

New York State Department of Civil Service
DIVISION OF CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION

Classification Standard

Occ. Code 3102300

Cook, Grade 11 3102300
Head Cook, Grade 15 3102600

Brief Description of Class Series

Positions in this series provide oversight in the kitchen. They also prepare and cook a variety of foods such as meats, fish, vegetables, fruits, salads and baked goods in the kitchen of a State facility. Incumbents prepare and cook food and usually supervise a kitchen staff in meal preparation and cooking, and in the cleaning of the kitchen and pantry areas. Incumbents use all cooking utensils and equipment found in a kitchen such as blenders, grinders, kettles, knives, measuring devices, mixers, ovens, and slicers.

Distinguishing Characteristics

All positions are in the non-competitive jurisdictional class.

Cook: under the supervision of a Head Cook, Food Service Worker 3, Dietitian or Nutrition Services Administrator, prepares and cooks an entire meal on an assigned shift or for a specific type of cooking such as range cooking, rethermalization, baking or dessert cooking. The incumbent usually supervises kitchen staff in the storage, preparation, cooking and dispensing of food, and also in the cleaning and sanitizing of the kitchen and pantry areas. Cooks may be the highest-level position involved in food preparation and cooking in a small kitchen and/or perform similar activities to those described for Head Cook in a smaller setting such as a hostel or half-way house.

Head Cook: under the supervision of a Nutrition Services Administrator or Dietitian, oversees the operations of a large kitchen; supervises and directs the activities of a large kitchen staff including Cooks; and may personally perform food preparation and cooking activities on occasion. This class is characterized by the assignment to assign a kitchen staff to shifts; determine the amount of food to be prepared to meet menu requirements; order and inventory food supplies; inspect kitchen and pantry areas to ensure that proper preparation, utilization, cooking and sanitation procedures are observed and provide training to kitchen staff; maintain operational records; prepare accident reports and work repair orders. Depending on the setting, they may also have responsibility to meet specific accreditation standards.

In those cases where a Head Cook is the highest-level position involved in food service operation, such as correctional facilities with fewer than 300 incarcerated individual beds, an incumbent is typically supervised by a facility director or administrative position who reviews the food service operation as to quality of food, utilization of resources and adherence to agency operating and sanitary procedures.

Related Classes

Food Service Workers 2 function as working supervisors in the performance of relatively unskilled activities in food preparation, portioning and serving food, and sanitation. In certain smaller settings, such as the various residential centers of the Office of Children and Family Services, Food Service Workers 2 may prepare and cook an entire meal on an assigned shift.

Food Service Workers 3 oversee the operation of multiple units within a facility's overall food service program and are responsible for coordinating activities between dining rooms and food production kitchens. Incumbents supervise a large sized group of Food Service Workers 1 and 2 or other subordinate staff, prepare work schedules and assignments, orient new employees and provide training to employees; inspect dining rooms, pantries, and kitchens for proper sanitation and adherence to correct procedures and prepare written reports of inspection; and ensure that food service and preparation equipment is maintained and in operating condition.

Dietitians provide dietetic care and nutrition services to individuals in State facilities or community residential settings. Incumbents assist in the management of food and nutrition program operations; participate in diet, meal, and menu planning and development; assist in and/or provide instruction on diet and nutrition therapy, meal planning, and food preparation and sanitation to individuals, families, and healthcare, direct care, and food service staff; and inspect and supervise food preparation, service areas, and meals to ensure compliance with dietetic care and nutrition plans, standards, regulations, and requirements.

Nutrition Services Administrators oversee, manage, and administer food, nutrition, and dietetic programs for individuals in State facilities or community residential settings. Incumbents plan, organize, and direct food preparation and service, and clinical dietetic program activities, such as nutrition counseling, menu development, and food safety and sanitation operations; develop and implement nutrition policies and procedures to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements; supervise the activities of Dietitians, and other food and nutrition services staff; and monitor program operations to ensure the nutritional health and well-being of individuals served and compliance with established standards, laws, rules, and regulations.

Illustrative Tasks

Cook

Prepares and cooks a variety of foods for individuals, employees, or students within a State facility. Monitors the flow of food to reduce the risk of food-borne illness.

- Reviews menus to determine type and quantity of food to be prepared.
- Plans cooking schedule so food is ready at prescribed time.
- Draws required ingredients from kitchen storage areas.
- Measures, mixes, stirs, cuts, grinds, chops and seasons ingredients according to State recipes using a variety of hand and power kitchen utensils/equipment.
- Bakes, roasts, broils, fries, and steams food as indicated in recipes.
- Tests food for doneness, adjusts heat controls, and documents final cooking temperatures.
- Prepares special foods for individuals requiring special diets.
- Uses and maintains kitchen equipment according to proper procedures.
- Arranges for distribution of food by placing into service trays, packing food into hot boxes, or bulk packaging for shipment to separate dining areas or facilities.
- May supervise a small staff in distributing food in a cafeteria setting.
- May personally serve food in a cafeteria setting.

May supervise a kitchen staff of Food Service Workers 2, Food Service Workers 1, residents and in some cases correctional incarcerated individuals.

- Makes specific work assignments in kitchen and pantry areas.
- Directs and/or may personally perform the general cleaning/sanitizing after each meal.
- Provides oral and written instructions regarding materials, equipment, and procedures to be performed.
- Demonstrates proper preparation and cooking procedures.

- Oversees and inspects performance to ensure instructions, procedures and standards are observed.
- Ensures that proper sanitation and storage procedures are always followed.

Head Cook

May perform all of the same duties and functions as a Cook.

Schedules the preparation and cooking of meals in a large kitchen of a State facility.

- Determines types and amount of food to be prepared for each meal according to menus and special instructions or events.
- Requisitions or arranges for delivery of required ingredients from central warehouses, suppliers or storage areas.
- Arranges cooking schedule for various types of food so that all are ready at the specified time.
- Schedules necessary kitchen staff to prepare and cook meals.

Ensures that sanitation standards are upheld in food preparation, food service, and storage areas.

- Inspects food preparation and cooking areas to ensure sanitary conditions are observed.
- Maintains records of food temperatures to ensure that prepared foods are safe and palatable.
- Inspects storage areas for evidence of vermin, insects and mold and arranges for their eradication if present.
- Oversees dish washing procedures to ensure dish ware, utensils, and trays are properly cleaned and sanitized after each meal.
- Oversees cleaning and sanitizing of kitchen and storage areas to ensure sanitary conditions are met.
- Trains employees on equipment and arranges maintenance when necessary.
- Inspects food for deterioration and discards all tainted food.
- Ensures all refuse is removed promptly and properly to designated areas.

- Maintains control over food inventory.
- Monitors emergency food levels and expiration dates for the need to rotate emergency food before it expires.
- Supervises work activity in the ingredient rooms.
- Coordinates repairs and needs with other departments under supervisor's direction. May assist with obtaining quotes for new equipment, repairs, and preventative maintenance plans.

Supervises a large kitchen staff of subordinate Cooks and Food Service Worker 1, 2, and 3's, and also in some cases incarcerated individuals.

- Participates in the interviewing, hiring, and training of subordinate staff.
- Assigns kitchen staff to various shifts.
- Provides instructions regarding the food to be prepared, the method of preparation, and any special requirements.
- Inspects food preparation and cooking procedures to ensure that sanitary conditions are observed and all food is utilized.
- Evaluates work performance and suggests corrective measures.
- Arranges for special food service training; supervises and provides training to kitchen staff.

Minimum Qualifications

Cook

Non-competitive: three years of experience in large-scale cooking.

Head Cook

Non-competitive: five years of experience in large scale cooking, two years of which must have included regular supervision of subordinate employees or working incarcerated individuals. An associate degree or higher in culinary arts or food service may substitute for two years of general cooking experience.

Note: Classification Standards illustrate the nature, extent and scope of duties and responsibilities of the classes they describe. Standards cannot and do not include all of the work that might be appropriately performed by a class. The minimum qualifications above are those which were required for appointment at the time the Classification Standard was written. Please contact the Division of Staffing Services for current information on minimum qualification requirements for appointment or examination.

Date: 7/2024

KAB