School Nutrition Association (SNA)
Certification and Credentialing Program FAQ’s

CERTIFICATION QUESTIONS

Initial Certification

1. When does the new certification program start?
   
   A: The new certification program will take effect on September 1, 2008.

2. When will the new Certification Guide be available?
   
   A: The new Certification Guide will be available in hardcopy by ANC 2008 in Philadelphia, PA. The Guide will be posted on SNA’s website for download. *Make sure to throw away the old Certification Handbook (the orange book).*

3. Do I have to start at Level 1?
   
   A: No. You do not have to start at Level 1. Simply review the requirements for each certification Level described in the Certification Guide and determine if you have met the requirements for that Level.

4. Do you need Core Requirements for every Level?
   
   A: Yes. Core Requirements are required for every certification Level. The Core Courses are:
   • 10 Hour Nutrition Education Course (i.e. Healthy EDGE or SNA-approved equivalent course)
   • 10 Hour Sanitation/Safety Course (i.e. ServSafe or SNA-approved equivalent course)

5. Is there an initial application fee for certification?
   
   A: Yes. Beginning August 1, 2008, there is an initial application fee when applying for certification. Please note that the fee is non-refundable. The initial application fee covers SNA’s processing cost.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Certification Application Fee</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Non-Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>$ 10</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>$ 12</td>
<td>$ 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>$ 25</td>
<td>$ 175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Are associate members eligible to pay the member rate for certification?
   
   A: Yes. All current members of SNA are eligible to pay the member rate for certification.
7. What is the waiting period before I will receive a response for my certification?

A: It takes approximately four to six weeks for your application to be processed. If you are approved, you will receive notification in the mail which includes: instructions on your responsibilities and procedures for certification renewal and a Personal Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Record form. Members who are approved for certification will be able to visit our website at www.schoolnutrition.org, login to MySNA and download a copy of their certificate at any time. SNA will no longer mail certification cards. The certification expiration date will be printed on your membership card and you will receive that at the time you renew your SNA membership.

If you are not approved, you will receive notice stating the reason why you did not become certified with SNA. You must submit the requested documents within 30 calendar days of receipt of 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.

8. What does the “Some College Credit” Academic Experience mean when using Table A for Level 3?

A: This means that you must have completed at least one college credit course prior to applying for certification. A copy of a transcript or diploma must be submitted as documentation when you are applying for Level 3 and using the requirements listed in Table A. NOTE: If applying for Level 3 using Table B, you are only required to submit a copy of your high school diploma/GED.

9. I took a safety and sanitation course about seven years ago. Can I use that for my Core Course requirement?

A: No. Core Requirement Courses must be taken within five years of your certification application date. College courses can be used no matter how long ago they were taken.

10. What's the difference between Serving It Safe and ServSafe ®?

A: Both of these are sanitation and safety courses that have been approved as Core Courses. Serving It Safe was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. ServSafe ® was developed by the National Restaurant Association. To become SNA-certified, you must take either one of these two courses, the Sanitation & Safety exam offered by the Dietary Managers Association (wwwDMAonline.org), or an SNA-approved equivalent course offered by your state.

11. Why do Core Courses offered by State Affiliates and third party associations have to be submitted to SNA for approval?

A: SNA will be responsible for approving and tracking all Core Courses. This will assure that the content of the courses is up to date and meets the objectives across the country.
12. Do states offer their own SNA-approved Nutrition Education Courses and Sanitation/Safety Courses?

A: Yes. Some SNA State Affiliates offer their own SNA-approved Nutrition Education Courses and Sanitation/Safety Courses. Note that previously approved courses will be re-evaluated every 5 years. To find out what’s available in your state, please visit SNA’s website at www.schoolnutrition.org and click on “Certification”.

Grandfathering

13. When will I be rolled into the new certification program?

A: Beginning September 1, 2008, if you are applying for initial certification, you will be automatically enrolled into the new certification program and will have an annual certification renewal and fee payment. If you are currently certified with SNA and your certification expires on or before September 1, 2011, you will be enrolled into the new system at the time of your certification expiration date. Your certification will then expire annually and will have to pay an annual renewal fee.

Changing Levels

14. I have Level 1 certification but am working to move up to Level 2. Do I need to take Core Courses a second time?

A: No. You only have to meet the difference in the Key Area Hour requirements between your current certification level and the level that you are applying for. For example: Level 2 (90 hours) – Level 1 (20 hours) current level of certification = 70 Key Area Hours difference. Note that there is a requirement on the number of hours you earn in each Key Area. Please review the Certification Guide for details.

15. 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 certification application with the documentation verifying the eligibility requirements for the higher level, along with the appropriate fee for the new level. Once you change Levels, you will have a new certification expiration date.

Certification Renewal

16. What do I need to do to maintain my certification?

A: You need to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for certification renewal within your annual certification period and pay a renewal fee. You are responsible for maintaining records of CEUs earned each year. It is your responsibility to renew your certification on time to avoid your
certification being cancelled and having to re-apply for a new certification. **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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification Levels</th>
<th>CEUs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>6 CEUs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>12 CEUs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>18 CEUs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Will notices be sent out to individuals who are certified?

**A:** Yes. Three months before your certification is scheduled to expire, SNA will send you (via mail) a letter and renewal form. Simply submit the renewal form with payment to SNA to renew your certification.

18. What would trigger an audit? Do you use a percentage? How will I know if I am picked for audit?

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

19. If I’m audited, what kind of CEU documentation do I need to submit to SNA?

**A:** CEUs can be verified with several forms of documentation. These include certificates of completion, copies of rosters, college/university transcripts, program agendas, program books/brochures, registration confirmation letters, badges, or payment receipts. The documentation must include your SNA ID number, date, and amount of credits you earned.

20. If I’ve just renewed, do I have to renew again next year?

**A:** Yes. Certification is valid for one year. You will have to renew and pay the renewal fee every year.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Certification Renewal Fee</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Non-Member</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>$ 5</td>
<td>$ 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>$ 6</td>
<td>$ 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>$ 8</td>
<td>$ 160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. Is my certification renewal date the same as my membership renewal date?

**A:** No. Your certification renewal date and membership renewal dates are different.
22. What happens if I don’t renew my certification?

A: If you fail to renew your certification on time, you will have to re-apply for initial certification, meet the requirements for initial certification and pay the initial certification fee. Note that this fee is non-refundable.

Ways to Earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

23. Does work experience count for CEU or Core Requirements?

A: No. Work experience is not part of the new certification program.

24. Do Back-to-School meetings count for CEUs?

A: Yes. Attending Back-to-School workshops counts for CEUs. Each hour of instructional time equals 1 CEU.

25. 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 my certification?

A: You can use a maximum of three (3) passing “To Your Credit” or PDA articles per year to renew your certification. The passing grade is 80%. Each article is worth 1 CEU. Articles must be published and submitted within your current renewal period.

26. Is SNA going to keep track of all my CEUs?

A: No. SNA will only maintain CEU records if you’ve attended SNA sponsored activities. You are responsible for maintaining records of all CEUs earned.

27. What would serve as documentation for CEUs at the school site?

A: You can submit a letter from your school principal, nurse, manager or director documenting your participation in a 1 hour CEU activity.

28. 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 foodservice and nutrition.

29. Can I take the same course twice within my yearly certification period?

A: No. Courses may not be repeated and used twice for CEUs within the same annual certification period.
30. Can I carry CEUs over to my next certification period?

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

31. Do state affiliate programs have to be pre-approved by SNA?

   A: The only courses that have to be pre-approved by SNA are the Core Courses including Nutrition Education alternatives and Safety/Sanitation alternatives.

32. Do the state affiliates still send in the rosters? When will SNA stop recording/processing the states rosters?

   A: States are able to send in rosters until August 1, 2008. Beginning September 1, 2008, SNA will stop processing rosters. At that time, those certified will have to keep track of their own CEU records.

33. Do district workshops have to be approved by state SNA?

   A: No. They do not require approval. Each hour of instruction time is worth 1 CEU. The agenda can be used as documentation.

**Key Area Hours**

34. Do I have to take the test for sanitation or just the course?

   A: You do not need to take the Sanitation test for SNA Certification you can simply take the course; however, some courses have a required test as do some states.

35. Do Key Area programs/courses have to be approved at the state level?

   A: States are able to approve in-state Key Area programs/courses. Third party associations offering Key Area programs within a state must receive approval from SNA State Affiliate. Third party associations offering Key Area Courses in more than one state must receive approval from SNA Headquarters. For example, if a local distributor or food broker wants to offer CEUs for a program in your state they must request approval from the state affiliate. If on the other hand the distributor wants to offer the program in more than one state or nationwide, they will have to request approval from SNA headquarters.

36. 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.
Trainer Certification

37. Is trainer certification required to teach all classes or only core classes?
   A: Healthy EDGE is the only Core Course required to be taught by a SNA Certified Trainer.

38. How do we find a trainer certification workshop?
   A: The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) is developing a trainer certification workshop that will be available online. Minnesota SNA has also developed a trainer certification workshop. Additionally, many colleges and universities offer Adult Education Courses.

39. What else can I use for the 10 hour trainer certification workshop?
   A: Completing a minimum 1 credit college course in Adult Education is the alternate to the trainer certification workshop.

40. I have a college degree in Education. Do I still need to take the 10 hour trainer certification workshop and submit documentation?
   A: No. If you have a college degree in Education you have already completed a method of teaching or adult education college course. This meets the 10 hour trainer certification workshop requirement.

41. Can you teach ServSafe if only certified to teach Healthy EDGE and grandfathered in?
   A: No. ServSafe is managed by the National Restaurant Association. Trainers must meet the requirements set by NRA. ServSafe requires NRA trainer certification.

CREDENTIALING QUESTIONS

42. Were changes made to the SNS Credential Program requirements?
   A: No. The SNS Credential Program requirements remain the same.

43. Is there a fee for taking the Credentialing Exam?
   A: Yes. The SNS Credential exam application fee will increase beginning August 1, 2008. The new application fee is $150 for members and $245 for non-members. If you are not deemed eligible to sit for the exam or cancel your exam registration, you will receive a refund of the exam application fee minus the processing fee of $25. Those who earn the SNS Credential will pay a yearly maintenance fee. The new maintenance fee for members is $35 and non-members is $130.
44. Do I need to be or become certified to sit for the Credentialing Exam?

A: No. You do not need to be certified in order to sit for the Credentialing Exam. Certification and Credentialing are two different programs offered by SNA.

45. I want to take the SNS Credentialing exam. How do I do that?

A: The Credentialing Exam Handbook contains the requirements, exam content outline, listing of resource materials and application to apply for the exam. You may call the SNA Service Center to request a Handbook be mailed to you, or you can download it by visiting www.schoolnutrition.org and clicking on “Credentialing.” The website also provides information on exam locations and dates. The Credentialing Exam Study Guide, 2nd edition is one of several resource tools for the exam. It addresses broad topics essential to school nutrition programs; however, it is not intended to be the sole source for preparing for the SNS exam. It may be purchased for $40 through the SNA Emporium toll Free at 800-728-0728.

46. I took the SNS exam, how long will it take for me to receive the results from the exam?

A: The exam is scored by an independent testing vendor and it takes approximately 8 weeks after the exam date for the results to be issued. If you have successfully passed the credentialing exam, you are given the designation SNS as well as a card and certificate displaying the SNS designation. If you fail the exam, you’ll receive a diagnostic report that shows which areas you scored weakest on.

47. I passed the SNS exam, how long is my credentialing renewal period?

A: The credentialing renewal period is every 3 years.

48. Is there an annual fee for maintaining my SNS Credential?

A: Yes. The annual maintenance fee for the SNS Credentialing will increase beginning August 1, 2008. The new annual maintenance fee is $35 for members and a $130 for non-members. You will receive an invoice on the anniversary month of the date when you took the credentialing exam.

49. My SNS Credential is scheduled to expire soon. Do I need to submit documentation of my CEUs?

A: No. You are not required to submit documentation of earning 45 CEUs unless you are randomly selected for an audit. With your SNS renewal notice, you will be notified if you are randomly selected for audit. SNA will maintain CEUs for SNA sponsored activities that you attend. You may view and print your transcript online at www.schoolnutrition.org; click on My SNA.

50. How can I host the SNS Credentialing exam in my state?

A: Contact Shantal Hall, SNA Certification & Credentialing Manager at shall@schoolnutrition.org or (800) 877-8822, ext. 180 for details on hosting the SNS Credentialing exam.