

EFNEP/FSNE Orientation Information for New State Program Coordinators*

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Orientation for New FSNE and EFNEP State Program Coordinators

The goal of this Orientation information is to help new Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) statewide coordinators learn about the Extension Service, EFNEP, and FSNE. It is a tool to begin exploring/building/refining the core competencies needed to function well in these positions. Since each state maintains its own structure and position descriptions, it was necessary to use a common framework that would include many of the duties of a state coordinator. The national [*Core Competencies for State Coordinators*](#), developed in 2001 was therefore used to organize the information in this manual.

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Nutrition programming is the basis of EFNEP and FSNE. The statewide coordinator has expertise/skills in this area. Depending on individual and state needs, nutrition expertise is utilized in programming and research.
- K. Plans for the future
 - a. Personal evaluation of growth and skills through this process

A. Introduction

This manual for new state coordinators has been a dream for many years. Many of us coordinators and former coordinators have desired such a manual to assist us through the first year of learning our new positions. There are many facets and entities involved in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE). It is hard to get a good understanding of all the responsibilities from a job description.

This manual is designed to assist new state coordinators, or those wishing to review some information or components of their position. The manual grew out of the work of the Core Competency Committee, begun in May 2001, in which a group of seven state coordinators from EFNEP, FSNE, FFNEWS (Families First Nutrition Education and Wellness System) and the Nutrition Networks gathered to brainstorm the core competencies required of individuals in these positions. The *Core Competencies for State Coordinators* includes six competencies and tasks under each. There is a website for more information and a self-[assessment tool](#) which you will be encouraged to complete.

This manual will review the Extension Organization and the Core Competency process, and will focus on the six core competencies identified and tasks/skills involved. Organizing a manual that addresses the job descriptions of so many individuals is challenging. The Core Competency Committee agreed in the beginning to include a variety of tasks/skills that were involved in our own job descriptions or in another staff member's job description. Although you may not be responsible for completing all these tasks yourself, you may be responsible to ensure the task is completed.

When using this manual, focus on the tasks that are included in your job description first. Each section will have assignments to be completed. Many of the assignments include reviewing web-based information. Some require that you seek sources of information within your own state Extension Service. To complete some of the tasks, you will need to meet with and discuss issues with coworkers at your institution.

This manual can also be used as a quick reference to review information or seek resources for helpful information. It will be useful to print the manual as well as bookmark it on your web program.

B. The Extension Organization

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE) are educational programs offered through the state Cooperative Extension Service. In some states FSNE is operated in cooperation with University Nutrition Departments, state Health Departments, or other entities. This manual will focus on EFNEP and FSNE within the Extension Service.

It is important to have a background in the Extension Organization in order to see where EFNEP and FSNE fit in and to see how the programs need to be positioned in the larger organization. Extension is housed in the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

As part of an orientation to Extension, new employees often get an overview of Extension Service and the land-grant mission. Is this just good to know information, or is it critical to your work within Extension?

The following tasks allow you to explore some of the basics of the Extension Organization, learn acronyms and terms, discover the professional organizations and review the national EFNEP and FSNE websites.

Tasks	Date Completed	Comments
<p>Cooperative Extension and the Land-Grant Mission</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Using resources from your state’s Extension Publications, review the land-grant mission, the mission of Cooperative Extension, and the program components available in your state. Consider how EFNEP/FSNE fits into the structure at the state level. Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) is the agency of USDA in which the Cooperative Extension Service is housed. Review general information about CSREES using the website http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/efnep.html Review the document “ The Extension System: A Vision for the 21st Century-Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP)” https://www.nasulgc.org/NetCommunity/Document.Doc?id=152 . This publication is also available in print in state Extension offices. 		
<p>Your State Extension Organization</p> <p>It is important to understand how Extension is organized at the county and state level and learn general job responsibilities in order to understand your working relationship with them. Check to see if an organizational chart is available for your institution.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the Extension Administrators (Director, Associate Director, 		

<p>State Program Leaders, Information Technology Specialist, etc.) in your state and where are they located? What interaction with or accountability to these administrators do you have?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Do you have responsibilities in an academic department, or with a group of Extension Specialists? What are your responsibilities? 3. How are the county programs organized? What is your interaction with local Extension Agents/Educators/Specialists? Do they supervise paraprofessional nutrition education staff? Do their job responsibilities include EFNEP/FSNE supervision? 4. How does the EFNEP/FSNE paraprofessional nutrition staff fit into the county programs? Are they integrated into or separate from the other county programs? 5. Review the job descriptions of the paraprofessional nutrition staff. 6. Describe your job responsibilities related to the local Extension Programs and paraprofessional staff. How will you carry out these responsibilities? 		
<p>National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To find out more about NASULGC, visit its website at: http://www.nasulgc.org. 2. Find out if your University President, other University Administrator, or Extension Administrator serves on a NASULGC committee. Make an appointment to visit with the administrator and discuss the EFNEP/FSNE and the impacts the program has on citizens of the state. It is important that Administrators are knowledgeable about what is taking place in their state. (Also see: Communicate Program impact under: I. Communicate program value with passion.) 		
<p>Extension Terminology</p> <p>In Extension many terms are used that have a meaning specific to Extension. Several universities have developed glossaries of Extension Terms. An example from Texas is linked below. Some of these terms may differ from the ones used in your system. For example, states have different names for local Extension Faculty, including Extension Educator, Extension Agent, and Extension Specialist.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare http://monarch.tamu.edu/d690/d690appa.htm with terms that are used in your system. 		
<p>Acronyms</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acronyms are commonly used in Extension. It is important to understand this alphabet soup. View this website http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/training/acronyms.html, for the following terms: USDA, CSREES, ERS–Economic Research Service (not to be confused with EFNEP Evaluation/Reporting System ERS), 		

<p>FNS, FSIS, OMB, NASULGC, ES, ECOP, CES, JCEP, ESP, NAE4-HA, NEAFCS, CYFAR, EFNEP, GPRA, TEFAP, and WIC.</p>		
<p>Professional Organizations in Extension and Beyond As part of a professional development plan, you will want to become involved in professional organizations. The Extension Service has several options for professional organizations and organizations of states and programs for you to participate in.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extension Professional Organizations: Visit the Joint Council of Extension Professional (JCEP) website to see an overview of all Extension Professional Organizations: http://www.jcep.org . JCEP sponsors the Public Issues Leader Development (PILD) conference in Washington D.C. each year. Visit the website of one or more Extension Professional organizations to understand their missions and issues. 2. Identify other professional organizations that may be of interest to you and visit their websites. Examples: Society of Nutrition Education (SNE) www.sne.org and American Dietetics Association (ADA) www.eatright.org . 3. The Extension Service is divided into four regions: North Central, Northeast, South and West. These regions include states and US territories. EFNEP and FSNE Coordinators have formed associations or discussion groups within these regions. There may be teleconferences/listservs/meetings to discuss issues with other state coordinators. To find out more about these groups, ask other nutrition professionals in your state, or contact another state coordinator in your region. Make sure your name is added to the appropriate listservs. On your first teleconference ask that the purpose of the teleconference and listserv be reviewed for new members. In some cases, EFNEP and FSNE teleconferences/listservs/meetings are combined. 4. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), which partially funds FSNE, also has regional offices and regional teleconferences/listservs/meetings. States in the region can provide guidance on how to get connected to the appropriate listservs and teleconferences. (Note: Extension and FNS regions are not identical. Each has a different set of states included in their regions.) See http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/ for your FNS region. 		
<p>Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) EFNEP has a long history as part of the USDA- Extension Service 3-D funding. Each state/territory gets a share of the appropriated funding for EFNEP.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the national EFNEP website; look at Success Stories from your state and others. Review the EFNEP Fact Sheets and Publications. You may have some of these in print in your office. 		

<p>The EFNEP policy manual can be found on this website at http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/pdf/program-policy.pdf There is also a section on the Evaluation/Reporting System-ERS4: http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/ers/ers4.html</p>		
<p>Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE) State Extension Service Programs began working with the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to provide nutrition education to persons eligible for food stamps more than a decade ago. FSNE is funded by Administrative Food Stamp dollars authorized through FNS. In the majority of states, the Cooperative Extension System and partnering land-grant universities are contracted to deliver the program. In states participating in FSNE, grantees work with various state agencies as well as their state Food Stamp Agency and regional FNS offices. Plans are submitted to the state Food Stamp Agency which, in turn submits the plan to the regional FNS office. Programs are approved on a year-to-year basis. State plans are subject to guidelines as defined by FNS, the state Food Stamp Agency, state Extension/University System, and other public and private partners.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the national FSNE website for contacts from other states, national program planning and reporting efforts, staff development and training resources, partnership information, reports, meetings and conference proceedings, national teams and committees, and current news and upcoming events. 2. Review the state contact information for your state. Is it current? If not, contact the webmaster and submit current information. 		

C. The Core Competency Process in EFNEP, FSNE, Nutrition Networks and FFNEWS

Early the spring of 2001, state coordinators were asked to nominate, from among their peers, individuals who would participate in a Core Competency Workshop for State Coordinators of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, Food Stamp Nutrition Education, the Nutrition Networks, and FF NEWS (Families First Nutrition Education and Wellness System).

The intended outcomes of this effort were to:

- *Assist state coordinators in identifying current strengths and areas for future professional development;
- *Assist supervisors of state coordinators in understanding the breath of skills necessary in these positions;
- * Provide input into the future offerings of national professional development opportunities.

Seven representatives gathered in Dallas to participate, including Susan Baker, Joyce Counihan, Terry Egan, Debra Keenan, Carolyn Noble, Robin Orr, and Donna Vandergraff. National Program Leaders/Coordinators, Larry Jones, Karen Konzelmann, and Wells Willis, were involved and supported the process.

They participated in the DACUM Process, which is an innovative approach to occupational analysis facilitated by Gloria Green, UW Extension Staff Training Specialist. First, some agreements were made:

- o Programs and states are set up differently - we needed to focus on the larger picture of the tasks involved in program coordination.
- o We needed to define tasks that the coordinator may be ultimately responsible for, but may not do themselves.
- o We needed to look for broad categories to describe competencies and organize tasks under each competency.

We were led through a series of discussions about program coordination. We began describing and defining tasks. We categorized the tasks and tried to capture the enthusiasm and passion that we have for these programs.

The results: We agreed on 6 categories of core competencies:

1. Practice shared, principled leadership
2. Provide leadership for statewide programming
3. Create an environment in which staff can thrive
4. Practice stewardship of all resources
5. Promote synergistic collaborations
6. Communicate program value with a passion

We then validated these competencies by asking state coordinators and program leaders to rate importance and frequency. Again, because of differences in organizational structure

among states, the frequency a task might be performed could vary. We were trying to determine which tasks were done less frequently and which ones were more frequent or on-going. We also tried to determine when the skills were needed in the position. This may be determined by the point in the grant year at which a person is hired into the position. For example: If hired near the end of the grant year, you would need to focus on “Promote Telling Our Story” and “Practice Stewardship of all Resources”. Results from the validation indicated that the core competencies and tasks involved were generally rated important. There are some differences in how frequently the tasks are performed and when the tasks needed to be learned. More result information is available under background information on the [core competencies webpage](#).

The results of the process and validation of the instrument were reported at the national conference in September 2001. Input from the audience provided direction for the committee to continue its work and other committee members were added, including R. Jeff Olson and Glenna Williams.

In 2002, the State Coordinator Core Competency Self-Assessment Plan was developed. The tool was designed to help assess an individual’s skill level and to be used as part of a plan of work or a plan of professional improvement.

The State Coordinator Core Competency Self-Assessment plan and more information about the process are available on the national FSNE website. In this section, you will be asked to review the website and information found there. The rest of this manual will focus on the core competencies and some of the tasks under each.

The definitions used with the Core Competencies are those chosen by the committee and a reference is provided. The tasks chosen for this orientation guide include those which are considered ones you will need to use and develop in your first year. The assessment tool contains other tasks which are not addressed here and could be used for further professional development in the future. The tasks identified in this document have many levels of skill. This guide will focus on beginning level skills. In the future, you may choose to spend more time, research and professional development on any of these tasks.

Tasks	Date Completed	Comments
<p>The Core Competency Information can be Found at http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/fsne/development.html</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self Assessment Tool - State Nutrition Coordinator Core Competencies. Click on and review Background information about the Core Competencies. 2. Scroll down the page and review: Suggested uses for the self-assessment tool. At this point, it may be best for you to use the results to plan professional development activities for yourself for the next year or reporting period. Remember, this is a time to learn your job duties and the program year cycle. Most of your goals could focus on learning these skills. Follow the directions for completing 		

<p>the self-assessment. Print the assessment.</p>		
<p>Compare Your Job Description to the List of Core Competencies and Tasks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight the core competency tasks that you perform in your position. Focus on these tasks as you complete this manual. 2. Indicate which tasks demand immediate attention. If time is of the essence, you may want to skip ahead to these topics. 		
<p>Core Competencies Used as an Assessment Tool</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with your supervisor (program leader, department chair, Extension administrator) to set appropriate goals for your first assessment period. You may need to introduce your supervisor to the core competencies for state coordinators and suggest ways you would like to use them in your personnel assessment. 		
<p>Plan for Professional Development/Plan of Work</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If appropriate at this time, write a plan for professional development for your first year. Note: You may wish to complete this assignment after reviewing the rest of the manual. 2. You may wish to use this information in writing your Plan of Work as defined by your state system. 		

D. Practice Shared Principled Leadership

The first Core Competency identified focuses on leadership. Leadership is a key role in the state coordinator position. Leadership is a skill which develops over time. A new coordinator provides leadership for the staff as well as the program. This section will focus on some basic principles of leadership and suggest some resources for further study. The Core Competencies Committee defined practice shared, principled leadership as “finding the skills in your organization and encouraging the owners of those skills to take a role”. Jean Lipman-Blumen's book *The Connective Edge* is about connectivity and how we all have different achieving styles. In a shared, principled leadership setting, we draw on the different strengths of the group and when needed the leadership arises from different places and from all levels of an organization.

Tasks	Date Completed	Comments
<p>Coach and Be Coached Zenger, Musselwhite, Hurson, & Perrin in their book, [Leading Teams: Mastering the New Role (1994) Irwin Professional Publishing, Inc.], defines coaching as helping people refine a skill they already have, in contrast to training, defined as teaching a new skill.</p> <p>This task refers to your ability to coach and be coached in the capacity of being a leader and practicing shared, principled leadership skills.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you have completed the Core Competencies Self-Assessment, you can identify some skills that you already have, but may need some refinement to meet the demands of your new position. Identify a supervisor or person on the Extension staff in your state that has the information and knowledge to be able to assist you in refining these skills. Meet with this person and share some of your personal and professional goals. Ask for guidance or assistance in meeting these goals. These could be included in your Plan of Work or Professional Development plan if required by your administration. 2. Participate in the EFNEP/FSNE mentoring program. This program will link you with another state coordinator in your Extension and/or FNS region. For more information see the FSNE Website. 3. Be willing to coach others in refining skills they possess. Identify a task that needs to be completed and a person who has the skills to complete the task. Work with that person to complete the task. 		
<p>Facilitate Team Building Not all tasks are accomplished by the program coordinator; some or many are performed by other team members. Tasks/duties are assigned or delegated with the coordinator facilitating the team effort. The coordinator supports the team members in performing their tasks.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with EFNEP/FSNE staff to determine what roles everyone serves. Discuss the importance of the team in the program. Discuss 		

<p>team building ideas and encourage the staff to make suggestions to assist your state team in working effectively.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. With the assistance of the team, implement some of their ideas and suggestions. Or, if appropriate, delegate some of the team building tasks to others. Check on progress of team building efforts. 3. Encourage and support team building efforts of local supervisors and paraprofessional staff. This may include verbal and written resources or monetary support. 		
<p>Promote Telling our Story As a leader, you provide direction on communicating program impact and success to decision makers, legislators, partners, and clientele.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather and review information and materials used in your state for communicating program impact. These could include program reports, success stories, evaluation data, other data collected, flyers, brochures, impact reports, etc. This should also include local impacts reported in newsletters and reports. 2. Review program impacts and success stories on the national EFNEP website: http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/efnep.html 3. With staff members, discuss ideas for communicating program impact and success. Identify key audiences for receiving communications, such as Extension administrators, legislators, partners, and clientele. 4. Prepare a plan, including a time table, to communicate with these audiences. Implement the plan, including delegating responsibilities as appropriate. 		
<p>Facilitate and Model Teamwork As a leader, encourage staff to work together toward common goals. Do you share the responsibility of traditional management duties with everyone participating in some capacity? Total Quality Management (TQM) principles of openness/trust and collaboration/teamwork could be goals.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First, learn how the team is/has been operating. 2. If it is a functional team, you will be able to step in and determine your responsibilities as part of the group. Ask the team to assist you in learning your role and how best you can facilitate continued teamwork. 3. Model teamwork. Choose a specific project or task, such as “promote telling our story.” Share and delegate responsibilities, check for progress and share results and successes. Reward teamwork. 4. If you do not have a team, or the team is not functioning well, you will need to back up and establish some openness/trust and set some goals for collaboration/teamwork. Meeting with team members to establish common goals and discuss roles and responsibilities will be 		

<p>critical. Begin with a small task that will include many and can be accomplished in a short period of time. Delegate responsibilities, check for progress and share results. Reward teamwork. Choose a second, larger task for the team to accomplish.</p> <p>5. If there are team members who are reluctant or uncooperative, you will need to work with them individually and try to get them involved in the process.</p>		
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E. Provide Leadership for Statewide Programming

As a state coordinator with EFNEP or FSNE, your major responsibilities will include many of the tasks included in this section. Here is where we begin to get into the day-to-day operation of the programs. There are many components, including program planning, culturally sensitive programs, curriculum decisions, and compliance issues. This section will introduce you to some topics and some resources to use in these areas.

Tasks	Date Completed	Comments
<p>Ensure Programming Guidelines are Followed</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FSNE Guidelines are revised each year and are distributed by FNS through the regional offices. It is the responsibility of the coordinator and state team to ensure programming guidelines are followed and monies are being spent appropriately. Find and review the FSNE Guidelines for the current year. See the Food Stamp Nutrition Connection for current guidance: http://www.nal.usda.gov/foodstamp/National_FSNE.html Look for future programming ideas and compliance in current programming. 2. EFNEP Guidelines are contained in a Maroon colored brochure. They are also available now on the EFNEP website: http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/pdf/program-policy.pdf These guidelines are from the federal level; your state EFNEP may follow additional guidelines implemented at the state level. State level guidelines can be changed as long as they comply with federal guidelines. 3. Review EFNEP and/or FSNE federal and state guidelines. Evaluate how your state program is complying with these. Are there changes that could be made? 		
<p>Coordinate Program Planning, Including Asset Mapping and Needs Assessment</p> <p>The difference between needs assessment and asset mapping is that needs assessment focuses on the needs or shortcomings of a community, whereas asset mapping focuses on utilizing its strengths.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a new coordinator, it may be useful for you to conduct a quick asset mapping of the program and staff to determine strengths. 2. A needs assessment of the program during the first year may also be worthwhile. It can assist in providing program direction. 		
<p>Oversee Curriculum Identification and Development</p> <p>Some states use their own curricula for adult and youth programming. Others are coordinating efforts to develop shared curricula. In the beginning, your task will be to learn the curricula that are used and when they were last updated or evaluated. In some states, consistent statewide curricula are used.</p>		

<p>In others, local programs set their own curricula or choose from several options.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine which curriculum is being used in the adult and youth (if you have youth responsibilities) programs in your state. 2. Determine when the curriculum was last reviewed or updated. Is there a process for reviewing and updating? How are changes or additions to curriculum currently being made? 3. Determine who is responsible for reviewing and revising the curriculum. Develop a plan with the staff to review and revise if needed. 4. Carefully check the literacy level of the materials chosen. For more information on preparing low literacy materials check this resource: http://extension.missouri.edu/xplor/regpubs/ncr475.htm. Before you decide to design a whole new curriculum, check to see what is available from other states and other credible sources. 5. There are many curricula options now located on the Food Stamp Nutrition Connection website. On the website, click on the Resource Library or Hot Topics buttons to search for information and curriculum on a specific topic or age group. http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodstamp/index.html 		
<p>Facilitate Culturally Sensitive Program Implementation for Behavior Change</p> <p>Some facets of cultural sensitivity are: (1) ability to articulate and present an issue or problem as it is perceived from another’s perspective; (2) ability to identify defensiveness and know how to bring it to the table for discussion in a non-threatening manner. (<i>Promoting Cultural Diversity: Strategies for Health Care Professionals</i> by Kavanagh & Kennedy. [1992] Sage Publications.)</p> <p>Cultural sensitivity is especially important in EFNEP and FSNE since many diverse populations participate in the programs. Before choosing curricula, cultural sensitivity must be considered. Staff must be trained to work with diverse audiences.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine diverse populations served by programs in your state, including ethnic, religious, age, gender, etc. 2. Determine what curricula or modifications to curricula are necessary to meet the needs of these populations. 3. Determine if there are populations of potential clientele needing culturally sensitive curricula and plan how to serve this population. 		
<p>Coordinate Program Evaluation (ERS, FSNE Evaluation Committee, Logic Model, etc.)</p> <p>A coordinated program evaluation helps identify program effectiveness, program requirements and program planning needs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine what types of evaluation are currently taking place in 		

<p>EFNEP/FSNE in your state. Do these include the use of the EFNEP Evaluation/Reporting System (ERS), success stories, program impact reports, or the logic model?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review some examples of evaluation data on the EFNEP and/or FSNE websites: http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/efnep.html http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/fsne/fsne.html FSNE: review information from the national FSNE Evaluation Committee regarding the logic model. EFNEP/FSNE: If you are using the EFNEP Evaluation and Reporting System (ERS), review the ERS website for current information: http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/ers/ers4.html Other evaluation reports: In the Mountain Plains FSNE region, a regional report is prepared. Review past reports if you are in this region. Regional and national FSNE reports can be found on the FSNE website. 		
<p>Utilize Evaluation Results for Program Enhancement Once you have compiled evaluation results, you are ready to utilize the results for program enhancements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with staff the types of evaluation information being collected and how to best utilize this information. Also discuss evaluation needs and concerns. Are your evaluation tools giving you the information you need to guide program decisions? Review evaluation data. List some strengths of the program. List some challenges, including challenges in collecting or summarizing data. Discuss changes in the program that could be made as a result of the evaluation data. Much can be learned from a process that was tried and did not work as planned. Take time to analyze why it did not work and changes that could possibly make it more successful. 		
<p>Recognize Participant Achievement Recognizing participant achievement may be delegated to someone else in the organization.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> With staff, discuss how participants are recognized. Is the staff satisfied with these efforts or are there additional options they would like to explore? Assist in providing or gaining resources for participant recognition. 		
<p>Ensure Compliance It is generally the coordinator's responsibility to ensure compliance within the program. This could include compliance with the program, including federal program and budget guidelines and institutional program, fiscal, personnel, and civil rights guidelines. Also, the coordinator is responsible</p>		

<p>for understanding compliance issues other partners may have and helping partners understand federal and institutional compliance requirements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review EFNEP/FSNE guidance to determine if your program is in compliance. If you have questions, contact the National Program Leader or a Coordinator in another state. 2. Review budgets and determine whether expenditures are in compliance with federal and state rules/regulations. See EFNEP/FSNE guidance and state operation guidelines. 3. Work with fiscal staff or Grants and Contracts for procedures specifically related to the food stamp project. The fiscal staff responds first in an audit situation. 4. Work with the Human Resources department to understand and follow personnel regulations for advertising positions, hiring personnel and disciplining personnel. 5. Determine requirements for state and federal reporting. Review final report for previous year and check with the National Program Leader and/or a colleague in a neighboring state for current requirements. 6. Each state has reporting requirements within the Extension system. Determine which reports are required of EFNEP/FSNE. 7. State Extension programs are required to compile civil rights reports for all Extension programming. Gain knowledge of civil rights policies and regulations. Determine how civil rights information is collected and reported in your state. Ensure staff complies with civil rights regulations and reports. 		
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F. Create an Environment in Which Staff Can Thrive

There are many models for staffing EFNEP and FSNE. Each state approaches the staffing situation in its own manner. EFNEP encourages the use of paraprofessional staff indigenous to the population being served. For FSNE, states vary in their use or non-use of paraprofessional staff.

The state coordinator is responsible for the overall creation of this environment; however several of the tasks listed in this section may be delegated to someone else on staff.

Tasks	Date Completed	Comments
<p>Develop and Modify a Staffing Pattern In the beginning, it is important to learn the current staffing pattern and the history or intention behind it. As time goes on, you may have ideas for changing or improving the staffing pattern. This could include adding positions in underserved areas or combining duties to work more effectively.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the staffing pattern in your state. Which positions exist? In which areas are they located? Are there any areas that are not being served that could be? Do you have too many staff concentrated in any one area? What determines where staff will be located? What are staffing priorities? 		
<p>Create and Modify Position Descriptions In the beginning, you will need to review the position descriptions of current staff to determine the responsibilities of various positions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review position descriptions of staff in EFNEP/FSNE. 2. Discuss position descriptions with staff. Ask if the position description adequately captures what they actually do in their work. If not, ask them to write corrections or additions as needed. 3. Work with human resources in your institution to make changes, as needed. 		
<p>Oversee Recruitment and Hiring of Staff Depending on the structure in your state, you may have a small or large role in this process.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine your role in recruitment and hiring professional and paraprofessional staff. Professional hires are often conducted by Extension. Paraprofessional positions are hired in a variety of ways. 2. Professional positions: Are there professional positions you need to hire at this time? If so, work with Extension administration to complete the process, as appropriate. 3. Paraprofessional positions: Learn the process for hiring paraprofessional staff. Are you responsible for the hiring process? Do you make contacts with the Human Resources department to begin the hiring process? Do you screen and interview candidates? 		

<p>If you do not do this, who is responsible? Work with Human Resources/Extension Administration, to complete the process, as appropriate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. How are new paraprofessional staff recruited? Do you rely on newspaper advertisements? Do you work with partner agencies to recruit individuals? 5. Learn the orientation process for new paraprofessional hires which may be provided by Human Resource Departments. (If employees are not on campus, this responsibility may be delegated to the program.) Orientation often includes benefits, working conditions, travel reimbursement policies, union affiliation if any, probationary periods and discipline policies. It is important to understand this information, even if you are not the person directly responsible for hiring paraprofessionals. 		
<p>Ensure Organizational Orientation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Beyond the basic personnel orientation, orientation to Extension and EFNEP/FSNE is critical. Check to determine how new employees are orientated to the Extension Service and EFNEP/FSNE. Does this orientation give them enough information for them to see the “big picture” of the organization, its structure and their part in it? If not, revise the orientation to include this information. 		
<p>Facilitate Initial Staff Training</p> <p>Depending on the structure in your state, you may have a small or large role in this process.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine your role in initial staff training. Are you deeply involved, or is this task delegated to others? If so, who is responsible for initial staff training? When or how often does this training take place? 2. Determine if there is a training manual or outline. If so, review the contents. Is the information up-to-date and accurate? 3. Commit time and resources to initial staff training as needed. 		
<p>Facilitate Staff Development</p> <p>Depending on the structure in your state, you may have a small or large role in this process.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine your role in staff training. Are you responsible for continued staff training, or do you assist local supervisors? 2. Determine if there is a set schedule for staff development? When and where does it take place? 3. Commit time and resources to facilitate staff development as needed and as budget allows. 		
<p>Provide for Performance Management (Counseling, Coaching, Termination, Legal Issues)</p>		

<p>Providing for performance management may include utilization and integration of institutional human resource policies and procedures.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine how performance management has been handled in the past. Who is responsible for performance management? What role do you play in all or parts of the process? 2. Personnel performance review for paraprofessionals: Who conducts the performance reviews of paraprofessionals? Is there an institutional process in place that must be followed? 3. Is there an established process for coaching paraprofessional staff? How is this accomplished? 4. Is there a process for counseling and termination of paraprofessionals? What is your role in the process? 5. When legal issues regarding a paraprofessional arise, what is the process or procedure for handling the situation? 6. Provide training opportunities or updates from Human Resources for all staff regarding performance management, harassment, and discrimination issues. 		
<p>Coach and be Coached This core competency area refers to the ability to help others to thrive as well as being helped by others to thrive yourself.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What opportunities do you have to coach others in their job performance? Make a plan to include coaching activities in your routine. 2. Be open to opportunities to be coached by others. 		

G. Practice Stewardship of all Resources

Stewardship means “the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care” (Merriam Webster’s *Collegiate Dictionary, 10th Edition*). This competency includes conducting, supervising and managing resources, including budgets, personnel and materials.

Tasks	Date Completed	Comments
<p>Develop Operational Systems for Financial Management Operational systems are the related procedures that specify how the work must be done.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn the operational systems for financial management that are currently being used. Do these meet the needs of the program operation? If not, what changes might be needed or desired? How can you go about implementing these changes? 		
<p>Develop Budgets In EFNEP, states are appropriated funds. In FSNE, the budget is set by the grant proposal and the ability to match funds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review program budget for the current year. What is the largest expense category in the budget? Usually this is personnel expenses. List other major categories of expenses. 2. Review previous year’s final budget report. As a whole, was the budget balanced? Did some categories exceed the budgeted amount? What were these categories? Were adjustments made to the current year’s budget? 3. After reviewing the current and past year’s budgets, are there any adjustments that need to be made now to stay within the budget? How do you make budget adjustments in your system? 4. At the appropriate time, begin developing the program budget for the next fiscal year. Use staff input to make adjustments as needed. 		
<p>Maintain Budgetary Communications Throughout All Levels Provide appropriate and current budget information/status to all organizational levels.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After learning the operational system for fiscal management, you will have an understanding of the offices and individuals involved. Communication among all levels and individuals is important. How are budgetary communications presently being handled? How do local staff members receive budgetary communications that affect them? 2. How are Extension Administrators informed of budgetary information? 3. In FSNE, budget communications are needed between the University Grants and Contracts office and the state agency receiving the funds. How is this communication taking place? Are there ways you can 		

<p>facilitate communication needed for a smooth transfer of funds. Some FNS regions conducted fiscal training in 2001 for state agencies, grants and contracts and state coordinators. A manual of fiscal information and procedures was provided. Check to see if this information is available for you to review.</p>		
<p>Oversee the Monitoring of Budgets</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once budgets are set and the fiscal year begins, how are budgets monitored? Do local units get accurate information in a timely manner to assist them in budget decisions? 2. Meet with budget/accounting personnel and discuss ways to be involved in the monitoring of budgets. Set a schedule to review budget progress. Adjust budgets as necessary and allowable. 		
<p>Ensure Compliance and Financial Accountability and Reporting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn the process of financial accountability and reporting for your program. EFNEP may be managed through an Extension or University fiscal office, where as FSNE may be managed through the institution's grants and contracts office or something similar. Build a working relationship with the fiscal officer responsible for your particular program budget. 2. Budget expenses follow specific rules and regulations. Expenditures for both programs will need to follow University policies and procedures. Identify the manual or source of information for University budget procedures. Check with staff and budget personnel to ensure these policies are being followed. 3. In FSNE, expenditures must follow the FNS federal nutrition guidance, and policies defined by specific Office of Budget Management (OMB) circulars, particularly OMB A-21 and A-87. It is important that you understand which apply to you. The Grants and Contracts office works with these circulars on a regular basis. Discuss OMB circulars with grants and contracts personnel to ensure policies are being followed. Review circulars as needed. 4. Learn about the audit process-types of audits (financial, program, civil rights), types of documentation needed and by whom, extent and time of your involvement. Work closely with your administration and fiscal office so that you can direct auditors to the appropriate person, should you be contacted for an audit. 5. In FSNE, audits are currently being conducted by FNS. Has your state been audited? What were the results? If not, how do you need to prepare for an audit in the next year or two? 		
<p>Authorize Expenditures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn the process for authorizing expenditures in your budget system. When and how often do you need to be involved in this process? 2. Is there a check and balance procedure in place so no one person 		

<p>makes all the budget decisions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Learn which expenses you will need to authorize. This may include expenditures over a specific dollar amount. 4. Communicate program and institutional requirements to staff with spending authority. 		
<p>Provide Technical Assistance</p> <p>Resource management technical assistance may be needed at the local level.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local units may be responsible for their own resource management. You may need to provide an avenue for technical assistance on budget expenses. How are local budgets operated in the program? Who manages the local budgets? Who authorizes expenditures at the local level? 2. Meet with staff and discuss budgets and budget management. How is the system working? Are there any changes or improvements they suggest? Do they need assistance in a specific area? 		
<p>Seek and Secure Additional Resources</p> <p>In EFNEP and FSNE, there is a need to seek and secure additional resources. These could be fiscal resources, cost-sharing, in-kind, materials and supplies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does your state program receive additional resources from other sources? Make a list of the resources and where they are from. Do these resources fulfill the needs of the program? 2. Do you need to begin or continue seeking additional resources for the programs at this time? If yes, work with staff to review how additional resources have been secured in the past. Make a plan of action to begin or continue this process. 		

H. Promote Synergistic Collaborations

Tasks	Date Completed	Comments
<p>Establish Relationships with Partners with Similar Goals and Vision</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn about other agencies and programs that work with limited income audiences, diverse populations and/or nutrition and health programs. These may include health departments, food stamp offices, welfare offices, WIC and Head Start Agencies, food banks, etc. 2. Ask other agencies if there is a nutrition and health coalition at the state and/or local level. If so, become involved in the coalition. 3. Work with directors of other statewide programs to form partnerships at the local level. Some partnerships can be formed at the local level; others need an incentive or direction from state leaders. Encourage local staff to work with agencies with similar goals and vision. 		
<p>Celebrate, Recognize, Reward Collaborations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine a plan to encourage collaborations at the local level. At regular intervals, celebrate, recognize and reward collaborations. Let staff share stories of how collaborations worked to improve the program or programming opportunities. 		

I. Communicate Program Value with a Passion

When the Core Competencies committee met, the facilitator and observers recognized that when the coordinators discussed EFNEP and FSNE, there was a sense of excitement, pride, and commitment. They felt it important for the committee to bring those qualities into this last competency. The word “passion” was chosen to try to capture our emotions about the work we all do.

Tasks	Date Completed	Comments
<p>Communicate Success Internally and Externally Communicate the program’s strengths and needs to decision-makers and stakeholders.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify internal and external audiences that need to hear about the program’s strengths and successes. Utilize reports, success stories, impact statements and personal testimonies to share the program’s strengths. Make contacts and tell them about the program. 2. Check the Community Nutrition Education Logic Model for examples and ideas. 3. Plan a variety of means for the staff and yourself to report program strengths. For example, volunteer to write an article with the publications and news department, or assign someone the task of writing a story for the in-house weekly/monthly news. 4. Often a combination of personal stories and hard impact data is most successful in communicating to decision-makers and stakeholders. 		
<p>Advocate for the Audience We Serve Working with limited income families and individuals of diverse backgrounds is very rewarding and sometimes very challenging. Often, they are not in a position to advocate for themselves, or have not had the experience to do so. Within the Extension organization, there may be some resistance to working with limited income because they are not seen as the “traditional” Extension audience. It is important for the coordinator to understand and be ready to advocate for the target audience.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify a situation in which you will need to advocate for the audience we serve. Prepare information, statistics and comments to assist others in understanding the audience, the program and the need for Extension’s involvement. 2. Prepare staff and program participants on how to “tell their story.” 		
<p>Oversee Development of Marketing Tools In previous sections, you have reviewed success stories, program impacts sheets, flyers, brochures, etc. that may be used in the programs. These are all marketing tools. The tools have different audiences. Some are directed to decision makers and some target potential program participants.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the marketing materials used to attract potential program 		

<p>participants. How long have these tools been used? Does the staff feel they are effective, or is it time to update these materials? Who is responsible to update the materials?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Review the marketing materials used to inform decision makers about the program. Are these produced yearly after the end of the reporting period? If so, when do they need to be updated? Who is responsible for updating these materials? 3. It is helpful to review what other states and regions have used in marketing the program to different audiences. In March 2000, a group of coordinators in the Mountain Plains FSNE region compiled a notebook entitled <i>Marketing Toolbox for Nutrition Educators Serving People with Limited Financial Resources</i>. Look to see if this resource is available in your office. It provides background in marketing, the basic marketing process, tips and techniques for developing and producing marketing materials and examples of products from other states. 		
<p>Communicate Program Impact</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the variety of evaluation tools and techniques used in the program. How can these be used to communicate program impact? 2. What other avenues or ways for communicating program impact would you like to put in place? 		

J. Subject Matter Competency

The Core Competencies Committee chose to focus on program management and the skills needed. Subject matter expertise was considered important, but secondary to overall program operation.

Individuals in coordinator positions most often have expertise or experiences in food and nutrition. Food and nutrition expertise are useful in curriculum development, research projects and implementing nutrition initiatives. Many coordinators are active in professional nutrition, health and leadership organizations.

In EFNEP and FSNE, experience in working with limited income and diverse populations is critical. This experience assists in developing and using resources and methods that are appropriate to the audience served.

In your first year, it is important to explore options that will assist you in completing your professional development and program goals.

K. Plans for the Future

This orientation manual was designed to assist new statewide coordinators in EFNEP and FSNE in learning some of the complex tasks involved in their positions. Once you have completed the activities in the manual, you may wish to go back and review some of the sections from time to time. Focus on issues that you reviewed beforehand, but now must use to complete the task. Hopefully, you have made some contacts through teleconferences/listserves/meetings that could discuss an issue or task with you. You will have learned that others have addressed the same issues you are facing and may be able to add words of advice or direction as you take on the task for the first time.

Take a few moments to review and assess your personal growth and skills development through this process. Are there areas on which you need to spend more time? Are there skills you would like to continue to develop?

There are suggested resources available on the [core competencies website](#). Here you can choose from a variety of resources including books, CD's, videos, DVD's and local programs.

A WORD TO COODINATORS WITH EFNEP/FSNE EXPERIENCE: The complexity of these programs is such that a periodic review of this manual can serve as a valuable refresher for effective programming and professional skill development. This manual will also have value for persons participating in the mentoring process.

If you wish to provide feedback on this manual, please address comments to the National Program Leader for Food and Nutrition Education, Helen Chipman. [Note: Karen Konzelmann, who contributed greatly to this manual, has since retired.]

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