Tulare County Office of Education
JOB DESCRIPTION **Job Title**: Cook, Centralized Kitchen (9969)

Job Summary:
Under the direction and general supervision of the Food Service Coordinator and/or designee, prepare and cook nutritious and appealing meals for children and employees of child care centers. This position is also responsible for following standardized recipes, ensuring food safety and sanitation standards, and working collaboratively with the kitchen team to support the dietary needs of young children.

Essential Duties:
- Prepare and cook meals according to standardized recipes and menus, ensuring portion control and nutritional guidelines are met.
- Review list of specific dietary needs and make accommodations for allergies, intolerances, and cultural or religious dietary restrictions.
- Safely drive and deliver meals to program sites throughout the county, following assigned routes and schedules.
- Load and unload vans, trucks, and storage items safely, using proper lifting techniques while adhering to workplace safety guidelines.
- Ensure all meals meet the nutritional requirements for young children.
- Maintain high standards of cleanliness and sanitation in the kitchen, including proper food handling, storage, and disposal.
- Assist in monitoring and managing inventory levels, receiving, and storing food supplies.
- Safely package and transport meals to various program sites, ensuring food remains at appropriate temperatures and is delivered on time.
- Adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations regarding food safety and nutrition, as well as the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Head Start program requirements.
- Work effectively with other kitchen staff, volunteers, and program personnel to ensure smooth kitchen operations and timely meal service.
- Maintain accurate records of food temperatures, meal counts, and other required documentation.
- Receive, organize, store, and inventory deliveries of food.
- Participate in ongoing training and professional development opportunities to stay current with best practices in child nutrition and food service.
- Clean and sanitize work areas, equipment, and surfaces during and at the end of each shift to maintain required health and sanitation standards.
- Wash dishes, utensils, pots, pans, etc. ensuring compliance with health, safety, and sanitation standards.
- Assist with maintaining refrigerators, ranges, and all other kitchen equipment in an organized, sanitary and safe condition; report any maintenance requests, as needed.
- Ensure delivery vehicles are kept clean, sanitary, and in good condition, both inside and out, when transporting food and supplies.
- Perform other related duties, as assigned.

Skills, Knowledge and/or Abilities:
Skills to:
- perform basic mathematical calculations, including adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing using whole numbers, common fractions and decimals for recipe measurements and portioning;
- operate commercial kitchen equipment such as ranges, ovens, and ventilation systems, and related appliances safely and efficiently;
- clean and maintain kitchen equipment including ranges, ovens, and small kitchen equipment in accordance with sanitation standards;

Knowledge of:
- public health standards, food safety practices, personal hygiene, and workplace safety standards;
- kitchen sanitation procedures related to kitchen cleaning and sanitation;
- food preparation techniques including cutting, chopping, cooking, and preparing a variety of foods;
- basic data entry and record keeping procedures including meal counts and temperature logs;
- standard units of measurement and how to accurately follow recipes;
- TCOE mission, vision, value statements, standards, policies and procedures, operating instructions, confidentiality standards, and the code of ethical behavior.

Ability to:

- read and comprehend recipes, measurements, and food preparation instructions accurately;
- follow oral and written instructions and established procedures;
- write simple correspondence and reports;
- effectively present information in one-on-one and small group situations;
- apply common sense and sound judgement to carry out detailed but routine instructions;
- deal with problems involving a few concrete variables in standardized situations;
- maintain ServSafe certification.

Working Conditions and Physical Abilities: Employee must be able to stand and walk on concrete and tile floors for extended periods and tolerate a wide range of temperatures. They must also have the ability to reach with hands and arms and possess the ability to talk, hear, taste, and smell. The position frequently requires climbing or balancing, as well as stooping, kneeling, crouching, or crawling. Additionally, the employee must be able to safely lift and carry objects weighing up to 55 pounds and push or pull objects weighing up to 75 pounds. Specific vision abilities required for the role include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

Experience Required:

- One (1) year of experience operating a kitchen effectively and efficiently with limited to no supervision.
- Some experience cooking for large groups.

Education Required:

- High school diploma or equivalent required.

Other Requirements:

- Must obtain ServSafe Certification within 90 days of employment.
- Valid California driver's license and proof of automobile insurance.
- Department of Justice and FBI Fingerprint clearance upon hire.

FLSA Status: Non-Exempt June 2026

This organization is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, age, gender or disability. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to our personnel office. This organization complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Persons with a disability who may need some accommodation in the hiring process should contact our personnel office. This organization is a Drug and Tobacco - Free Workplace. This organization requires a successful candidate to provide it with employment eligibility and verification of a legal right to work in the United States in compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act.