

Standard #4 Clearinghouse Questions

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An issue was submitted during the 2018 Biennial Conference for Food Protection with regard to individuals conducting field exercises. Background information regarding this issue submission is as follows:

When conducting a Standard 4 audit for jurisdictions; the auditor must ensure that the jurisdiction meets the applicable requirements. At this time, there is no consideration for performing an audit on larger jurisdictions. Jurisdiction sizes are only taken into consideration in calculating the program effectiveness. There are jurisdictions in the country that have over 100 inspectors not within their first 18 months of training as part of their food program. This means that an auditor will have to verify that at least 300 field reviews and the applicable file reviews are conducted and that they meet the requirements listed. This creates an undue hardship on the auditor and should be re-examined. In Standard 1, 2, and 6, there is a statistical model utilized to pull a random sampling of the content to be reviewed, with which the auditor can then use to determine whether the jurisdiction meets the requirements. It is recommended that for jurisdictions with over 20 inspectors performing foodservice or retail food inspection work, a similar statistical measure be provided or allowed to determine whether the jurisdiction meets the Standard.

Currently, there is no specification requiring an auditor to verify that the individual(s) performing the field reviews have been conducted by someone that has completed Steps 1-3 in Standard 2, and is recognized by the program manager as having the field experience and communication skills necessary to train new employees.

Should the auditor then verify the training records, affidavits, certificates, etc... for those individual(s) that are performing the field reviews? If so, it is recommended that a field evaluator course, track, and/or certificate be established to demonstrate Steps 1-3 of Standard 2 have been completed. This will be especially beneficial when auditing large jurisdictions with many individual(s) performing the field reviews. Although the Retail Program Standards are voluntary, and auditors volunteer, performing an audit is highly time consuming and any means to make this process more efficient would be beneficial.

Questions:

- 1. When conducting the field exercises and applicable file review for Standard #4, does the evaluator need to be trained in Standard #2, Trained Staff?**
- 2. Does an auditor need to review all field exercise files for all staff when conducting a verification of Standard #4?**