JOB CORPS
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NJCA Professional Development Series

Food Service Best Practices

Part Two – Tuesday, October 27

Agenda

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Managing and Supporting Food Service Staff

III. PRH Compliance

IV. Budgeting

V. Questions/Discussion

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Training Notes

- This training is being recorded – a copy of the training and associated materials will be sent to all *REGISTERED* attendees and posted online.

- The slide deck and associated materials will also be available to download via the NJCA Professional Development webpage: https://njcaweb.org/professional-development/.

- Please ask questions via the chat.

- If you would like a certificate confirming your participation in the training, please contact Stacy Green (sgreen@njcaweb.org).

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Disclaimers

The contents of this training do not constitute legal advice with respect to compliance with contract terms. Additionally, this training is being facilitated by the National Job Corps Association and has *no affiliation with the U.S. Department of Labor*.

Please coordinate with your direct manager/supervisor, campus leadership, AND/OR corporate leadership prior to implementing the recommendations or best practices from this training.

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Presenters

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Talking Leaves Job Corps

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Food Service
Best Practices Part Two

What we are covering
Managing and Supporting Food Service Staff
PRH Compliance

Understanding kitchen and support roles

01 Maintenance supports dining area cleaning

02 The coverage protects preparation time

03 Shared responsibilities help staff manage the workload

04 Evening coverage still needs a clear plan but the support makes it possible

Onboarding staff

01 A checklist connects training to the employee’s role

02 Demonstrations cover equipment and storage locations

03 Knife safety procedures receive hands-on attention

04 Service schedules guide preparation and cooking time

Support during the first week

01 Work alongside new employees when possible

02 Show expectations through everyday work

03 Allow practice and encourage questions

04 Give coworkers a clear foundation to reinforce

Ensuring staff follow guidelines and recipes

01 Keep successful recipes written down and easy to find

02 Include quantities, preparation steps, yield, and portions

03 Use a shared recipe across cooks and shifts

04 Keep the recipe and its ingredient cost breakdown together

Recipe costs and the budget

01 Cost the quantities of ingredients actually used

02 Calculate the batch cost and ingredient cost per portion

03 Use the expected yield to plan purchasing

04 Update costs when prices or ingredients change

Chef’s Choice

01 Each cook features a meal about once a month

02 Recognition gives staff an opportunity for personal expression

03 Established meals continue to follow the agreed recipes

04 Recipe costing helps plan featured meals

Food safety and sanitation

01 Opening checklists give staff a clear starting point

02 Food checks continue through preparation and service

03 Stock reviews happen at delivery and before planned meals

04 Early checks give the team more time to respond

Communication and follow-through

01 Staff report concerns as soon as they find them

02 Clear contacts help employees get support

03 Kitchen and maintenance coordinate the response

04 Follow-up confirms that the issue receives attention

Sanitation throughout the shift

01 Specific assignments clarify who cleans each area and when

02 Cleaning during the shift helps manage the closing workload

03 Deeper cleaning needs planned time and attention

04 Shift handoffs identify unfinished work and concerns

Food Committees

01 Salad bar suggestions give students an achievable way to contribute

02 One recent addition: chocolate pudding with crushed Oreos

03 Consider requests alongside menu and preparation needs

04 Connect changes back to student feedback

NJCA TRAINING • PART TWO

BUDGETING FOR A HIGH-PERFORMING CAFETERIA

Practical ways to control food costs, reduce waste, and protect meal quality.

Angela Callie | Food Service Supervisor | Talking Leaves Job Corps

Budgeting Is More Than Spending Less

Serve students well while using resources responsibly

PLAN AHEAD

Use enrollment, menus, inventory, and past production to estimate needs.

CONTROL COSTS

Track food, labor, supplies, and waste before small problems grow.

PROTECT QUALITY

Never solve a budget problem by compromising safety, portions, or nutrition.

A strong budget supports consistency, student satisfaction, and retention.

Speaker point: Budgeting means making thoughtful decisions early—not waiting until funds or supplies run short.

Start With a Simple Monthly Plan

Build a realistic picture before placing orders

1. **Know your numbers** — Meal counts, attendance patterns, planned events, and approved budget.
2. **Review inventory** — Check freezer, cooler, dry storage, open products, and upcoming deliveries.
3. **Plan the menu** — Use approved menus and standardized recipes; identify ingredients shared across meals.
4. **Order with purpose** — Compare unit prices, pack sizes, delivery fees, and product quality.

Know Your Cost Per Meal

A simple calculation helps compare spending over time

FORMULA

Total food cost for the period ÷ meals served = food cost per meal

EXAMPLE — ILLUSTRATIVE

$6,000 food cost ÷ 4,000 meals = $1.50 per meal

Track the trend—not just one number.

- Compare similar weeks or months and explain unusual changes.
- Use the same definition of “meals served” each time.
- Follow your center’s cost-reporting method.

Portion Control Protects the Budget

Consistent portions improve fairness and cost predictability

FOLLOW RECIPES

Use standardized recipes, approved serving utensils, and portion guides.

TRAIN THE TEAM

Demonstrate the correct portion and coach staff respectfully.

WATCH THE LINE

Notice over-serving, uneven portions, and food running out early.

Never reduce required portions or change approved menus just to save money.

If costs rise, review purchasing, production quantities, waste, and approved substitutions first.

Reduce Waste Without Reducing Quality

Small daily habits add up

Forecast carefully	Use attendance and meal-count history to estimate production.
Use inventory first	Apply FIFO, date and label products, and rotate stock.
Measure leftovers	Record what remains and why: overproduction, low popularity, or serving mismatch.
Coordinate orders	Avoid duplicate stock and plan compatible ingredients across approved menus.
Follow food-safety rules	Reuse or repurpose food only when approved procedures and safety rules allow it.

Work With Vendors Strategically

Compare the full value—not just the sticker price

- Compare unit cost, pack size, usable yield, quality, and delivery charges.
- Check invoices against orders; report shortages or substitutions promptly.
- Know lead times and order deadlines to avoid emergency purchases.
- Use approved vendors and follow center purchasing procedures.
- Communicate menu or supply concerns early.

ASK BEFORE ORDERING

Do we need it?
Do we already have it?
Is this the best usable value?

Lowest price is not always lowest cost if quality, waste, or yield is poor.

Time and Labor Are Budget Resources, Too

Organize work so labor hours support safe, smooth service

PREP SMART

Use prep lists, production schedules, and clear priorities.

DEFINE ROLES

Assign responsibilities for cooking, serving, dishroom, logs, and cleaning.

CROSS-TRAIN

Train staff to cover routine tasks safely and consistently.

Do not cut required cleaning, food-safety checks, or safe staffing practices to save time.

A clear plan reduces last-minute overtime, rework, and avoidable mistakes.

Use a Weekly Budget Check

Catch issues early enough to adjust

Food purchases	Are purchases tracking with meal counts and the approved allocation?
Inventory	Any expired or overstocked products? Are high-cost items moving as expected?
Waste & leftovers	What was wasted, why, and what production adjustment is reasonable?
Labor & supplies	Any unusual overtime, disposable-supply use, or emergency purchases?
Next week	What one change improves cost control without harming service?

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

The Budgeting Habit

Plan • Count • Check • Adjust

- Plan menus and orders around real needs.
- Measure portions, costs, and waste consistently.
- Review the numbers with the team and act early.

Questions & Discussion

Questions / Comments

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Food Service Best Practices – Part One

Tuesday, October 20

Recording available here

I. Cooking and Leading w/ Passion and Care
II. Customer Service
III. Involving and Engaging Students

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Questions/Certificates

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Thank you, presenters!

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Training Survey

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Thank You!

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