



# School Nutrition Association (SNA) CERTIFICATION QUESTIONS

## Those with a 3 Year Certification Period

### 1. When will I be enrolled into the new certification program?

**A:** If you are currently certified with SNA and you have a three year renewal period, you will be enrolled into the new program at the time of your certification expiration date once you renew. Your certification will then expire annually and you will have to pay an annual renewal fee.

#### 1a. How many PDA's can I submit?

**A:** If you are certified under SNA's old certification program (*you have a 3 year certification period*); you have no limit on the number of PDA's you can submit. Note that the fee for PDA's is non-refundable.

#### 1b. How many CEUs do I have to earn during my 3 year renewal period?

**A:** If you are certified under SNA's old certification program (*you have a 3 year certification period*); you will follow the CEU requirements under the old program. You will receive a notice for renewal 3 months prior to your expiration date. Simply complete the renewal form and submit the renewal payment. **NOTE: You are only required to submit documentation of CEUs if you receive a notice stating you are being audited.**

Certification Levels	CEUs
Level 1	15 CEUs during 3 year period
Level 2	30 CEUs during 3 year period
Level 3	45 CEUs during 3 year period

## Applying for Initial Certification

### 2. When did the new certification program start?

**A:** The new certification program took effect on September 1, 2008. Those applying for initial certification will be enrolled into the new certification program and will have an annual certification renewal and payment.

### 3. Where is the Certification Guide available?

**A:** The Certification Guide is available for download on SNA's website [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org). Click on Certification Program and then select Certification Documents to print out the Guide.

**4. Do I have to start at Level 1?**

**A:** No. You do not have to start at Level 1. Review the requirements for each certification Level described in the Certification Guide and determine if you have met the requirements for that Level.

**5. 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)

**6. Is there an initial application fee for certification?**

**A:** Yes. Beginning August 1, 2009, the initial application fees for certification will change. Please note that the fee is non-refundable. The initial application fee covers SNA's processing cost.

<b>Initial Certification Application Fee</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Non-Member</b>
Level 1	\$ 12	\$ 57
Level 2	\$ 15	\$ 68
Level 3	\$ 25	\$ 175

**7. 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.

**8. 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. Members who are approved for certification will be able to visit our website at [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://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 which will be mailed to you 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.

**9. 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 your college transcript 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.

**10. 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.

**11. 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 ([www.dmaonline.org](http://www.dmaonline.org)), or an SNA-approved equivalent course offered by your state.

**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](http://www.schoolnutrition.org) and click on “Certification Program”.

**13. I'm supposed to get a bonus or pay increase when I have achieved a certain certification level. How does that work and when will I get that?**

**A:** SNA is not responsible for any monetary awards that you might receive related to certification. These are unique agreements between you and your employer. Check with your supervisor or human resources department about documentation requirements and timelines.

## **Certification Renewal**

**14. 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.

Certification Levels	CEUs
Level 1	6 CEUs
Level 2	12 CEUs
Level 3	18 CEUs

**15. 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. **NOTE:** If we have your email address in our database, you will also receive an email notification a few weeks prior to expiring.

**16. 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.

**17. 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.

**18. 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.

Certification Renewal Fee	Member	Non-Member
Level 1	\$ 6	\$ 51
Level 2	\$ 7	\$ 61
Level 3	\$ 9	\$ 161

**19. Is my certification renewal date the same as my membership renewal date?**

**A:** No. Your certification renewal date and membership renewal dates are different.

**20. 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)**

### **21. Does work experience count for CEU or Core Requirements?**

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

### **22. 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.

### **23. 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.

### **24. 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.

### **25. 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.

### **26. 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.

### **27. 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.

### **28. 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.

### **29. Does SNA offer online courses?**

**A:** Yes. SNA offers online courses through its School Nutrition University (SNU) website at [www.snuniversity.org](http://www.snuniversity.org).

**30. Do the state affiliates still send in the rosters? When did SNA stop recording/processing the states rosters?**

**A:** State affiliates no longer have to submit rosters to SNA. Since September 1, 2008, SNA stopped processing rosters. Those certified are now responsible for keeping track of their own CEU records.

**31. Do district workshops have to be approved by the SNA Affiliate?**

**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**

**32. 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.

**33. Do Key Area programs/courses have to be approved by the SNA State Affiliate?**

**A:** SNA State Affiliates are able to approve in-state Key Area programs/courses. Third party associations offering Key Area programs within a state must receive approval from the 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.

**34. 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.

### **Changing Levels**

**35. 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.

**36. 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 initial application fee for the new level. Once you change Levels, you will have a new certification expiration date.

**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. What else can I use for the 10 hour trainer certification workshop?**

**A:** You can complete a 1 credit college course in Adult Education as the alternate to the trainer certification workshop.

**39. 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.

**40. 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.