



Director of Food Services

Guiding Culinary Excellence and Nutrition for Campers and Staff

Position Overview

The Director of Food Services is a vital leadership role at the heart of any successful camp, responsible for orchestrating the full scope of dining operations to ensure campers and staff are served nourishing, high-quality meals in a safe and welcoming environment. The Director of Food Services manages menu planning, food preparation, dietary accommodations, staff supervision, budget control, and regulatory compliance, all while fostering a spirit of community around the dining table.

Key Responsibilities

- **Menu Planning & Development:** Design creative, balanced, and nutritious menus that cater to the tastes and needs of children and adults. Incorporate a variety of dietary requirements such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, allergen-sensitive, and culturally appropriate options.
- **Food Preparation & Service:** Oversee the preparation, cooking, presentation, and timely serving of all meals and snacks for campers and staff. Uphold high standards of food quality, taste, and safety at every meal service.
- **Staff Leadership & Training:** Hire, train, schedule, and supervise food service team members, including cooks, kitchen aides, and dining hall staff. Foster a positive, collaborative work environment that values teamwork, professionalism, and respect.
- **Safety & Sanitation:** Ensure strict adherence to all health codes, food safety laws, and sanitation standards. Conduct regular kitchen inspections, maintain documentation, and implement corrective actions as needed.
- **Inventory Management & Procurement:** Manage inventory and ordering of all food, beverages, and kitchen supplies. Build strong relationships with vendors and local suppliers to ensure timely deliveries and cost-effective purchasing.
- **Budget Oversight:** Develop, monitor, and control the food services budget. Track expenses, forecast needs, minimize waste, and maximize value while maintaining high culinary standards.
- **Special Event Support:** Coordinate food service for special camp events, theme nights, cookouts, and banquets. Collaborate with program staff to deliver memorable culinary experiences for all occasions.
- **Camper & Staff Engagement:** Be visible and approachable in the dining hall, soliciting feedback, addressing concerns, and nurturing a sense of camaraderie and hospitality.

- Record-Keeping & Reporting: Maintain accurate records on meal counts, inventory, budgets, staff schedules, and compliance measures. Prepare reports for camp leadership as required.
- Emergency Preparedness: Develop and implement contingency plans for power outages, severe weather, supply chain disruptions, and foodborne illness incidents.

Required Qualifications

- Minimum of 5 years of progressive experience in food service management, preferably in a high-volume, institutional, or camp setting.
- Current certification in food safety (e.g., ServSafe or local equivalent).
- Demonstrated ability to plan, prepare, and serve meals for large groups with diverse dietary needs.
- Proven leadership and staff management skills, including recruiting, training, scheduling, and coaching.
- Excellent organizational and multitasking abilities, with keen attention to detail.
- Strong budget management and cost control skills.
- Solid understanding of food allergies, dietary restrictions, and best practices for safe meal preparation.
- Effective communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to collaborate across camp departments.
- Physical ability to stand for extended periods, lift up to 50 pounds, and work in a fast-paced kitchen environment.
- Flexibility to work variable hours, including early mornings, evenings, weekends, and during special events.
- Passion for youth development, community building, and the mission of the camp.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience working in a residential camp or retreat center.
- Familiarity with sustainable sourcing, local agriculture, and environmentally conscious kitchen practices.
- Current CPR and First Aid certification.

Daily Duties

- Plan and review daily and weekly menus in advance, ensuring variety, nutrition, and alignment with camper activities.
- Conduct morning briefings with kitchen staff to review tasks, assignments, and any special needs.
- Supervise all aspects of meal service, including food preparation, serving, and cleanup.
- Monitor food quality and presentation, making real-time adjustments as needed.
- Interface with program staff regarding meal timing, special events, and outdoor dining logistics.
- Rotate and inventory stock, maintaining high standards of freshness, and minimizing waste.
- Schedule staff shifts and manage time-off requests to ensure full coverage for all meal services.
- Respond promptly to camper or staff concerns regarding food service, dietary needs, or complaints.
- Maintain a safe working environment, addressing hazards or maintenance issues immediately.

Work Environment & Physical Demands

The Director of Food Services works in a dynamic, hands-on kitchen and dining hall environment typical of a residential or day camp. This role requires substantial physical activity, including standing, moving, lifting, and the safe operation of kitchen equipment. Days are often long and fast-paced, particularly during peak camp sessions and special events. The director must be able to adapt to frequent interruptions, shifting priorities, and the evolving needs of campers and staff.

Compensation & Benefits

- Competitive salary commensurate with experience and camp size.
- Onsite rustic accommodations negotiable.
- Professional development and training opportunities are available.

Reporting Structure

The Director of Food Services reports to the Executive Director and works closely with other department heads, including programming, health services, and maintenance.

Application Process

Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter, and references outlining their relevant experience and vision for camp food service excellence. Selected candidates may be asked to provide sample menus, undergo a practical cooking assessment, and participate in interviews with camp administration.

Impact and Legacy

The Director of Food Services shapes the culinary culture of the camp, ensuring that every meal is not just nourishment, but an opportunity for community building, joy, and lifelong memories. Their leadership ensures the kitchen is a place where safety, nutrition, creativity, and hospitality flourish, and where campers look forward to gathering, sharing, and thriving together.