

Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline Competency Model for Child Care Occupation: Early Childhood Culinary Supervisor

Employer Requirements	Occupation-Specific Competencies*
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and prepare nutritious meals and snacks Follow food safety guidelines to prevent foodborne illnesses Collaborate with staff and parents to ensure child specific dietary requirements are met Maintain a clean and sanitary kitchen according to health codes Order and maintain inventory of kitchen supplies and food Oversee daily culinary operations and staff Manage finances for fixed culinary costs Ensure meals meet federal and state requirements Record and maintain documentation of food served Utilize first-line allergy prevention and response approaches Implement safety protocols for food preparation, storage and handling

Industry-Sector Technical Competencies*		
Management principles		Food preparation, production and presentation
Food safety and sanitation		Advanced infection control Kitchen management
Purchasing and storeroom management		Diverse dietary restrictions Culinary nutrition
Culinary arts foundation		USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) requirements

Industry-Wide Technical Competencies		
Early childhood learning and development		Diversity, equity and inclusion Food safety systems
Child care ethics		Laws and regulations Documentation Food quality and cost control
Food service industry principles and concepts		Early childhood supports Child health and safety

Workplace Competencies							
Business fundamentals	Teamwork	Customer focus	Planning and organizing	Problem solving and decision making	Working with tools and technology	Checking, examining and recording	Scheduling and coordinating
Creative thinking	Health and safety	Sustainable practices	Instruction				

Academic Competencies						
Reading	Science and technology	Mathematics	Basic computer skills	Communication	Critical and analytical thinking	Writing

Personal Effectiveness Competencies								
Interpersonal skills	Integrity	Professionalism	Initiative	Dependability and reliability	Adaptability and flexibility	Lifelong learning	Compassion and empathy	Cultural competency

Based on: Building Blocks for Competency Models – Foundational Competencies, Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor, February 2025. For more detailed information about competency model creation and sources, visit dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/child-care.

Competency Model for Early Childhood Culinary Supervisor

Early Childhood Culinary Supervisor – This individual is responsible for planning, organizing, developing, and directing the overall operation of the dietary department in an early childhood care setting, to assure that quality and appealing nutritional services are provided and maintained in a clean, safe and sanitary manner. An individual in this role must also prepare menus, snacks and offerings for individuals who have certain dietary restrictions.

*Pipeline recommends the Industry-Sector Technical Competencies as formal training opportunities (provided through related instruction) and the Occupation-Specific Competencies as on-the-job (OJT) training opportunities.

Industry-Sector Technical Competencies

Related Instruction for dual training means the organized and systematic form of education resulting in the enhancement of skills and competencies related to the dual trainee's current or intended occupation.

- **Management principles** – Ability to provide communication, motivation, coaching, mentoring, and conflict resolution to manage and enhance the success of the early childhood culinary team.
- **Food preparation, production and presentation** – Understand the essential components of transforming raw ingredients into edible and appealing dishes, which includes planning, sourcing, prepping, cooking and presentation.
- **Food safety and sanitation** – Understand how to properly clean the kitchen and dining room to ensure that food is safe and minimize risk of infection.
- **Advanced infection control** – Awareness of safe food service procedures and regulations during cooking process to prevent the spread of food-borne illnesses and infectious disease.
- **Kitchen management** – Able to prepare menus, order food, hire, train and monitor staff, and perform quality control on food served. If the kitchen is shared with other entities, it is also important to know how to manage the site in a manner that does not harm the relationship with any others who may use it.

- **Purchasing and storeroom management** – Able to obtain food and non-food items for meal preparation and serving. This includes creating detailed order specifications and securing pricing, as well as organizing, maintaining, and optimizing storage spaces for materials, supplies and equipment to ensure that everything needed for operations is available.
- **Diverse dietary restrictions** – Able to accommodate therapeutic necessities for individuals who may require a special diet. The individual must be able to create and implement well-rounded menus that maintain high nutritional standards and support a variety of dietary needs while delivering quality taste.
- **Culinary nutrition** – Understanding of nutrition principles and food science demonstrated through a mastery of culinary skills.
- **Culinary arts foundation** – Understand the art of preparing, cooking, presenting and serving food.
- **USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) requirements** – Understand the United States Department of Agriculture’s nutritional standards, infant and toddler feeding, recipe standardization, meal planning, and documentation to ensure the quality and nutritional value of meals and snacks provided.

Occupation-Specific Competencies

On-the-Job Training is hands-on instruction completed at work to learn the core competencies necessary to succeed in an occupation. Common types of OJT include job shadowing, mentorship, cohort-based training, assignment-based project evaluation and discussion-based training.

- **Plan and prepare nutritious and age-appropriate meals and snacks** – Understand how a child’s age, dietary needs, and developmental stage factor into planning appropriate meals and snacks. Know how to plan and create meals that support the growth and development of children in a child care setting.
- **Follow food safety guidelines to prevent foodborne illnesses** – Understand the proper handling, cooking, and preservation of food to protect people from foodborne illnesses and/or injury. The individual must adhere to infection control standards and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines to mitigate the spread of respiratory illnesses.
- **Collaborate with staff and parents to ensure child specific dietary requirements are met** – Understand how to communicate with parents and staff to gain insights into a child’s dietary needs and preferences. Discuss issues such as food allergies, diabetes, gluten sensitivities, etc. with parents and staff and ensure that staff follow safe dietary protocols for each child.

- **Maintain a clean and sanitary kitchen according to health codes** – Understand how to follow procedures to prevent harmful germs from spreading among children and staff, ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all.
- **Order and maintain inventory of kitchen supplies and food** – Understand quality management methods, tools and techniques in the dispensing and distribution of food and other related supplies.
- **Oversee daily culinary operations and staff** – Understand how to effectively supervise staff who work in the kitchen through direct oversight, assistance, teambuilding and support. Depending on the site, food may be primarily catered in or crafted entirely by the onsite staff and so understanding kitchen oversight will depend greatly on where the food is originally prepared.
- **Manage finances for fixed culinary costs** – Knowledge in the importance of forecasting, budgeting and accounting in food service operations where the budget is consistent from week to week based on the number of children enrolled.
- **Ensure meals meet federal and state requirements** – Understand how to plan and prepare meals that address all the nutritional requirements for any federal and/or state required governed food programs that the facility may or may not participate in.
- **Record and maintain documentation of food served** – Know how to properly keep records of all the food that is prepared and/or served to children and understand how to submit any required records or paperwork related to food served as part of participating in any local, state or federal food programs.
- **Utilize first-line allergy prevention and response approaches** – Understand how to prepare food in a manner that clearly identifies all ingredients in the food and avoids any dangers for children that may have allergies to certain ingredients and be able to work with staff to ensure that children with known food allergies are not inadvertently served food that could cause a reaction. Also know how to assist with epi-pens or other allergy medication if a child does accidentally have an interaction with a food that causes an allergic reaction.
- **Implement safety protocols for food preparation, storage and handling** – Understand key practices in personal hygiene, food safety training, temperature control, sanitization, cross-contamination prevention and food storage.

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