal

### 14. What do I need to do to maintain my annual certificate?

**A:** The number of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) must be categorized in the four key areas: *Nutrition, Operations, Administration, and Communications/Marketing*. Due to SNA's realignment of the certificate program with USDA Professional Standards, you will be required to maintain the number of CEUs based on your level and membership type. The CEUs must be earned during your 12 month certificate period. You must also pay the annual renewal fee. You are responsible for maintaining records of CEUs earned each year and for renewing on time before your certificate expires.

**NOTE:** You are only required to submit CEU documentation to SNA if you receive an audit notice at the time you receive your renewal notice. For more information about how to obtain CEUs and the number required please visit:

<https://schoolnutrition.org/certificate/Maintaining-Certificate/>.

### 15. Will renewal notices be sent out?

**A:** Yes. Three months before your certificate program expiration date, SNA will send you (via mail) a renewal form. Simply submit the renewal form with payment to SNA at least 4-6 weeks prior to expiring. Click [here](#) to view a copy of the renewal form for the certificate program.

**NOTE:** If SNA has your email address in its database, you will also receive an email notification a few weeks prior to expiring. You are also able to pay your renewal fee online. To renew, visit [www.schoolnutrition.org/certrenew](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/certrenew).

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### 16. How will I know if I am picked for audit?

**A:** SNA uses an automated random selection process for audits and each month a percentage of individuals are audited during their renewal. If you are selected for an audit, notification to send CEU documentation to SNA will be included in your annual renewal notice.

### 17. If I'm audited, what kind of CEU documentation do I need to submit to SNA?

**A:** SNA will accept training tracking grids, certificates of completion, copies of rosters, college/university transcripts, program agendas, registration confirmation letters, badges, your *MyAccount* record on the SNA website or payment receipts. The documentation must include your SNA ID number, date, and amount of credits or CEUs you earned.

### 18. How often do I need to renew my certificate?

**A:** Your SNA certificate is valid for 12 months. You will have to pay a renewal fee every year. **Your renewal fee is separate from your membership dues.**

### 19. Is my certificate program renewal date the same as my membership renewal date?

**A:** No. Your certificate program renewal date and membership renewal dates are normally different.

### 20. What happens if I don't renew my SNA certificate?

**A:** If you fail to renew on time, you will have 90 days after your expiration date to reinstate. You will have to pay a reinstatement fee along with the annual fee due from the previous year. You will also have to submit documentation of CEUs earned for that year. SNA will mail you a reinstatement notice after your expiration date with instructions on how to reinstate. These fees are non-refundable.

## Ways to Earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

### 21. Does work experience count for CEU or Core Requirements?

**A:** No. Work experience cannot be used for CEUs or initial requirements for SNA's certificate or credentialing programs.

### 22. Do Back-to-School meetings count for CEUs?

**A:** It depends. Due to USDA's Professional Standards all CEUs must fall under the four key areas: *Nutrition, Operations, Administration, and Communications/Marketing*. Each hour of instructional time equals 1 CEU.

### 23. How many of the "To Your Credit" articles in *School Nutrition* magazine or Professional Development Articles (PDAs) can I use from the magazine to renew?

**A:** You can use a maximum of three (3) passing "To Your Credit" or PDA articles per year to renew your certificate. The passing grade is 80%. Each article is worth 1 CEU in a key area.

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PDA's can be completed online at [www.schoolnutrition.org/PDA](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/PDA). PDA's can only be used to renew. PDA's **cannot** be used for to earn a certificate or move up a level.

### **24. Is SNA going to keep track of all my CEUs?**

**A:** No. SNA will only maintain CEU records for SNA sponsored activities such as ANC, NLC, LAC, SNIC, and *School Nutrition* magazine PDAs. You are responsible for maintaining CEU records.

### **25. If I take a college course on writing children's books, can it count for CEUs?**

**A:** No. CEUs must be job-related professional growth experiences that relate to your job in school nutrition. CEUs must fall under the four key areas: *Nutrition, Operations, Administration, and Communications/Marketing.*

### **26. Can I take the same course twice within my annual certificate program period?**

**A:** No. Courses cannot be used twice for CEUs within the same annual period.

### **27. Can I carry CEUs over to my next certificate program period?**

**A:** No. When your SNA certificate is renewed, you start fresh with no CEUs. All CEUs must be earned within the annual period.

### **28. I have lost my certificate of completion for a course I took, where I can get a copy?**

**A:** You will need to contact the educational provider for a copy of your certificate of completion.

### **29. Do district meetings have to be approved for CEUs by the SNA State Association?**

**A:** No. Districts that have developed their own programs/meetings do not require approval for CEUs by the State Association but the CEUs must be in the four key areas. Each hour of instruction equals 1 CEU. The agenda can be used as CEU documentation for audit.

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### Key Areas and Initial Requirement Hours

**30. I have a course that is not labelled with a key area, how do I know that it will qualify for a key area?**

**A:** SNA provides a list of broad topics explaining the different courses/sessions that will be acceptable or considered key area training. These are aligned with USDA Professional Standards topics. [Click here](#) to view the list of course topics by key area.

**31. Do I still need to continue bundling two hours of CEUs to earn key area hours?**

**A:** No, SNA no longer requires bundled hours to count as key area hours. Instead, individuals can submit 1 CEU (1 hour of training) in a key area and apply it towards their initial requirements for Levels 2 and 3.

**32. Do key area programs have to be approved by the SNA State Association?**

**A:** SNA State Associations are able to approve in-state key area programs. Third party associations, individuals and districts offering key area programs within a state must receive approval from the State Association. Those offering key area programs in more than one state must receive approval from SNA Headquarters. For example, if a local distributor or food broker wants to offer a key area program in your state they must request approval from the state association. If on the other hand a school district wants to offer key area program in more than one state or nationwide, they will have to request approval from SNA headquarters.

**33. Is the National Restaurant Association an approved provider?**

**A:** No. The National Restaurant Association is not an approved provider, but SNA does accept NRA's ServSafe® as a Core Course.

**34. Why were Key Area 1 and Key Area 2 reordered so that Key Area 1 is now Nutrition?**

**A:** To align with Professional Standards key areas, SNA's Key Area 1 was switched to Nutrition and Key Area 2 to Operations. The number of hours required for each section has not changed, only the order in which it is listed.

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## Changing Levels

**35. I have Level 1 and I'm working to move up to Level 2. Do I need to take the Core Courses a second time?**

**A:** No. You only have to meet the difference in the key area training requirements between your current level and the level that you are applying for. For example: Level 2 (86 hours) – Level 1 (16 hours) current level = 70 hours of additional key area training difference. Note that there is a requirement on the number of hours you earn in each key area. To view the requirements for moving up a level, please click [here](#).

**36. Do I have to wait for my renewal before applying to move to another Level?**

**A:** No. You can apply to move to a higher level whenever you meet the eligibility requirements for that new level. You must submit the certificate program application with the documentation verifying the eligibility requirements for the higher level, along with the initial application fee for the new level. Once you change levels, you will have a new certificate program expiration date.