



GROWING HOME

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PRODUCTION ASSISTANT JOB DESCRIPTION

Each year, Growing Home hires 50+ individuals to work as Production Assistants on our urban organic farm and participate as students in our job readiness program. The traditional program consists of classroom lessons and on-the-job training with the goal of transitioning participants into permanent, full-time employment after graduation.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, Growing Home has had to transition to remote learning for the 2020 season. Please read this document in full to learn about how we have pivoted to develop a thorough and accessible remote version of the Growing Home curriculum and related services. As stay-at-home restrictions are lifted, it is possible there will be increased opportunities for on-site farm training and work hours.

KEY INFORMATION

- The program consists of:
 - Job Readiness Training
 - Supportive Service Referral
 - Job Search Support
 - Organic Farming Experience
- Average of 16-20 hours per week
- \$16/hr pay rate, paid every two weeks

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Must be 18 or older, and not currently in high school
- Must be unemployed
- Must have basic reading and math comprehension
- Must be comfortable with basic computer navigation skills
- Must be a Chicago resident
- Must be able to lift 25 lbs, stand, bend, and work for up to 6 hours at a time

Growing Home considers applications from individuals who meet all of the above qualifications, as well as those who may have been previously incarcerated, have misdemeanor or felony convictions, and those who are currently on probation or parole.

WORK SCHEDULE

Production Assistants must be available 8:30AM-4PM Tuesday-Friday. All Production Assistants will be expected to attend virtual class from 2-4 PM Tuesday-Friday (4 days/wk). Production Assistants will also be invited to work a minimum of one, 4-hour shift per week on the farm. These farm shifts will take place from 8:30 AM-12:30 PM Tuesday-Friday and will be assigned after the start of the program.

Pending their operation, there may be optional opportunities to work at the farmer's markets Growing Home participates in on the weekends. Saturday farmer's market shifts are 4:45 AM - 3 PM and Sunday farmer's market shifts are 7 AM - 4 PM.

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

Job Readiness Training

All Production Assistants participate in a comprehensive Job Readiness curriculum while at Growing Home. Topics and skills covered in the curriculum include interview prep, cover letter and resume writing, professional communication, managing workplace conflict, developing executive skills, basic computer skills and many others.

TIP

TIP is a psychological self-sufficiency program that Growing Home facilitates in a group-work context. Developed by Dr. Philip Hong at Loyola University, the program helps participants identify barriers and forward-moving Hope Actions as tools for setting TIP goals and achieving positive outcomes.

Roots of Success

New in 2020, all Production Assistants will participate in the Roots of Success environmental literacy and work readiness curriculum. This curriculum covers material on environmental challenges and environmental justice and connects the work being done on the farm to the science behind agriculture and food systems. This program intends to prepare participants for entry level jobs in the green economy.

Supportive Services

While enrolled in the program, all Production Assistants have available to them the support of a Case Manager. Growing Home firmly believes that employment stability cannot be achieved if there are other persisting social service needs. The Case Manager is able to make referrals for and provide support around housing, healthcare, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, childcare and any other needs that might arise.

CGLA

Growing Home has a long-standing partnership with Cabrini Green Legal Aid and all Production Assistants are eligible to receive free services from CGLA regarding the sealing and expungement of existing records.

Farm Shifts

At the start of the program, we anticipate that Production Assistants will be able to work at the Growing Home Wood Street Farm in small numbers and thus for limited hours each week. While we want everyone in the program to learn organic farming and gain farming experience, we will also be prioritizing the health and safety of staff and participants. Opportunities for increased farm work hours will be evaluated regularly in accordance with health and safety protocols.

ServSafe

Program participants will have the opportunity to complete a ServSafe Food Handler's Certification during their time in the program. This certification is needed for most food service or food production jobs.

Job Search

It is Growing Home's goal that all Production Assistants have post-program employment plans in place prior to graduation from Growing Home. In the second half of the program, all participants will receive individualized job search and job application support to work towards fulfilling this objective.

EQUIPMENT/TECHNOLOGY

All classroom portions of the Job Training Program will be taught remotely this year, primarily over the video technology Zoom. Growing Home has a select number of laptop computers and internet hotspots available for loan to Production Assistants for the duration of the remote Job Training Program. Once admitted to the program, technology loan agreements can be discussed on an as-needed basis. **A lack of access to a computer or internet access should not discourage anyone from applying for the program.** However, comfort with basic computer navigation skills (basic typing, operating a computer, navigating the internet) is recommended in order to fully participate in the remote version of the program.

FARM WORK ENVIRONMENT

Farm work is performed outdoors, subject to varying weather conditions, and includes a lot of bending, lifting, stooping, squatting and standing for extended periods of time. A mask and gloves must be worn for the entirety of farm work shifts.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applying for Cohort 2 of the 2020 Job Training Program will be a fully remote process. The first step in applying is to review this document in its entirety to ensure a full understanding of the program and all of its components. If after reviewing this document you are interested in applying, please complete the online application by visiting: **www.growinghomeinc.org/opportunities**

*please note that if you are unable to complete the application at the link provided due to technological challenges of any kind, please contact us by phone at 773-434-7144 or by email at anawn@growinghomeinc.org.

Your application will be reviewed by Growing Home staff, and if we feel you might be a good fit for the program, we will be reaching out to you to schedule a phone interview to get to know you a little bit better. It may take up to 10 days for us to contact you for a phone interview.

Following the phone interview, you will be notified if you have been selected to participate in the program no later than June 22nd, 2020. If you have not heard from us by this date, feel free to reach out to us for an update on the status of your application.

If offered a position in the program, you will need to complete a comprehensive individual intake with a Growing Home staff member prior to the first day of programming. Documents required at intake include State Photo ID, Social Security Card, and Birth Certificate for you and any applicable spouse, domestic partner, or dependents.

Key Application Dates for Cohort 2

Application Closes: **June 12th, 2020**

Acceptance Notification Date: **June 22nd, 2020**

Individual Intakes: **June 25th - July 10th, 2020**

Cohort Start Date: **July 14th, 2020**

Growing Home Wood Street Farm * 5814 S. Wood Street Chicago, IL 60636

www.growinghomeinc.org

Growing Home is co-sponsored by the City of Chicago's Department of Family and Supportive Services' (DFSS) Community Development Block Grant from the federal department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)