## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** **Lead Cook**
**Department:** The Harvest Cafe
**Reports to:** Harvest Café Manager
**Status:** Part-time, Non-exempt
**Schedule:** Typically, M-F 9:00-2:30 p.m., up to 27 hours
**Salary Range:** $21.75-26.00
**Revised Date**: 9/22/2026
Posted: Open 11/2/2026, closes 11/13/2026 or until filled

**HOW TO APPLY**
Please submit your resume along with brief responses to the three questions below to xinia@sebastopolseniorcenter.org. In lieu of a cover letter, we'd love to hear directly about your experience, approach, and interest in this work. We suggest approximately 150–250 words per question.

1. Tell us about your experience working in a commercial kitchen or preparing meals for groups. What types of meals have you prepared, and approximately how many people were you cooking for?
2. Our Harvest Café serves freshly prepared lunches in a busy, community-oriented environment. How do you stay organized, manage your time, and work with others to ensure meals are prepared safely and served on schedule?
3. What interests you about working at the Sebastopol Area Senior Center, and what would you enjoy most about preparing meals for older adults in our community?

**POSITION SUMMARY**
The **Lead Cook** plays a key role in the daily operation of the Sebastopol Area Senior Center's Harvest Café, helping provide high-quality, nutritious meals in a welcoming community environment.

Working in collaboration with the Harvest Café Manager, the Lead Cook takes the lead on daily kitchen operations, including food preparation and cooking, kitchen organization and cleanliness, food safety, inventory, and coordination of kitchen volunteers. The ideal candidate is an experienced and dependable cook who enjoys working as part of a team and takes pride in preparing quality food. This position requires strong kitchen skills, excellent organization, attention to detail, and the ability to provide positive leadership and direction to volunteers.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Food Preparation & Kitchen Operations**

- Lead daily food preparation and cooking for the Harvest Café.
- Prepare, cook, portion, package, and serve meals for both dine-in and to-go service.
- Ensure meals are prepared consistently, efficiently, and according to established rotating menus and quality standards.
- Maintain a clean, organized, efficient, and safe kitchen environment.
- Ensure proper food handling, storage, labeling, temp control, sanitation, and equipment use.
- Maintain compliance with applicable food safety and health department requirements.
- Help monitor food inventory and communicate purchasing and supply needs to the Manager.
- Assist with receiving, organizing, rotating, and properly storing food and supplies.
- Help minimize food waste and make efficient use of ingredients and resources.
- Assist with food preparation and cooking for Senior Center events and special programs as needed.

**Volunteer & Team Leadership**

- Provide welcoming, clear, and supportive direction to kitchen volunteers during daily meal preparation and service.

- Help train volunteers in kitchen procedures, food safety, sanitation, meal preparation, and other assigned responsibilities.
- Create a positive kitchen environment where volunteers feel welcomed, appreciated, and able to contribute meaningfully.
- Work collaboratively with the Harvest Café Manager, Senior Center staff, volunteers, and other members of the team.
- Communicate clearly about daily priorities, assignments, food preparation, and kitchen needs.
- Help identify opportunities to improve kitchen workflow, organization, and efficiency.

**Customer Service & Community**

- Help create a warm and welcoming Café experience for Senior Center members and guests.
- Interact professionally and respectfully with older adults, volunteers, staff, vendors, and community members.
- Respond to questions and requests with patience, professionalism, and excellent customer service.
- Support the Harvest Café as an important part of the Senior Center's broader mission and community.

**Additional Responsibilities**

- Assist the Harvest Café Manager with food and supply ordering as requested.
- Assist with basic inventory and expense tracking.
- Attend required staff meetings, trainings, and designated Senior Center events.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

**Knowledge, Skills & Abilities**

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Strong cooking and food preparation skills.
- Ability to work efficiently in a fast-paced kitchen while maintaining high standards for food quality and safety.
- Strong knowledge of commercial kitchen sanitation and food-safety practices.
- Excellent organization and attention to detail.
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks and manage daily food preparation timelines.
- Strong interpersonal and customer service skills.
- Ability to provide positive direction and guidance to volunteers.
- A collaborative and team-oriented approach.
- Reliability, punctuality, and good judgment.
- Ability to communicate clearly and professionally with staff, volunteers, and Café patrons.
- Basic computer and email skills.
- Ability to maintain accurate kitchen, inventory, and food-safety records.

Experience with inventory management, food-cost management, food-waste reduction, nutrition, and volunteer leadership is highly desirable.

**Qualifications**

- Minimum of one year of professional restaurant, commercial kitchen, catering, or comparable food-service experience required; five years preferred.
- Previous experience in a lead cook or similar kitchen leadership role preferred.
- Food Manager Certification required. The Sebastopol Area Senior Center may reimburse the cost of obtaining or renewing the certification.
- High school diploma or equivalent preferred.
- Valid driver's license.
- Must successfully complete required background screening.

**Physical & Environmental Requirements**

The physical requirements described below are representative of those necessary to perform the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform essential job functions.

This position requires the ability to:

- Stand and move throughout a commercial kitchen for extended periods.
- Frequently bend, reach, stoop, and perform repetitive motions associated with food preparation and kitchen operations.
- Safely operate commercial kitchen equipment, utensils, appliances, and tools.
- Frequently lift, carry, move, and position food, supplies, and equipment weighing up to 50 pounds.
- Communicate effectively in a kitchen and dining environment that may be busy and noisy.
- Safely work around heat, steam, sharp utensils, hot surfaces, and other conditions typical of a commercial kitchen.
- Distinguish flavors and odors associated with food preparation and food safety.

**Benefits- Part Time**

The Sebastopol Area Senior Center offers a competitive benefits package for eligible part-time employees, including:

- Paid vacation, prorated based on scheduled hours and years of service
- 12 paid holidays annually, prorated for part-time schedules
- Paid sick leave
- SIMPLE IRA retirement savings plan, subject to eligibility
- Workers' compensation coverage and applicable California state benefits

This position is scheduled for 25 hours per week and is not eligible for employer-sponsored health insurance. Benefits are subject to eligibility requirements and organizational policies.

Health and insurance benefits are currently available to eligible employees working 30 or more hours per week after 30 days of employment. SIMPLE IRA eligibility begins after 90 days of employment for employees meeting plan eligibility requirements. Benefit eligibility, accruals, coverage, and other terms are governed by SASC policies and applicable benefit plans and are subject to change. Please refer to the current Employee Handbook and benefit plan documents for complete details.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

The Sebastopol Area Senior Center is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to creating an inclusive workplace. SASC provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants without discrimination or harassment based on any characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.

SASC also provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities and for other protected needs in accordance with applicable law.

**ABOUT US**

The Sebastopol Area Senior Center (SASC) is a vibrant nonprofit organization serving older adults throughout West Sonoma County. Our mission is to create and maintain an environment that encourages independence for older adults by providing opportunities for learning, social connection, recreation, wellness, and support. Through programs, classes, meals, transportation, social activities, resources, and community partnerships, we help older adults remain active, engaged, connected, and supported as they age.

SASC also operates The Legacy, our unique craft thrift store and social enterprise. Powered by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers, The Legacy gives donated arts, crafts, and creative materials a second life while generating significant financial support for Senior Center programs and services.

Across the Senior Center and The Legacy, our work is powered by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. We value collaboration, compassion, creativity, respect, and a willingness to pitch in and help one another. Together, we are committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and engaging community for older adults.

To learn more about the Sebastopol Area Senior Center and The Legacy, visit sebastopolseniorcenter.org.