

Reminder of Hiring Standards for School Nutrition Program Directors

This is a reminder that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has specific hiring and training standards for a school nutrition program director, commonly referred to as a school food service director (FSD). **Non-compliance with these hiring standards may result in findings during an administrative review potentially including unallowable costs for the salary and benefits of a director hired that does not meet the required standards.**

When hiring a new FSD, please remember that they are subject to meeting minimum education requirements as specified in [USDA memo SP 05-2020](#)ⁱ: *Questions & Answers Regarding Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Program Personnel*. There are different educational requirements for the FSD, based on the student enrollment size of the local educational agency (LEA). USDA has allowed additional flexibilities for LEAs with a student enrollment of 2,499 students or less and more information is provided in the [USDA Professional Standards flyer](#)ⁱⁱ.

If a School Food Authority (SFA) contracts with a food service management company (FSMC) or has a vended meal contract, USDA states that because the SFA maintains oversight of the school meal programs when contracting meal services, hiring, and training standards also apply to the SFA person overseeing the contract. **This means business managers or others at the LEA level who oversee the FSMC or vended meal contract must meet the required standards or be subject to the same potential findings as noted above.**

At the SFA level, the person overseeing the contract must meet the education and experience requirements for a FSD, based on the student enrollment size. At the SFA level, the employee placed on-site by the FSMC to manage the day-to day operations is considered the FSD and must meet education and experience requirements, based on the student enrollment size.

Please direct any questions regarding USDA Professional Standards to Linda Stull at stullL@michigan.gov.

ⁱ <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/SP05-2020os.pdf>

ⁱⁱ https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/Professional_Standards_Flyer.pdf