



Position: Cook - Lunch Box

About Dutchess Outreach: Founded in 1974, Dutchess Outreach is one of the Hudson Valley's leading anti-hunger organizations. Our mission is to provide food, community, and hope while addressing the root causes of hunger in Dutchess County. Through The Lunch Box Community Meal Program, we serve more than 600 nutritious meals each day, and through The Beverly Closs Memorial Food Pantry, we provide food to approximately 2,000 families each month.

Our culinary team prepares nutritious meals with dignity, hospitality, and compassion while creating a welcoming environment for every guest who walks through our doors.

Equal Opportunity Employer Statement: Dutchess Outreach is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We prohibit discrimination and harassment of any kind based on race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other protected characteristic as outlined by federal, state, or local laws. This policy applies to all employment practices within our organization, including hiring, recruiting, promotion, termination, recall, leave of absence, compensation, benefits, training, and apprenticeship.

Position Summary

The Cook reports directly to the Culinary Director and works closely with the Sous Chef to prepare and serve high-quality meals for The Lunch Box Community Meal Program. This is a hands-on culinary position requiring someone who is comfortable working independently as well as collaboratively. The Cook is responsible for food preparation, meal production, sanitation, receiving deliveries, maintaining kitchen cleanliness, and supporting the overall operation of the kitchen.

This position includes both Saturday and Sunday every week, along with three weekdays. Weekend work is an absolute requirement of this position and applicants must be available to work every weekend.

During weekends, the Cook will frequently be the primary culinary staff member on-site and must be comfortable independently preparing and serving meals while maintaining the organization's standards for quality, food safety, hospitality, and professionalism.

Schedule: Five days per week, including every Saturday and Sunday, plus three weekdays. Typical hours are 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Essential Responsibilities

Meal Preparation

Prepare and serve nutritious, high-quality meals following established recipes and production procedures.

Prepare breakfast, lunch, and dinner components as assigned.
Work independently on weekends to ensure timely meal preparation and service.
Assist with menu preparation using both purchased and donated food.
Accommodate special dietary needs when appropriate.

Kitchen Operations

Maintain clean, organized, and sanitary kitchen, storage, refrigeration, and dining areas.
Operate commercial kitchen equipment safely and efficiently.
Wash pots, pans, dishes, utensils, and food service equipment as needed.
Receive, unload, rotate, and properly store food deliveries.
Remove garbage and recycling while maintaining a clean work environment.

Food Safety & Quality

Follow all Department of Health regulations and organizational food safety procedures.
Monitor food temperatures, storage, labeling, and sanitation practices.
Help ensure consistent food quality and presentation.
Report equipment or supply needs promptly.

Team Support

Work collaboratively with the Culinary Director, Sous Chef, volunteers, and fellow staff members.
Provide guidance and support to volunteers working in the kitchen.
Maintain a welcoming, respectful, and professional attitude toward guests, volunteers, donors, and coworkers.
Assist with other culinary responsibilities as needed.

Required Qualifications

High school diploma or equivalent.
Minimum of one year of cooking or food service experience preferred.
Ability to prepare meals independently in a commercial kitchen.
Strong organizational and time-management skills.
Ability to work independently with minimal supervision.
Dependable, punctual, and able to manage multiple responsibilities.
Commitment to hospitality and serving diverse communities.
Ability to lift at least 50 pounds and perform the physical requirements of commercial kitchen work.
Ability to stand for extended periods and perform repetitive kitchen tasks.

Preferred Qualifications

ServSafe Certification or Food Handler Certification.
Previous experience in institutional, nonprofit, healthcare, school, or high-volume food service.
Spanish language skills.
Experience working with volunteers.
Valid driver's license.

Compensation: Full-time, non-exempt position, 35 hours per week at \$22 per hour, plus benefits.

**Studies have shown that women and people of color are less likely to apply for jobs unless they believe they meet every one of the qualifications as described in a job description. We are most interested in finding the best candidate for the job, and that candidate may be one who comes from a less traditional background. We would encourage you to apply, even if you don't believe you meet every one of the qualifications described.*