

POSITION TITLE: Sous Chef

REPORTING TO: Executive Chef

CLASSIFICATION: Part-time

RATE: \$24-\$26.00 an hour

HOURS PER WEEK: 18–25; evenings, weekends, and events as required

LAST UPDATED: September 2026

POSITION SUMMARY

The Sous Chef provides hands-on leadership in the kitchen, supporting menu development and execution, supervising and training culinary staff, maintaining high standards for food quality and presentation, and helping manage the systems that keep the kitchen organized, efficient, safe, and welcoming. The position also supports food preparation and execution for Museum events and catered programs.

The Sous Chef is a key member of the culinary leadership team at Tall Grass, Madison Museum of Contemporary Art's all-day restaurant, bar, and events caterer. Working closely with the Executive Chef, the Sous Chef helps translate the restaurant's culinary vision—rooted in Indigenous American foodways, seasonal ingredients, and relationships with local and regional producers—into exceptional and consistent daily service.

As a senior member of the Tall Grass team, the Sous Chef helps foster a collaborative, respectful kitchen culture and is prepared to lead kitchen operations in the Executive Chef's absence. Although this position will begin as a part-time position, it could turn into a full-time opportunity as we expand the needs of the restaurant.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Culinary Production and Service

- Works closely with the Executive Chef to execute Tall Grass's culinary program and maintain consistency with the Chef's menu direction, recipes, preparation methods, plating, and presentation standards.
- Participates actively in food preparation and service, including daily restaurant operations, catered events, Museum programs, and special events.

- Coordinates daily prep and production to ensure the kitchen is prepared for efficient and timely service.
- Oversees portioning, cooking, plating, and timing during service to maintain consistent standards for food quality and presentation.
- Assists the Executive Chef with menu development, testing, seasonal changes, and specials as needed.
- Helps ensure thoughtful handling and preparation of ingredients central to Tall Grass's culinary program and its emphasis on Indigenous American foodways, seasonal ingredients, and local and regional sourcing.

Kitchen Operations and Inventory

- Supports the Executive Chef in managing the day-to-day operation of the kitchen and assumes responsibility for kitchen operations in the Executive Chef's absence.
- Monitors food and kitchen inventory and assists with ordering, receiving, storage, rotation, and inventory control.
- Helps maintain appropriate inventory levels while minimizing waste and ensuring ingredients are fresh and of consistently high quality.
- Oversees proper labeling, storage, rotation, and handling of food products.
- Coordinates kitchen opening and closing procedures and ensures required tasks are completed consistently.
- Identifies equipment, maintenance, and supply needs and communicates them promptly to the Executive Chef and appropriate Museum staff.
- Supports responsible management of food and labor costs through thoughtful preparation, portion control, inventory management, and waste reduction.

Team Leadership and Kitchen Culture

- Provides day-to-day leadership and supervision for cooks and other back-of-house staff.
- Supports the Executive Chef in recruiting, hiring, onboarding, scheduling, training, and developing kitchen staff.
- Assigns and coordinates daily prep, production, service, opening, and closing responsibilities.
- Trains and coaches staff in recipes, preparation techniques, plating standards, food safety, sanitation, and kitchen procedures.

- Helps maintain a professional, collaborative, respectful, and accountable kitchen culture consistent with the values of Tall Grass and the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art.
- Communicates effectively with front-of-house staff and other Tall Grass and Museum team members to support smooth service and a positive guest experience.
- Provides leadership and direction to the kitchen team in the Executive Chef's absence.

Quality, Safety, and Sanitation

- Maintains consistent standards for food quality, flavor, presentation, portioning, and timing.
- Monitors food preparation, cooking, holding, cooling, and storage temperatures and ensures compliance with established food-safety procedures.
- Ensures kitchen staff follow applicable food-safety, sanitation, allergen-awareness, and workplace-safety requirements.
- Maintains clean, organized, and sanitary kitchen, storage, and food-preparation areas and ensures staff follow established cleaning and sanitation procedures.
- Follows applicable ServSafe, public-health, and workplace-safety standards and helps ensure compliance throughout kitchen operations.
- Identifies food-quality, safety, sanitation, staffing, or equipment concerns and works with the Executive Chef to resolve them promptly.
- Performs other duties as assigned in support of Tall Grass and Museum operations.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Experience

- Minimum of 3-5 years of professional kitchen experience.
- Minimum 1-2 years experience in a leadership role (i.e., Sous Chef, Lead Line Cook, Kitchen Supervisor, or Junior Sous Chef)

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Experience preparing and cooking a variety of menu items and cuisines.
- Ability to supervise and train kitchen staff.
- Knowledge of food safety and sanitation requirements; ServSafe certification is often required.

- Ability to manage a kitchen during the Executive Chef's absence.
- Experience with scheduling, prep planning, and coordinating service.
- Strong communication, leadership, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to work evenings, weekends, holidays, and in a fast-paced environment.

WORK ENVIRONMENT AND JOB SPECIFICATIONS

The work environment and job specifications listed below are representative of those that must be met by an employee, with or without accommodations, to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

- This is an on-site position in a professional kitchen and food service environment.
- Prolonged standing, walking, and movement throughout kitchen and service areas.
- Ability to lift and carry items weighing up to forty (40) pounds.
- Exposure to heat, noise, kitchen equipment, and cleaning chemicals.
- Availability for evenings, weekends, holidays, and special events as required by Museum operations.