

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC**

<h1 style="margin:0;">FSIS NOTICE</h1>	12-20	3/19/20
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FSIS CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM OPEN TO ALL INSPECTORS

I. PURPOSE

This notice announces that the FSIS Continuing Education Program (CEP) is open to all Food Inspectors (FIs) and Consumer Safety Inspectors (CSIs). The CEP is a college tuition reimbursement program that provides inspectors an opportunity to develop and enhance core competencies and further their education. Those interested in qualifying for reimbursement are to submit a CEP application. Instructions for submitting applications are detailed in Section III. B.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Under the Continuing Education Program (CEP), inspectors may qualify for tuition reimbursement for job-related college-level courses from nationally accredited institutions. The coursework, whether on-line or classroom, needs to be related to one of these core fields of study:

1. Food safety;
2. Food science;
3. Animal science; or
4. Meat science.

B. The CEP is not a degree program but can be used to:

1. Support degree program goals;
2. Assist with career development goals; or
3. Help complete a certificate program.

C. The CEP is offered on a first come, first serve basis. Each fiscal year (FY) there will be three opportunities to enroll in the CEP since there are three semesters (spring, summer, fall) offered by academic institutions. All CEP participants can be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$3,000 per FY.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CEP

A. To be eligible to participate in the CEP and qualify for reimbursement:

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1. Participants need to be full-time permanent employees in good standing, (i.e., rated fully successful or better and with a minimum of 1 year of service with FSIS);
2. Courses need to be CEP approved by the Office of Employee, Experience, and Development (OEED), Training Transformation and Distance Learning Staff;
3. Participants are to pay tuition costs out of pocket and may be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$3,000 per FY;
4. Participants are to remain employed with FSIS for the duration of the course;
5. Courses are to be taken on personal time; and
6. A minimum grade of C is required for tuition reimbursement.

B. How to apply for the CEP:

1. Download the CEP application form and instructions from IPP Help Resources at <https://fsishelp.fsis.usda.gov/ipphelp/cep/csicep/csicep.htm>;
2. A copy of the application and all CEP materials can also be requested by: e-mail: ContinuingEducationProgram@usda.gov, Phone: 301-344-0734 or 1-800-336-3747;
3. Complete the application in full and include college courses being submitted for CEP approval;
4. Submit application during the semester enrollment period. There are three semester enrollment periods: Spring, Summer and Fall Semesters. Applications are to be e-mailed to: ContinuingEducationProgram@usda.gov.
 - Summer 2020 Semester Enrollment: Submit application from March 23 - April 29, 2020. Includes courses that start anytime between May 11 - July 31, 2020.
 - Fall 2020 Semester Enrollment: Submit application between June 22 – July 27, 2020. Includes courses that start anytime between August 10 – December 4, 2020; and
5. Wait to pay for the courses until notified of application status by the CEP Manager.

C. To receive tuition reimbursement for CEP-approved courses, participants are to provide the following documentation to the CEP Manager:

1. Proof of payment with a proper receipt;
2. An official transcript showing the course was passed with a C or better; and
3. A signed OF-1164 Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business with the tuition amount to be reimbursed.

IV. QUESTIONS

The CEP is coordinated and administered by OEED. Refer questions to ContinuingEducationProgram@usda.gov or 301-344-0734. Questions may also be referred to OEED Training Transformation and Distance Learning Staff at 1-800-336-3747. Additional CEP information can be found on IPP Help Resources at: <https://fsishelp.fsis.usda.gov/ipphelp/cep/csicep/csicep.htm>.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rachel A. Edelstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Acting Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development