



## PRODUCTION ASSISTANT JOB DESCRIPTION

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

Although subject to change, 2023 cohorts are expected to be a fully in-person program. **Please read this document in full to ensure you clearly understand the components of the Growing Home program and related services.**

| KEY INFORMATION  | MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The program consists of:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Job Readiness Training</li><li>○ Supportive Services</li><li>○ Job Search Support</li></ul></li><li>• \$17/hr pay rate, paid every two weeks</li><li>• Minimum 25 hours per week</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must be 18 or older, and not currently in high school</li><li>• Must be a Chicago resident</li><li>• Must be unemployed</li><li>• Must have basic reading and math skills</li><li>• Must be comfortable with basic computer navigation skills</li><li>• Must be physically capable of hands-on farm work</li></ul> |

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Due to the various funding sources of the Growing Home Job Training Program, all participants MUST have the follow documents to be eligible for enrollment:

- Social Security Card for self (copy okay)
- Valid Photo ID w/Chicago address for self (copy okay)
- Social Security Cards and Birth Certificates for any dependent children (if applicable)
- Social Security Card and Photo ID for legal spouse if married and not separated (if applicable)
- Proof of Health Insurance (if applicable)
- Proof of SNAP benefits (if applicable)
- Income verification for self and spouse (W2, SSDI, SSI, paystubs -- if applicable)
- TANF verification (if applicable)
- Copy of DD-214 if individual is a veteran (if applicable)
- Justice involvement verification (if currently on parole, probation or a registry)
- Homeless verification (if applicable)

**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.**

**Growing Home Wood Street Farm | 5814 S. Wood Street Chicago, IL 60636 | [growinghomeinc.org](http://growinghomeinc.org) | (773)434-7144**

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)

## 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.

### **On-The-Job Farm Training**

Production Assistants will engage in hands-on training on our urban farm located in the Englewood neighborhood. This includes experience with all aspects of the crop cultivating and harvesting processes. Additionally, the expectations of Production Assistant on the farm are representative of and help prepare Production Assistants for their post-graduation employment. The possibility for this in-person component is reevaluated regularly in accordance with Covid health and safety protocols.

### **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**

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.

### **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 application support to work towards this goal.

### **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.

### **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.

## WORK SCHEDULE AND ATTENDANCE

Below is a sample average weekly class and farm work schedule. The options for safe, in-person farm shifts are evaluated regularly based on current Covid safety precautions. In total, Production Assistants will be in active programming a minimum of 25 hours per week. Like any workplace, **Growing Home holds Production Assistants to a strict attendance policy, and participants are expected to attend all classes and activities to maintain their position in the program.**

| Tuesday                        | Wednesday                      | Thursday                       | Friday                         |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 8:30AM - 12:30PM<br>Farm Shift | 8:30AM - 12:30PM<br>Farm Shift | 8:30AM- 12:30PM<br>Farm Shift  | 8:30AM- 12:30PM<br>Farm Shift  |
| 2 PM - 4 PM<br>Afternoon Class | 2 PM - 4 PM<br>Afternoon Class | 2 PM - 4 PM<br>Afternoon Class | 2 PM - 4 PM<br>Afternoon Class |

## EQUIPMENT/TECHNOLOGY

Portions of the classroom training of the Job Training Program will be taught on computers, especially certifications like ServSafe. Growing Home has a state-of-the art Computer Resource Center on site to provide the technological resources for all participants. **A lack of computer skills should not discourage anyone from applying for the program.** These computer skills will be taught during our classes and additional time is available at our Resource Center outside of program hours.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applying for our 2023 Job Training Program will involve both online and in-person activities. 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](http://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 [dmackey@growinghomeinc.org](mailto:dmackey@growinghomeinc.org).

While filling out the application, you will also sign up for an information session the following week. The information is on site at Growing Home's Farm and Training Center and is your opportunity to see our program and ask more questions. It's also an opportunity for our staff to get to know you and understand if you are a good fit for the program.

Through phone calls, you will be notified if you have been selected to participate in the program before the start of the Cohort. 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.