



# **TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK**

## **AN ONGOING PROJECT OF THE TASN EDUCATION COMMITTEE & SUBCOMMITTEE**

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**This handbook is available on the TASN website at [www.TASN.net](http://www.TASN.net)**

# FOREWORD

The Certification Handbook is designed to provide information to association members, school districts, interested agencies, and individuals in regard to training programs, courses of study, and certification developed and implemented by the Texas Association for School Nutrition.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Texas Association for School Nutrition Education Committee & Sub Committee is grateful to the individuals and groups of people across the state for their assistance in promoting professionalism and growth in the career of school food service. The long-term project of developing a quality educational program is the result of the dedication and involvement of the TASN members, officers, committees, retirees, colleges, instructors, Texas Education Agency, Texas Department of Agriculture, Region Education Service Centers, and local school districts.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Texas Association for School Nutrition Education Committee & Sub Committee is to provide a current quality education program with timely data for the purpose of continuous improvement of the Child Nutrition Program.

## GOALS

- To improve competency in job performance as evidenced by excellence in school nutrition programs.
- To provide a means of recognition by peers and other professionals for all levels of employees in school nutrition.
- To promote the building of pride and self-esteem by involvement in the TASN training program.
- To establish a recognized career ladder system for the advancement of school food service personnel.
- To educate membership about the educational opportunities offered by the School Nutrition Association (SNA).

# REQUIREMENTS

## CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

There are three categories of requirements for TASN Certification. They are as follows:

1. Membership in TASN is a requirement for certification. If dues are not received thirty (30) days after the expiration date, the member shall automatically forfeit membership, certifications, and all other rights and privileges.
2. Work experience in school food service.
3. Required courses directly related to the **school food service field**.

The program progresses from basic skills to managerial and administrative responsibilities from Level 1 to Level 5. Each course level requires a certain number of certification hours and experience. The individual may select training courses that will enhance their job skills; however, **levels require specific number of hours or courses**.

### TASN Certification Program is from Level 1 to Level 5

TASN members are also encouraged to participate in the School Nutrition Association Certification program and with careful course selection, members can become both TASN and SNA certified at the same time.

## **Certification Responsibilities**

### Member responsibilities:

- When a member is signing up for class(s) they must write their name as it appears on the TASN membership card.
- When taking courses, it is the member's responsibility to make certain that the course counts at the level the member is working toward.
- Each course certificate may only be used once per level for certification or re-certification.
- It is the member's responsibility to determine that a course is approved by our TASN Headquarters for self-study **prior** to taking the course.

### Helpful Tips:

- Please submit all certificates for the level in which you are applying for in the same envelope, fax, or email. Keep in mind payment **may not be collected via phone or email** for confidentiality purposes.
- All required course hours must be attended in order to receive a certificate of completion, partial credit will **NOT** be given. If a member needs to miss class time due to an illness or family/personal emergency, a letter written by the member must be submitted to the Headquarters office in order to receive credit for time attended.
- A variety of courses must be submitted when applying for certification; multiple certificates for the same course will not be accepted.

There is a **grace period of 90 days** from the certification or re-certification expiration date for the member to certify for the next level or re-certify the same level. Effective 10/1/2016, if the member does not apply to certify for the next level or re-certify for their current level within the 90 day grace period they will be required to re-start the certification program with Level 1.

## EXPIRATION OF COURSES

All courses expire after 5 years, unless they are college credit (transcript) courses. Courses may not be used for certification or re-certification after they have expired.

## **COURSES TAKEN AT COLLEGES**

### **Semester/College Hours**

College courses that are part of a degree plan that is related to nutrition, dietetics, food service, food service management, or directly related field will count towards certification.

Each 4 semester hours of college credit in a food service related field is equivalent to 16 hours of TASN Certification credit.

A college transcript is a permanent record; therefore, these credit hours never expire. They may be used as certification credit at any time. They may be used for re-certification, however, only if taken during the three-year re-certification period.

## **COURSE SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

Course sponsors (Local TASN chapters, school districts, industry partners, and ESCs) should at all times strive to publicize the correct USDA professional standards code(s) for each course offered. If there is any question regarding the appropriate code for a course, the sponsor should contact the Certification Department at the TASN headquarters prior to advertising the course.

**Confusion among members can be avoided if the sponsor publicizes the correct USDA professional standards code(s) for each course offered.**

### **Course approvals:**

If the course is part of a workshop, the approval form must be sent in at least **45 days** in advance due to Professional Standard Guidelines.

If the course is an in-district course (only applies to district-wide employees), the approval form must be sent in at least **30 days** in advance.

Courses must be a minimum of 2 hours. If a sponsor would like to teach a course in smaller increments these times must be combined on one certificate to total 2+ hours.

Once your course request is approved. TASN will create a certificate template for you that includes the statement: "this class has been approved by TASN". **If you choose to use your own course certificate, you must submit this along with the course request. The template should include: Professional Standard Code(s), title of course, Instructors name, date, student name, number of CEU's.**

### **Requirement to teach TASN approved courses:**

Instructor must be one of these:

- TASN or SNA Level 3 or higher & completed a course dealing with training Adult Learners within the previous 5 years. (Recommended Train the Trainer)
- Bachelor's Degree & Resume
- Associates Degree + 2 years School Food Service Experience & Resume
- 5 years' experience in the Key Training Area assigned to teach & Resume
- 5 years' experience training/presenting to groups & Resume

Training, presenting to groups, and subject matter expert should be evidenced on submitted resume is required.

## **Levels of Certification Structure for Courses (Effective July 1, 2020)**

The following courses are recommended but not limited to only these courses. A variety of courses must be taken for each certification level. Please verify that the course taken has been approved and qualifies under appropriate code and category. If you have any questions contact TASN HQ.

### **TASN Level 1 Requirements: A total of 16 Hours & 1 year school food service experience**

**Required courses are:**

4 hours Safety	4 hours Sanitation
4 hours Customer Service	4 hours recognizing a Reimbursable Meal

### **TASN Level 2 Requirements: A total of 48 Hours & 1 year school food service experience**

**Required courses must be related to Food Preparation.**

**HACCP courses can be used as it relates to food preparation.**

**Suggested Courses are:**

Quantity Food Preparation	Equipment use and maintenance
Work Simplification	HACCP Related Food Preparation

### **TASN Level 3 Requirements: A total of 64 Hours & 2 years' school food service experience**

**Required courses must focus on Compliance and/or Regulations and Nutrition.**

**Suggested Courses are:**

Compliance Guidance for Managers	Menu Planning
Food Buying Guide	Application Processing
Inventory, Receiving & Storage	Nutrition
Computer Applications (Except Basic Computer)	

### **TASN Level 4 requirements: A total of 64 Hours & 2 years' school food service experience**

**Required courses will focus on Management and Human Relations.**

**Suggested Courses are:**

Managing Employees	Interpersonal Skills/Customer Service
Employee Discipline	Train the Trainer
Successful Program Operations	AR (Administrative Review)
Counting & Claiming	Food Production Records
Required Records	Eligibility Guidance
Texas Public School Nutrition	

**OR**

2 years' school food service experience and completion of the TASN Managers Academy (32 hours) with 75% score on the exit exam. (See Manager Academy details below)

### **TASN Level 5 requirements: A total of 72 Hours & 3 years' school food service experience**

**Required courses must be related to Advanced Management.**

4 options are:

1. A total of 72 hours & 3 years' school food service experience
2. 3 years' school food service experience and successful completion of TASN Administrative Academy and at least a 75% on the exit exam.
3. 2 years' school food service experience with an unofficial transcript of an Associate's Degree and successful completion of TASN Administrative Academy and at least a 75% on the exit exam.
4. Bachelor's Degree with an unofficial transcript showing degree related to nutrition, dietetics, food service management, or directly related field will count towards certification.

## **Train the Trainer Certification**

Members who wish to take TASN approved Train the Trainer Course must be TASN Level 3 certified before taking the course.

## **TASN Approved Managers Academy**

Presently, TASN offers a Managers Academy Program which allows participants to receive Level 4 certification. \* It is preferred that the member has a food handler's certificate. To attend Managers Academy a member must be an active member, have two years in school food service experience and submit a letter of recommendation from the district supervisor or director. After successful completion of the academy and a 75% or higher on the exit exam the member may submit a TASN certification application and appropriate payment with a copy of the TASN Managers Academy certificate.

No other "Manager" Academies will be accepted for the certification credit at Level 4 unless it has been preapproved by the TASN Education Committee. Contact TASN HQ for any questions or academy approval.

Managers Academy is offered annually at Board Meetings and as requested and approved during the summer.

## **TASN Approved Administrative Academy**

In addition to the Managers Academy, TASN sponsors an Administrative Academy that allows participants to receive Level 5 certification. To attend Administrative Academy a member must be a member in good standing, 3 years school food service experience OR an unofficial transcript of an Associate Degree + 2 years' of school food service experience OR Bachelor's Degree in a related field, and submit a letter of recommendation or sponsor letter from their Superintendent/Director.

Administrative Academy is offered annually at Board Meetings and as requested and approved during the summer.

***\*All required course hours for any training program must be attended in order to receive a certificate of completion, partial credit will NOT be given.***

## **TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

***\*Courses covering required courses must be pre-approved by TASN, except when developed or sponsored by the following:***

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics	Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN)	Texas Assoc. for School Nutrition (TASN)
American Heart Association	National Restaurant Association	Texas Region Education Service Centers
American Red Cross	School Nutrition Association (SNA)	Texas Dept. of Agriculture (TDA)
Dietary Managers' Association	School Nutrition Foundation	Texas Dept. of Health and Human Services
	TX Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics	Texas Education Agency (TEA)
	Texas Association for School Business Officials (TASBO)	US Dept. of Agriculture

\*When taking courses, it is the member's responsibility to make certain that the course counts at the level the member is working toward and applies to the USDA professional standards. Contact TASN headquarters for course questions.

## **Food Handler Requirements**

Effective September 1, 2016, the Texas Department of State Health Services (TXDSHS), under Texas Food Establishment Rules (TFER) §228.33, requires that "all food employees shall successfully complete an accredited food handler training course, within 60 days of employment"; exemptions from this course may apply. TASN will accept a course certificate of completion from state accredited sources that may be applied towards two (2) hours for Level 1 certification or Level 1-5 re-certification, unless otherwise specified.

Additional information regarding the food handler program may be located online at:  
<http://www.dshs.texas.gov/food-handlers/default.aspx>

## **Retirees/Individuals No Longer Employed in School Food Service**

1. Retirees re-entering the workforce will be allowed to resume the certification level they held during their last year before retirement with an active membership.
2. After three years the retiree must re-certify with the required number of re-certification hours in effect at the time he/she re-certifies. Failure to re-certify within three years of returning to the work force will make the retiree subject to the same re-certification requirements as any other TASN certified member.

## **RE-CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES**

Re-Certification certificates are issued for a three-year period. As a courtesy, a notice of expiration is mailed to members, district, or to designated address 60 days prior to expiration. It is, however, the responsibility of the member to keep track of the expiration date and to keep TASN updated with the current mailing addresses. The individual must complete a current application form and submit it with the appropriate fee(s) to the TASN office prior to the expiration date shown on the certificate.

There is a **grace period of 90 days** from the expiration date for the member to re-certify. Effective 10/1/2016, if the member does not apply to re-certify for their current level within the 90 day grace period they will be required to re-start the certification program with Level 1. A member may not re-certify greater than **120 days** prior to their expiration date.

### **Required Training Hours Requirements for Re-Certification**

- |             |                                                 |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Level 1     | 8 hours, in any combination of approved hours.  |
| Level 2 – 5 | 32 hours, in any combination of approved hours. |

### **FEES**

Fees for processing certification and re-certification applications are set by the TASN Board and are subject to review as needed. The amount is published in the TASNews and is printed on the application form.

If an applicant applies for certification or re-certification and does not meet the requirements, the fee is not refunded. However, a credit will be extended for one year from the date of receipt at TASN Headquarters Office provided the individual meets the requirements within that period.

## CERTIFICATION APPLICATION

**\*Please note: Your TASN membership is a one year membership. You must renew your membership each year for your certification to remain in active (approved) status. Membership must be renewed within 30 days of the expiration**

**INFORMATION: Please print all information and sign the completed application**

Name _____	TASN Membership # _____ Certification # _____
School District _____	Title _____
Address _____	City _____ Zip Code _____
Telephone Home _____	Work _____
Email _____	Fax _____

**EXPERIENCE**

Check present job title	# of years in each position
<input type="checkbox"/> Specialist/Helper/Cashier	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Manager/Asst. Manager/Trainee	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor/Director/Administrator	_____
Total years of experience in school food service	_____

**FORMAL EDUCATION**

Check highest level completed:

<input type="checkbox"/> Below High School Level	<input type="checkbox"/> GED or High School Diploma
<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of Credit (or 20-30 college hours toward a degree plan in a food service related field)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree
<input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree	

**CERTIFICATION**

Last Certification Level \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ **\$20 per Level**

(Please attach copies of your certificates for the level that you are applying for.)

Indicate below which level of certification for which you are applying:

<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5
----------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------

I, the undersigned, verify the accuracy of the information contained in this application. Furthermore, I understand that any certificate issued by TASN which is based upon information found to be false will be revoked and the person to whom the certificate was issued will be subject to denial of any other certificate issued by TASN. I hereby give permission to release information regarding certification records to the authorized representative of the school district where I am employed.

Signature of Applicant _____	Title _____	Date _____
Signature of School Nutrition Official _____	Title _____	Date _____

**Payment Information:**

Discover \_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_ Master Card \_\_\_ Amex \_\_\_ Credit Card or Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Security Code (On back of card) \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Amount Enclosed/Charged: \_\_\_\_\_**

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address (if different from Certification address): \_\_\_\_\_



**RE-CERTIFICATION APPLICATION**

**Applicant must be a current TASN member in order to become re-certified. The fee for re-certification is a total of \$20.00.**

<b>INFORMATION</b>	
Name _____	TASN Membership # _____ Certification # _____
School District _____	Title _____
Address _____	City _____ Zip Code _____
Telephone Home _____	Work _____
Email _____	Fax _____
Last Certification Date _____	
Last Level of Certification _____	Years of Experience _____

**(Must also attach copies of all certificates to this application when submitting to TASN HQ)**

I, the undersigned, verify the accuracy of the information contained in this application. Furthermore, I understand that any certificate issued by TASN which is based upon information found to be false will be revoked and the person to whom the certificate was issued will be subject to denial of any other certificate issued by TASN. I hereby give permission to release information regarding certification records to the authorized representative of the school district where I am employed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of School Nutrition Official Title Date

<b>Payment Information: TASN USE ONLY</b>	
Discover _____ Visa _____ Master Card _____ AmEx _____	Credit Card/Check # _____
Security Code (On back of card) _____	Expiration Date _____
Total Amount Enclosed/Charged: _____	
Name on Card: _____	Billing Zip Code: _____
Billing Address (if different from above address): _____ _____	

## REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF CERTIFICATION TRAINING

All training applicants must complete this form for **each** class offered. (This includes all ESC's) If you are requesting approval for multiple courses, please use the attached spreadsheet.

If course materials that are being used are already TASN approved, please complete Part 1 and submit to TASN at least **45 days prior to scheduled training**. If the course is an in-district course (only applies to district-wide employees), the approval form must be sent in at least **30 day in advance**.

If the course materials that are being used have **not** been approved by TASN, please complete Part 1 and Part 2 and submit to TASN at least **60 days prior to schedule training**.

Materials that need to be approved by TASN need to be submitted to TASN via email in PDF or by regular mail.

Courses must be a minimum of 2 hours. If a sponsor would like to teach a course in smaller increments these times must be combined on one certificate to total 2+ hours.

Once your course request is approved. TASN will create a certificate template for you that includes the statement: "this class has been approved by TASN". **If you choose to use your own course certificate, submit along with this request. The template should include: Professional Standard Code(s), title of course, Instructors name, date, student name, number of CEU's.**

***If class is not pre-approved by TASN Headquarters the class will NOT be considered for TASN Certification or Re-certification. (Please review the list of Professional Standard Codes and TASN Levels on the TASN website at <http://www.tasn.net/certification-overview>)***

### PART 1

#### TRAINING SPONSOR INFORMATION

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 School District/Business \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

#### TRAINING INFORMATION

TASN Certification Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TASN Level: \_\_\_\_\_ In-district \_\_\_\_\_ Open Workshop \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location of Training \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date(s) of Class: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Actual Certification Hours per scheduled dates:

<u>Course Code</u>	<u>Time Class Starts and Ends</u>	<u>Total Hours</u>
PS Code: _____	From _____ To _____	Total Hours per class _____
PS Code: _____	From _____ To _____	Total Hours per class _____
PS Code: _____	From _____ To _____	Total Hours per class _____

**Check if approved training materials are being used (must attach course syllabus and training material)**

**PART 2**

**PROGRAM INFORMATION**

**Training Objectives (must attach course syllabus and all training materials)** Total Hours \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Training Sponsor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Instructor must be one of these:

- TASN or SNA Level 3 or higher & completed a course dealing with training Adult Learners within the previous 5 years. (Recommended Train the Trainer)
- Bachelor's Degree & Resume
- Associates Degree + 2 years School Food Service Experience & Resume
- 5 years' experience in the Key Training Area assigned to teach & Resume
- 5 years' experience training/presenting to groups & Resume

Training, presenting to groups, and subject matter expert should be evidenced on submitted resume is required.

**INSTRUCTOR**

Only the approved material may be taught.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ TASN Member Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ TASN Certification Level \_\_\_\_\_

Credentials if not TASN member/certified \_\_\_\_\_

**Check if TASN Train the Trainer certified or other Adult Learner Certificate (submit copy)**

**Check if unofficial transcript or resume is included**

**Check if unofficial transcript or resume is on file**

**\*After course is completed, send copy of Course Sign-in Sheets and Evaluations to TASN Headquarters.**

**FOR TASN USE ONLY**

**(Approved or Unapproved application will be sent to district prior to the class date.**

**A certificate template will be attached for hosting district or ESC to prepare for each participant)**

Approved                       Not approved                      for \_\_\_\_\_ hours of Level \_\_\_\_\_ Certification

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Education/Training Specialist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Course Title	PS Code	TASN Level (TASN use only)	Instructor	Hours	Date of Class	Class Description	Material Resource (ICN, TDA, ESC)	NOTES (TASN use only)

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AND HOSTING CERTIFICATION WORKSHOPS**

Many food service employees seek the opportunity to take certification courses for the purpose of improving competency on the job and to use for credit toward TASN certification. Your local chapter of TASN or your School Nutrition Department can be of assistance to these individuals by sponsoring classes within your school district. To plan and organize a class, please follow these steps:

- 1) Assess the needs of your population to identify which required training area courses to offer.
- 2) Contact your TASN Area Representative to seek help in the implementation of this program or call the Certification Department at the TASN Headquarters Office.
- 3) The Request for Approval form is found in the appendix section and website.
- 4) Determine date, time, and location for courses. Determine the length of training. Classes should be scheduled in segments based on convenience of students, available facilities, and teachers. Inquire about cost of facilities and services that are based on policy of the local school district. Clear these plans through the sponsoring administrator.
- 5) Set class fees and minimum number of students required based on anticipated costs of overall project. Set class maximum based on available facilities and logistics of teacher/student ratio.
- 6) Consider qualifications, salary, and availability of teachers. TASN requires that teachers have a thorough and current knowledge of subject matter.
- 7) Salary is determined by the sponsoring agency.
- 8) As soon as course offerings are determined, contact teachers regarding class assignment, teaching materials, and contracts.
- 9) Develop a registration form that includes student information:
  - a) Name
  - b) Membership Number
  - c) Address
  - d) Telephone number
  - e) School District
  - f) Choice or choices of required courses offered
- 10) Advertise and publicize.
- 11) Hold registration and tally results to determine which classes "made". Contact persons who requested classes that did not "make" and offer other choices.
- 12) Finalize request for facilities.
- 13) Prepare rosters to use for class rolls and attendance.
- 14) Prior to class time: plan classroom arrangements and supplies for classes and consult with assigned teacher for necessary teaching supplies. Examples of items that may be needed:
  - a) Audio/visual equipment
  - b) Print student booklets based on numbers enrolled.
  - c) Name tags
  - d) Rosters, forms for certificates and tracking
  - e) Demonstration or laboratory supplies
  - f) Break and meal schedule
  - g) Expense form
  - h) Teacher "Code of Ethics"
- 15) On the day of the class:
  - a) Open building at least 30 minutes before classes start.
  - b) Have people and signs to direct students to classrooms and help with late registrations.
  - c) Proceed with classes.
- 16) Complete follow-up by submitting attendance sheets and evaluations to TASN HQ.  
Teachers will be given TASN re-certification certificate by workshop sponsor.