



Certificate in School Nutrition

PROGRAM GUIDE

Aligned with USDA Professional Standards



Level 1



Level 2



Level 3



Level 4

schoolnutrition.org/Certificate

August 2026



Certificate in School Nutrition

Program Guide

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[NEW: APPLY ONLINE](#)

SNA Certificate Program Overview/ Alignment with USDA Professional Standards

Earning a Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4 SNA Certificate in School Nutrition shows your commitment to your profession and helps you stay current on the job. SNA's Certificate Program is based on the standards of practice in the four key areas of the Keys to Excellence Program and, SNA's Certificate Program is aligned with USDA Professional Standards.

Level 1 is aligned with USDA Professional Standards continuing education requirements. Renewals are based on membership type.

Employees/staff should consult with their manager/supervisor to determine training plans in the four key areas.

Table A.

Membership Type	SNA CEU Requirements for Level 1	Professional Standards Required Annual Training Hours
Staff less than 20 hours	6 CEUs	4 Training Hours
Employees/Staff	6 CEUs	6 Training Hours
Managers	10 CEUs	10 Training Hours
Directors	12 CEUs	12 Training Hours
State Agency Directors	15 CEUs	15 Training Hours

**You should ALWAYS keep a file of all training documentation
in the event you are randomly selected for an audit.**

Professional Standards Resources: schoolnutrition.org/professionalstandards

Earn Your SNA Certificate in Three Simple Steps

Step 1: Academic Experience & Requirements

First, determine if you have met all the academic experience and requirements for the certificate level that you would like to apply for. The initial requirements and annual CEU requirements for each of the 4 levels are listed in this guide.

Step 2: Documentation and Payment

You have three options when applying for the certificate and submitting the required training documentation. You may submit proof of **ALL** training documents along with the cover sheet **OR** your manager may review your training and then sign the cover sheet providing confirmation. If your supervisor signs the cover sheet you **DO NOT** need to send the supporting documentation. You should **ALWAYS** keep a file of all training documentation in the event you are randomly selected for an audit.

OPTION 1 – [Online Application \(NEW\)](#)

This option includes applying online, including paying and submitting all proof of training documentation. Instructions on how to apply online are available in the [Certificate Member Portal FAQs](#)

- [Pay Online](#)
- Submit all proof of training documentation
- Submit the completed application

OPTION 2a – Paper Application

This option includes the certificate program cover sheet. The cover sheet assists in verifying your training with the documentation you submit. *The cover sheet is optional for initial Level 1 submissions.*

- List all training on the [Certificate Program Submission Cover Sheet](#)
- Submit all proof of training documentation
- Submit the completed [Certificate Program Submission Cover Sheet](#)
- Submit the completed [application](#), documentation and the appropriate fees

OPTION 2b – Paper Application (Supervisor Approval)

This option provides verification of your training documentation and required training by your supervisor. If you utilize this option, you **DO NOT** need to submit all of your documentation, **ONLY** the cover sheet, verified and signed by your supervisor, **AND** a copy of your High School Diploma/ GED/ College transcripts.

- List all training on the [Certificate Program Submission Cover Sheet](#)
- Have your supervisor review and confirm training and required education then sign the cover sheet
- Submit the completed and signed [Certificate Program Submission Cover Sheet](#)
- Submit the completed [application](#), documentation and the appropriate fees

Step 3: Celebrate!

Upon approval of your application, SNA will send you a verification letter to confirm you earned your SNA Certificate in School Nutrition. Please allow 3-5 business days for your online application to be reviewed. It can take 4-6 weeks for your application to be processed if sent by mail. **Your SNA Certificate is valid for one year from month of approval.**



Level 1

Initial Level 1 Application Requirements

1. Eight (8) hour Core Course in Nutrition **OR** 1 College Credit in Nutrition **AND**
 2. Eight (8) hour Core Course in Food Safety & Sanitation
- CEUs must be categorized by Key Topic Area based on the USDA Professional Standards.
 - CEUs CANNOT date back further than five (5) years from the date you apply.
 - College credits have no expiration.

Annual Renewal Requirements Required annual training hours can be in one or all key areas.

Employees	Managers	Directors	State Agency
6 CEUs	10 CEUs	12 CEUs	15 CEUs

Level 1 Application Fees

Member: \$20.00

Non-Member: \$76.00

How You Can Earn CEUs

- [SNA Live Webinars](#)
- [USDA Training Programs](#)
- [SNA Approved Core Courses](#)
- [SNA Conferences & Meetings](#)
- [SNA Webinars On-Demand \(SNA Members only\)](#)
- [SNA Professional Development Articles \(PDAs\)](#)
- [Institute of Child Nutrition \(ICN\)](#)
- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics \(AND\)](#)
- [Association of Nutrition and Foodservice Professionals](#)
- School Districts (ie back to school workshops and trainings)



Level 2

- CEUs must be categorized by Key Topic Area based on the USDA Professional Standards.
- CEUs CANNOT date back further than five (5) years from the date you apply.
- College credits have no expiration.

Initial Level 2 Requirements

- 8 Hour Core Course in Food Safety & Sanitation
- 8 Hour Core Course in Nutrition Education **OR** 1 College Credit in Nutrition
- 6 Hours: Key Area 1 Nutrition
- 6 hours: Key Area 2 Operations
- 6 hours: Key Area 3 Administration
- 6 hours: Key Area 4 Communications & Marketing
- 6 hours: General Electives

Include a copy of your:

- High School Diploma **OR** High School Transcripts **OR** GED **OR**
- College/University Degree **OR** Transcripts

Annual Renewal Requirements: Level 2 Required annual training hours can be in one or all key areas

Employees	Managers	Directors	State Agency
8 CEUs	10 CEUs	12 CEUs	15 CEUs

Level 2 Application Fees

Member: \$23.00

Non-Member: \$83.00

How You Can Earn CEUs

- [SNA Live Webinars](#)
- [USDA Training Programs](#)
- [SNA Approved Core Courses](#)
- [SNA Conferences & Meetings](#)
- [SNA Webinars On-Demand \(SNA Members Only\)](#)
- [SNA Professional Development Articles \(PDAs\)](#)
- [Institute of Child Nutrition \(ICN\)](#)
- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics \(AND\)](#)
- [Association of Nutrition and Foodservice Professionals](#)
- School Districts (ie back to school workshops and trainings)



Level 3

- CEUs must be categorized by Key Topic Area based on the USDA Professional Standards.
- CEUs CANNOT date back further than five (5) years from the date you apply.
- College credits have no expiration.

Initial Level 3 Requirements

- 8 Hour Core Course in Food Safety & Sanitation
- 8 Hour Core Course in Nutrition Education **OR** 1 College Credit in Nutrition
- 15 Hours: Key Area 1 Nutrition
- 15 hours: Key Area 2 Operations
- 15 hours: Key Area 3 Administration
- 15 hours: Key Area 4 Communications & Marketing
- 10 hours: General Electives

Include a copy of your:

- High School Diploma **OR** High School Transcripts **OR** GED **OR**
- College/University Degree **OR** Transcripts

Annual Renewal Requirements: Level 3 Required annual training hours can be in one or all key areas

Employees	Managers	Directors	State Agency
10 CEUs	10 CEUs	12 CEUs	15 CEUs

Level 3 Application Fees

Member: \$25.00

Non-Member: \$88.00

How You Can Earn CEUs

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNA Live Webinars • USDA Training Programs • SNA Approved Core Courses • SNA Conferences & Meetings • SNA Webinars On-Demand (SNA Members only) • SNA Professional Development Articles (PDAs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) • Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) • Association of Nutrition and Foodservice Professionals • School Districts (ie back to school workshops and trainings) |
|---|--|



Level 4

- CEUs must be categorized by Key Topic Area based on the USDA Professional Standards.
- CEUs CANNOT date back further than five (5) years from the date you apply.
- College credits have no expiration.

Initial Level 4 Requirements

Option A

1. 8 Hour Core Course: Food Safety & Sanitation
 2. 3 College Credits: Key Area 1 Nutrition
 3. 3 College Credits: Key Area 2 Operations
 4. 3 College Credits: Key Area 3 Administration
- AND/OR:**
- 3 College Credits: Key Area 4 Comm. & Marketing

Option B

1. 8 Hour Core Course: Food Safety & Sanitation
 2. 8 Hour Core Course: Nutrition Education
- OR:** 1 College Credit: Key Area 1 Nutrition
3. 35 Hours: Key Area 1 Nutrition
 4. 35 Hours: Key Area 2 Operations
 5. 45 Hours: Key Area 3 Administration
- AND/OR:** Key Area 4 Comm. & Marketing
6. 15 General electives in any of the four key areas

For either option, include a copy of your:

- High School Diploma **OR** High School Transcripts **OR** GED **OR**
- College/University Degree **OR** Transcripts

Annual Renewal Requirements: Level 4 Required annual training hours can be in one or all key areas

Employees

12 CEUs

Managers

12 CEUs

Directors

12 CEUs

State Agency

15 CEUs

Level 4 Application Fees

Member: \$35.00

Non-Member: \$205.00

How You Can Earn CEUs

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNA Live Webinars • USDA Training Programs • SNA Approved Core Courses • SNA Conferences & Meetings • SNA Webinars On-Demand (SNA Members only) • SNA Professional Development Articles (PDAs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) • Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) • Association of Nutrition and Foodservice Professionals • School Districts (ie back to school workshops and trainings) |
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Calculating CEUs and Training Hours

The purpose of CEUs (Continuing Education Units) is to provide job-related professional development and growth experiences. Annual training (earning CEUs) is a requirement for both USDA Professional Standards and maintaining your Certificate in School Nutrition or SNS Credential.

CEU Requirements

- 1 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) = 1 hour of training for Professional Standards
- CEUs must be a minimum of 15 minutes in length.
- CEUs CANNOT date back further than five (5) years from the date you apply.
- **Renewal CEUs must be completed during the certificate year.**
- Education earned in the four key areas can be used to meet the initial requirements for Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4 certificate.
- Initial hour requirements can also be met by using college credits. *See college credit conversion on the next page.*

How to Earn CEUs

There are a number of resources for earning CEUs.

Webinars, workshops and/or conferences

- SNA Live Webinars
- SNA Webinars On-Demand
- SNA Conferences & Meetings

Online trainings

- SNA Approved Core Courses
- [Institute of Child Nutrition \(ICN\) Online Training](#)
- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics \(AND\) Online Courses](#)

Additional Training Sources

- State Agencies
- [USDA Training Programs](#)
- SNA State Associations and Chapters
- [Association of Nutrition and Foodservice Professionals](#)
- School Districts (back to school workshops and trainings)
- Universities and Colleges (including home study and correspondence courses)
- Industry and Allied Organizations

CEUs can also be earned by

- Teaching a class (first time only) – 1 CEU
- Publishing an article in a national journal/magazine – 1 CEU

College credit conversion

- 1 Credit Course = 15 hours
- 2 Credit Course = 30 hours
- 3 Credit Course = 45 hours

Learn about SNA Membership! Members have access to ALL SNA's on demand webinars for FREE!

<http://schoolnutrition.org/membership/>

Maintaining Your Certificate

- **Your SNA Certificate is valid for one year.** Three months before your certificate is due to expire, SNA will email and mail you a renewal notice. It is your responsibility to renew on time to avoid your certificate expiring.
- **To keep your Certificate current, you must obtain CEUs within your annual certificate period and pay your yearly renewal fee. Employees/staff should consult with their manager/supervisor to determine training plans in the four Key Areas.**
- Each individual is responsible for maintaining and keeping records of CEUs earned and the Key Topic Area.
- **SNA will check proof of CEUs via a random audit.** Only those chosen for the audit will be required to send in documentation of CEUs earned. If you are selected for an audit, a notification to send CEU documentation to SNA will be included in your annual renewal notice.
- Submit your annual renewal fee with the renewal form to SNA at least four weeks prior to expiring.
- After SNA reviews and approves your certificate renewal, you will receive notification of approval. Please allow 3-5 business days for your online renewal to be processed. It can take 4-6 weeks for your renewal to be processed if sent by mail.
- To show your school district that you obtained your certificate, you can print a copy from the My Account section of the website (www.schoolnutrition.org).
- If your renewal form is incomplete, you will receive an email explaining what is required to maintain your certificate.
- In order to pay the member renewal rate, your SNA membership status must be active during your entire certificate period. If your membership status was inactive at any point, you will be required to pay the non-member rate.

Annual Certificate Renewal Fees

Certificate Level	Member Annual Renewal Fee	Non-Member Annual Renewal Fee
Level 1	\$14.00	\$70.00
Level 2	\$15.00	\$75.00
Level 3	\$17.00	\$80.00
Level 4	\$20.00	\$190.00

Note: Annual fees are subject to change at any time.

Audit Information

SNA will check proof of CEUs via a random audit. Only those chosen for the audit will be required to send in documentation of CEUs earned. If you are selected for an audit, notification to send CEU documentation to SNA will be included in your annual renewal notice.

Required Renewal Hours

Membership Type	SNA CEU Requirements for Level 1	Professional Standards Required Annual Training Hours
Staff less than 20 hours	6 CEUs	4 Hours
Staff/Employees	6 CEUs	6 Hours
Managers	10 CEUs	10 Hours
Directors	12 CEUs	12 Hours
State Agency Directors	15 CEUs	15 Hours

Membership Type	SNA CEU Requirements for Level 2	Professional Standards Required Annual Training Hours
Staff/Employees	8 CEUs	8 Hours
Managers	10 CEUs	10 Hours
Directors	12 CEUs	12 Hours
State Agency Directors	15 CEUs	15 Hours

Membership Type	SNA CEU Requirements for Level 3 (Old Level 2)	Professional Standards Required Annual Training Hours
Staff/Employees	10 CEUs	6 Hours
Managers	10 CEUs	10 Hours
Directors	12 CEUs	12 Hours
State Agency Directors	15 CEUs	15 Hours

Membership Type	SNA CEU Requirements for Level 4 (Old Level 3)	Professional Standards Required Annual Training Hours
Staff/Employees	12 CEUs	6 Hours
Managers	12 CEUs	10 Hours
Directors	12 CEUs	12 Hours
State Agency Directors	15 CEUs	15 Hours

CEU Documentation Accepted by SNA

- Tracking Grids
- Certificates of Completion
- Program Agendas
- College/University transcripts
- Registration Confirmation Letters
- Copies of Roster

You should ALWAYS keep a file of all training documentation in the event you are randomly selected for an audit.

Professional Standards Resources: schoolnutrition.org/professionalstandards