



CULINARY TRAINING PROGRAM FAQ

1. How long is the program?

The Culinary Training Program is a 12 week program. Students will spend 12 weeks with the Central Texas Food Bank learning different types of food service in a state-of-the-art commercial kitchen.

2. Is it a full-time or part-time program?

This is a full-time program that runs 5 days a week, 30 hours per week. See Question #8 for specific days and hours.

3. Where is the school located?

Classes are held in the kitchen of the Central Texas Food Bank, located at 6500 Metropolis Drive, Austin, TX 78744 (Note: NOT Montopolis).

4. How much does the program cost?

The program is free and open to anyone in the community (see *Eligibility Requirements in Question #11*). It is supported through the generosity of those who donate to the Food Bank, which means we don't have to charge tuition to students in the program.

5. What will I learn?

The program is designed to teach students **basic** culinary skills such as equipment operation, knife skills and basic cooking techniques from an experiential learning perspective. It provides students with hands-on experience in a commercial kitchen working with commercial equipment, terms and food production. The program will be a mix of classroom time and hands-on job training.

6. Do I get paid?

The students volunteer their time in return for the educational experience. This is not a paid job.

7. Will I be hired after graduation?

This is an educational program only. Graduating students will be encouraged to apply to the Central Texas Food Bank if open positions are available. However, any applications will go through the same process as an applicant who is not a student and the most qualified candidate will be chosen for any position open. There is **NO** promise or guarantee of employment. We will help students develop resumes, network with employers and practice interviewing skills to improve their ability to successfully gain employment. But employment is **NOT** guaranteed.

8. What are the hours?

The schedule is mostly Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (6 hours plus 1 lunch hour). Attendance/work at some weekend and/or evening events may be required. The student will be offered the opportunity to assist with other events, if possible, and if it is deemed beneficial to the student's growth.

9. Do I need to have a car?

Students are not required to have a car, but will be expected to secure transportation to the kitchen and event locations if they volunteer for an event. Transportation will be provided to and from the kitchen to catering events when the student is already at the kitchen.

10. Do I have to buy my own uniforms?

Students will be provided with 3 short-sleeved Food Bank-logoed chef jackets, 3 pair of chef pants and 1 pair of non-slip safety shoes. The program provides 3 textbooks to cover savory cooking, baking and pastry, and culinary math. These are conveyed upon graduation. A set will be in the kitchen for the students to use during their program for class work. Additionally, upon graduation the student will receive a starter toolkit. Tools for daily class and kitchen work will be available in the kitchen.

11. What are the eligibility requirements for students?

- **MUST** be at least 18 years old by the day class begins
- **MUST** have a high school diploma, GED, or be actively pursuing a GED
- **MUST** meet the income eligibility guidelines for SNAP benefits
- **MUST NOT** be a registered sex offender

AND MUST meet 2 of any of the following criteria:

- Residing in a homeless shelter or other temporary living facility
- Currently underemployed or unemployed
- Formerly incarcerated*
- Referred by a program partner
- Seeking a full-time career in the culinary arts

**Cannot be for a recently committed violent crime. The Food Bank reserves the right to refuse or accept potential students on a case-by-case basis*

12. Do I have to have a High School Diploma?

Students must be done with high school and have either a high school diploma or GED. If the student does not have a diploma or GED and is interested in completing a GED, we can direct the student to resources to complete this. The goal is that upon completion of the Culinary Program the student is employable. Completing a GED will help the student be more employable as most employers require a minimum of a GED.

13. What kind of person are you looking for as a student?

We are looking for people who are interested in food service careers, people who are ready and willing to learn and work hard, and who have a passion for food.

14. Do I have to take a drug and alcohol test?

If it is suspected that you are under the influence of a substance you may be asked to undergo a drug test or breathalyzer test. If it is determined that you have come to class under the influence of alcohol or drugs you will be dismissed from the program. This is a “No Tolerance” safety violation.

15. What physical qualities do I need to possess?

Working in a kitchen is a very physical job. If you have medical problems that prevent you from being able to stand for extended lengths of time, pick up heavy objects, bend down or that restrict your sight or hearing in a way that would make it unsafe for you to work in a commercial kitchen, we may consider this in application process. Our goal is for students to be set up for success and to be safe. We do make reasonable accommodations for physical disabilities that would not risk a student’s safety, the safety of those working around the student or those being served by the student. The standard for our work environment is:

- Ability to walk, stand, sit, kneel, push, stoop, reach above the shoulder, grasp, pull, bend repeatedly, identify colors, hear with aid, see, write, count, read, speak, analyze, alphabetize, lift and carry under 50 lbs., perceive depth, operate a motor vehicle, and operate motor equipment.
- Conditions may include working inside, working around machines with moving parts and moving objects, working closely with others, working alone, working protracted or irregular hours, and traveling by car, van, bus, and airplane. Kitchen equipment (machines, tools, devices) used in performing only the essential functions include 6-burner stove, griddle, grill, fryer, steam-jacketed kettles of varying sizes, combi ovens, blast chillers, tilt skillets, meat slicer, bread slicer, stand mixers, dish machine and general smallwares. Additional items may be added as need arises. Office equipment includes computer and related equipment, calculator, copier, fax machine, telephone, and automobile.

16. What if I have learning disabilities such as dyslexia or don’t speak English well?

Students must be able to communicate in the kitchen. Language barriers will be discussed on a case by case basis to determine how much of a gap there is and how it will affect the student’s learning. Again, our goal is to set students up for success. Students should be able to read, write and speak English well enough to read recipes and lessons, fill out reports and quizzes, etc.

17. What if I have a criminal record?

Past criminal convictions, both felonies and misdemeanors, will be evaluated at on a case-by-case basis. **However, if you are a registered sex offender, you MAY NOT become a student due to activities and/or work locations from which sex offenders are restricted.**

For more specific details, information and requirements please read the Food Bank Student Agreement.