

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Food and Feed Safety Division**

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Title: Training Assignments and Records-Retail Foods SOP	

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to describe the process for RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM TRAINING, specifically classroom coursework assignment, completion, record entry, review of records including classroom and field training, and entry and monitoring of continuing education.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM TRAINING and includes instructions for RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM STAFF. The procedure does not apply to the Manufactured Food Program or to audits. Specific field training requirements are found in *FOOD.20.04 – Retail Field Training SOP*.

3. BACKGROUND

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) – Food and Feed Safety Division (FFSD) conducts training for Retail Food Inspection staff based on the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (VNRFRPS) along with program training needs. The VNRFRPS requires inspectors to complete a five step training and standardization process in order to achieve the required level of competency. Inspectors must complete a series of pre-curriculum courses prior to conducting routine independent inspections (step one), complete a minimum of 25 joint field training inspections and complete two (2) successful evaluations (step two), complete a minimum of 25 independent inspections and any remaining post-curriculum courses (step three), completion of a standardization process (step four), and completion of 20 contact hours of continuing education every 36 months after the initial training is completed (step five). Deviations from the required 25 field inspections may be granted based on previous experience.

Steps one – four are to be completed within eighteen months of hire, and step five every thirty six months after the initial eighteen months of training. The standards also require that coursework, fieldwork, and continuing education is recorded and that records are maintained per the division Data Retention Schedule.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

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Retail Food Program Manager - The Retail Food Program Manager will designate QUALIFIED TRAINERS, assist in advising the TC/TSA on course assignment, review and assist in completion of the FDA training needs survey, and sign-off on approvals, affidavits, and corrective actions.

Retail Food Program Supervisor – The Retail Food Inspection Supervisors will advise the TC/TSA on what courses to assign staff, remind staff to complete training assignments and submit documentation, assist in training completion reviews, assist in designation of QUALIFIED TRAINERS, and sign-off on approvals, affidavits, and corrective actions.

Food Program Trainer – The Food Program Trainer will update training materials based on new procedures/regulations, provide training, and supply the TC/TSA with course attendance and completion information.

Training Coordinator (TC) and Training Standards Administrator (TSA) – The Training Coordinator and Training Standards Administrator will create training courses in the LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS), assign and coordinate the facilitation of online and classroom training, perform training completion reviews, complete the FDA training needs survey with assistance from the Program Manager, manage all training records and ensure that all staff are trained in processes and procedures as applicable to their job responsibilities.

Retail Food Inspector/Trainee – The Retail Food Inspector/Trainee will participate in all assigned training, identify further training needs, provide training records such as certificates, assessments, etc. and upload training records per the procedure.

5. DEFINITIONS

Contact Hour: An inspector qualifies for one contact hour of continuing education for each clock hour of participation. Contact hours for a specified presentation, course, or training activity will be recognized only one time within a 3-year continuing education period.

Current Experienced Staff: Current Experienced Staff are staff who were trained and began conducting Retail Food inspections prior to the initiation of the Retail Food Training Plan, which was December 2012.

Individual Training Record: Individual Training Records consist of training records from the LMS, SharePoint, and ORAU. They are provided to Supervisors by Training Coordinators or designee to review on an annual basis for performance reviews, verify completion of training, or as requested.

Learning Management System (LMS): The Learning Management System is a database which stores training records, materials, and recorded training sessions.

Retail Food Program Staff: All staff with full or partial funding from the Food Program's budget. This may include but is not limited to: inspectors, food program supervisors, and management.

Retail Food Program Training: The Retail Food Program Training consists of pre-curriculum, joint training, post-curriculum and independent inspections, standardization, and

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continuing education, as defined by the VNRFRPS and the Retail Food Program's *Retail Food Inspector Training Plan*. The training includes classroom training provided by MDA or external sources, online training, field training and evaluation, and independent study.

Newly Hired Experienced Staff: Staff with retail food regulatory experience received outside of the Retail Food Program.

Qualified Date: When an inspector has completed all coursework, fieldwork, and standardization. This date is not to exceed 18 months from the date of hire or assignment into the Retail Food Program. This date will also be used as the start date for the 3-year continuing education period.

Qualified Trainer: A Qualified trainer is a FFSD staff member designated by the Retail Food Program Manager or Division supervisor who has completed training requirements as needed for the training topic.

Start Date: Date inspector is newly hired or assigned to the Retail Food Program. Used as the start date for training timelines.

Training Record: A Training Record may be a certificate, sign-in sheet, evaluation, inspection report, affidavit/memo, supervisor approved database entry or any other piece of documentation which provides evidence that the RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM STAFF member completed the training.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1. Training Coursework - All

6.1.1. Complete all RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM TRAINING coursework within 18 months of inspector START DATE with the Retail Food Program.

- a. RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM TRAINING coursework consists of courses in the following subject areas:
 - i. Prevailing statutes, regulations, and ordinances
 - ii. Public health principles
 - iii. Emergency management
 - iv. Communication Skills
 - v. Microbiology
 - vi. Basics of HACCP
 - vii. Allergen management
 - viii. Basic food labeling
 - ix. Food defense awareness training
 - x. Sampling technique and preparation
 - xi. Traceback investigations

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- xii. Foodborne illness investigations/Epidemiology
- xiii. Plan Review
- xiv. Licensing
- xv. Recalls and Reportable Incidents
- xvi. Inspection Procedures
- xvii. Regulatory Enforcement

6.2 Course Creation and Assignment

Training Coordinator (TC)/Training Standards Administrator (TSA)

- 6.2.1 Create training courses in the LMS for each online or classroom training. Refer to *FOOD.20.02 – Course Description Development and Entry SOP* for course description development.
- 6.2.2 Assign training to RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM STAFF for each online and classroom course.
 - 6.2.2.1 Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – Office of Regulatory Affairs University (ORAU) – Set up food staff in FDAORAUSTATES (if not already) and create assignments.
 - 6.2.2.2 Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Training – Assign through LMS to all food staff listed on the circulation list in the SOP except for approver.
 - 6.2.2.3 Classroom (Internal or External) – Assign through LMS and create an Outlook appointment.
 - 6.2.2.4 All Other Online (Internal or External) – Assign through LMS.
- 6.2.3 Provide due dates for each course.
 - 6.2.3.1 Allow 14 to 30 days, depending on availability and length of course, to complete online training including SOP training.
 - 6.2.3.2 Send follow-up emails to trainee and supervisor if courses are not completed.
 - 6.2.3.3 If courses are more than two (2) weeks overdue and there is not an extenuating circumstance, notify the program manager.

6.3 Internal Classroom Training

TC/TSA

- 6.3.1 Schedule classroom and continuing education training based on the current training plan and supervisor/program manager advisement.
 - 6.3.1.1 Contact the QUALIFIED TRAINER to set up a date and time for the training at least four (4) weeks (when possible) prior to the requested training date to allow for scheduling. Copy Trainer's supervisor on the request.

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6.3.1.2 Once a date, time and location is confirmed with the QUALIFIED TRAINER:

- 6.3.1.2.1 Create an Outlook Appointment;
- 6.3.1.2.2 Reserve a training location and equipment (if applicable)
- 6.3.1.2.3 Print training materials (PowerPoint, handouts, course evaluations, etc.)

6.3.1.3 Provide a sign-in sheet to Trainer via email or hardcopy prior to the training.

Trainer

- 6.3.2 Respond to requests from the TC within two (2) days and provide availability information.
- 6.3.3 Prior to the classroom course, review training materials located on the Training SharePoint Site.
 - 6.3.3.1 Make updates to the current training materials in SharePoint based on new procedures, regulations, or training style. Confer with the TC and/or Supervisor as needed.
 - 6.3.3.2 If major, such as removing or adding directions, changes are made, save a new copy of the training and send the updated training material for review to at least one Supervisor and one Agricultural Consultant prior to delivery.
- 6.3.4 Send printing and equipment needs to the TC and TSA at least four (4) business days prior to the course.
- 6.3.5 Complete the training on the scheduled date.
- 6.3.6 Provide sign-in sheet and any required course evaluation surveys from the classroom training to the TC and TSA after the training.
- 6.3.7 Complete review of any assignments or exams and provide completed documents to the TC and TSA to be uploaded to the LMS or SharePoint.
- 6.3.8 Notify the TC, TSA, and Supervisor as soon as possible if the training date or time needs to change due to extenuating circumstances.
- 6.3.9 Provide feedback to the TC and TSA on successes and opportunities for improvement of training courses.

Trainee

- 6.3.10 Complete required prerequisites prior to the course.
- 6.3.11 Attend the classroom training assigned or notify TC, TSA, and direct supervisor if unable to attend.
 - 6.3.11.1 Be on time to the course. Contact the Trainer and TC/TSA if late or unable to attend the course because of unforeseen circumstances.
 - 6.3.11.2 Participate in all activities, assessments, and evaluations.

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6.3.11.3 Ask relevant questions.

6.3.12 After the training, complete any follow-up inspections or activities.

6.3.13 Apply classroom training to inspection work and submit any follow-up questions to the Trainer or Supervisor.

Supervisor

6.3.14 Review training topics with Trainee at check-ins and provide any additional information on the topics as needed.

6.4 FDA Classroom Training

Program Manager/Supervisor

6.4.1 Review and update the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) training needs survey at least annually or as needed with the Training Coordinator.

TC

6.4.2 Review, update, and complete the FDA training needs survey and pre-registration workbook at least annually or as needed with the Supervisors/Program Manager.

6.4.3 Send the FDA course description and registration forms to assigned trainees within five (5) working days from the date the information is received from the FDA.

6.4.4 Gather information from Inspectors/Trainees as necessary to complete the forms (special needs, emergency contact information).

6.4.5 Submit travel estimate, course announcement, justification, and funding string to the assigned support staff person for signature routing.

6.4.6 Verify Trainee has completed prerequisite training prior to the course and send the information to the FDA. Complete registration form prior to sending it to the FDA.

Trainee

6.4.7 Complete all course prerequisites prior to attending the course by due dates specified in the course announcement. If there are no due dates, complete prerequisite training at least two weeks prior to course. Submit an updated registration form to the TC with all completed prerequisites if requested.

6.4.7.1 Inform the TC if prerequisites are not complete.

6.4.8 Refer to section 6.7.2 of this SOP for directions regarding certificates.

6.4.9 Contact the TC and Supervisor if unable to attend the training due to unforeseen circumstances.

6.5 Other External/Non-FDA Classroom Training

TC

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- 6.5.1 Consult with Supervisors to identify yearly classroom training needs outside of FDA Conducted training.
- 6.5.2 Provide training opportunities to staff based on program needs, trainee areas of interest, training funds, and availability. Examples of training are below:
 - 6.5.2.1 Employee Development courses such as Enterprise Learning and Development (ELD) courses provided by Minnesota Management and Budget
 - 6.5.2.2 SharePoint and Microsoft Product Training provided by the Science Museum or other entity
 - 6.5.2.3 Training courses host by the Minnesota Food Safety and Defense Task Force or Food Safety Partnership
 - 6.5.2.4 Training courses hosted by university extension programs
- 6.5.3 Identify appropriate training and staff attendance in consultation with Supervisors.
- 6.5.4 Provide completed MDA forms and course description, registration form, agenda, etc. to the designated support staff person for signature routing.

Supervisor

- 6.5.5 Advise TC on training needs and courses based on staff requests or opportunities for improvement noted during performance reviews.
- 6.5.6 Identify staff that should attend each course announced based on identified needs/training gaps, requests, and seat availability. Work with other Supervisors if there are limited seating and involve the Program Manager as needed.

Trainee

- 6.5.7 Communicate training needs to Supervisor and TC.
- 6.5.8 Attend all assigned training and follow directions in section 6.7.2 regarding training documentation.

6.6 Online Training – External and Internal

TC/TSA

- 6.6.1 Assign all new or newly assigned Trainees Basic Online Training based on the current *Retail Food Inspector Training Plan*.
- 6.6.2 Set up accounts in the FDAORAUSTATES database. Do not assign a specific due date unless required as a prerequisite for other courses.
- 6.6.3 Verify all Basic online training is completed prior to official training approval.
- 6.6.4 Assign any additional online training, outside of Basic training, based on requests from supervisors, required course prerequisites, and new training topics such as the changes to regulations.

Trainee

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- 6.6.5 Complete assigned online training by the specified due date (if applicable) and notify TC and Supervisor if requested.
- 6.6.6 Complete all online training curriculum during office hours between field and classroom training.
 - 6.6.6.1 Notify Supervisor and TC/TSA when all Basic ORAU training is complete.
 - 6.6.6.2 Upload Incident Command System (ICS) certificates to Absorb once complete and notify TC/TSA for approval.

Supervisor

- 6.6.7 Verify new or newly assigned Trainees are completing online courses assigned on ORAU, Absorb, and ICS during check-ins and report approved requests (i.e.-due date extensions, etc.) to the TC.

6.7 Training Records

Trainee

- 6.7.1 Keep all TRAINING RECORD documentation in a personal training records file. The file may be electronic or paper. Never discard ANY TRAINING RECORD such as a certificate.
- 6.7.2 Upload all TRAINING RECORDS to the LMS within two (2) weeks of receiving a personal TRAINING RECORD as applicable.
 - 6.7.2.1 **Classroom Certificates:** Upload certificates to the LMS as courses are completed. If a course is not assigned and a certificate is received, contact the TC to assign or create a course.
 - 6.7.2.2 **Online Certificates:** Upload certificates to the LMS as courses are completed except for individual FDA-ORAU certificates (This record is stored in the FDA-ORAU database). If a course is not assigned and a certificate is received, contact the TC to assign or create a course.
 - 6.7.2.3 **Joint Field Training:** Follow the directions in *FOOD.20.04 – Retail Field Training SOP*.
 - 6.7.2.4 **Independent Field Training:** Follow the directions in *FOOD.20.04 – Retail Field Training SOP*.

TC/TSA

- 6.7.3 For all courses taken prior to being entered in LMS, enter all training records into the LMS and/or SharePoint as required within one (1) month of receiving the record.

6.8 Training Monitoring

TC/TSA

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- 6.8.1 Review certificates uploaded and complete the course in the LMS for the individual.
- 6.8.2 Review training records for assignments not completed for each RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM STAFF on a quarterly basis and send notification regarding missing training records or incomplete assigned courses to supervisors and program manager for further follow-up.

Supervisor

- 6.8.3 Remind staff to complete training assignments and submit appropriate documentation such as certificates.
- 6.8.4 Request reports from the TC as needed for annual performance reviews, audits, etc. and work with staff to complete missing training.

6.9 Corrective Actions

TC/TSA

- 6.9.1 RETAIL FOOD PROGRAM STAFF will be allowed two attempts to pass an exam for courses that contain quizzes.
- 6.9.2 After two failed attempts, a training corrective action form will need to be initiated by the inspector's Supervisor. Notify inspectors' Supervisor when a training corrective action form is needed for any training deficiency identified.

Supervisor

- 6.9.3 Complete and submit training corrective action forms as needed. Refer to *FOOD.WI.20.02 – Training Corrective Actions WI*.
 - a. Examples of a deficiency that will require a corrective action may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Failure to pass an LMS exam after two attempts.
 - ii. Failure to pass a field evaluation.
 - iii. Failure to complete required training or continuing education as required by procedures.

6.10 Training Approval

TC

- 6.10.1 Upon notification from the supervisor, verify all classroom and online training is complete prior to staff being approved to conduct independent inspections. Refer to *FOOD.20.04 – Retail Field Training SOP* for joint training inspection requirements.
- 6.10.2 Complete an INDIVIDUAL TRAINING RECORD using ORAU, Absorb, and SharePoint on an annual basis, when an inspector has completed all training for each type of inspection, or as requested.

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- 6.10.3 Provide this information to the Supervisor annually, prior to final independent inspection approval, or as requested. Supervisors may use this information for review or promotion purposes.

Supervisor

- 6.10.4 Review INDIVIDUAL TRAINING RECORD on an annual basis, prior to independent inspection approval, or prior to an employee review or promotion.
- 6.10.5 Contact the TC if there appear to be any discrepancies.

6.11 Continuing Education

Trainee

- 6.11.1 Participate in 20 CONTACT HOURS, of continuing education related to food safety every 36 months. This period starts based on the inspector's QUALIFIED DATE.
- 6.11.1.1 The following activities related specifically to food safety or food inspection work may qualify for CONTACT HOURS:
- 6.11.1.1.1 Attendance at FDA regional seminars/technical conferences;
- 6.11.1.1.2 Professional symposiums/college courses;
- 6.11.1.1.3 Food-related training provided by government agencies;
- 6.11.1.1.4 Food safety related conferences and workshops;
- 6.11.1.1.5 Distance learning opportunities that pertain to food safety; or
- 6.11.1.2 Of the 20 CONTACT HOURS of continuing education a maximum of 10 CONTACT HOURS may be accrued from the following activities:
- 6.11.1.2.1 Delivering presentations at professional conferences
- 6.11.1.2.2 Providing classroom and/or field training to newly hired inspectors, or being a course instructor in food safety; or
- 6.11.1.2.3 Publishing an original article in a peer-reviewed professional or trade association journal/periodical.
- 6.11.1.3 Of the 20 CONTACT HOURS of continuing education a maximum of 4 CONTACT HOURS may be accrued from reading technical publications related to food safety.
- 6.11.2 Log hours in SharePoint.
- 6.11.3 Documentation must accompany each activity submitted for continuing education credit. Examples of acceptable documentation include:
- 6.11.3.1 Certificates of completion indicating course date(s) and number of hours attended;
- 6.11.3.2 Transcripts from a college or university;

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- 6.11.3.3 A letter from the program administrator of the continuing education program attended;
- 6.11.3.4 A copy of the peer-reviewed article or presentation made at a professional conference; or documentation to verify technical publications related to food safety have been read including completion of self-assessment quizzes that accompany journal articles, written summaries of key points/findings presented in technical publications, and/or written book reports;
- 6.11.3.5 An agenda and attendance roster.

TC/TSA

- 6.11.4 Verify staff are entering continuing education on SharePoint.
- 6.11.5 Pull an annual report of entries and provide it to the supervisors for review. Use the Federal Fiscal Year to pull reports. For example: Oct 2015 to Sept 2016.
- 6.11.6 Identify inspectors that will require continuing education hours to meet the required hours and by the end of the fiscal year and coordinate with the inspector and supervisor to schedule training.

Supervisor

- 6.11.7 Review continuing education records provided by the TC on an annual basis.
- 6.11.8 Coordinate with the TC and Inspectors that need continuing education hours.
- 6.11.9 Remind staff to enter continuing education hours in SharePoint.

6.12 Affidavits

TC and Supervisor

- 6.12.1 Complete a training documentation affidavit (see *Training Affidavit - Retail Food*) for CURRENT EXPERIENCED STAFF as needed. The affidavit may cover:
 - 6.12.1.1 Previously completed required trainings for which the documentation can no longer be produced;
 - 6.12.1.2 Missing joint training inspection (JTI) completion records. If using the affidavit for the completion of JTIs, include the background or experience of the inspector that justifies a waiver of the JTI requirement. The supervisor will be required to observe the experienced inspector conduct at least two (2) inspections to determine any areas in need of improvement.
- 6.12.2 Do not use training affidavits for continuing education.
- 6.12.3 File all signed affidavits in the personal training file in Absorb.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS (includes References, Attachments)

Retail Food Inspector Training Plan

FOOD.WI.20.02 – Training Corrective Actions WI

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Training Corrective Action Form Template
 FOOD.20.04 – Retail Field Training SOP
 Training Affidavit – Retail Food Template

8. EQUIPMENT/MATERIALS NEEDED

Learning Management System
 SharePoint

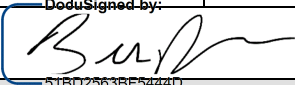
9. SAFETY

N/A

10. CIRCULATION

This policy will be circulated to the following groups: Retail Food Program Supervisors, Retail Food Program Management, Retail Food Inspectors, Training Coordinator, and Training Standards Administrator. The current version will be stored electronically on the FFSD document control site.

11. APPROVAL/DOCUMENT HISTORY

Document History		
Version #	Status (I, R)	Change History
1	I	Initial Policy Drafting.
DocuSigned by: 		4/11/2017
Approved By:		Date
Approved By:		Date

I = Initial document; R = Revised document