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| Job Title: | Locum Catering Assistant | Post Holder: | VACANT |
| Reports To: | Catering Manager | Location: | SPADE Shared Kitchen,Smithfield,D7 |
| Salary: | This role is paid at a rate of €14.47 per hour + €1.45 holiday = €15.92 | | |

Purpose of the Job

The role of the Locum Catering Assistant is vital to the successful delivery of quality nutritious meals and food in NOVAS services for our clients. The Locum Catering Assistant will support the clients of the NOVAS Dublin Services (Rathgar, Rathmines and Drumcondra).

The Locum Catering Assistant will report directly to Catering Manager, will be a member of, and work collaboratively with the Catering team and Dublin services, wider NOVAS services, external service providers and local authorities in the region.

The Locum Catering Assistant is responsible for participating in the duties of the catering team to deliver a safe, effective and high-quality food service, and responding to the needs and requests of clients. This includes assisting clients with access to nutritious meals, supporting them to develop life skills in meal preparation and planning, and ensuring their wellbeing in relation to food.

The Locum Catering Assistant will work closely with other catering staff and service managers to support the implementation of food-related plans and contribute to the smooth day-to-day running of food services. This includes maintaining hygiene, health and safety standards in line with legislation and organisational policies and assisting with the delivery of meals to the Dublin Services as required.

The role is based in Dublin 7, with transport to the wider Dublin services as required. Standard working hours are 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, across seven days per week. Flexibility is required, as hours may be subject to change to meet the needs of the service. The Locum Catering Assistant will have a background in the catering industry, trained in HACCP, with a passion for food and attention to detail. They will have experience of working with clients in a respectful, non-judgmental way and will be expected to work within the relevant frameworks of quality standards, health and safety, and legislation.

This job description is a guide to the general range of duties assigned to the post holder. It is intended to be neither definitive nor restrictive and is subject to periodic review.

Environment of the Job

NOVAS is a not-for-profit organisation and Approved Housing Body, we work with single adults, couples, and families, and who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. We also provide a service for unaccompanied minors seeking asylum. We provide a range of services and accommodation. Our first service was established in Limerick in 2002 which was a temporary low-threshold emergency homeless accommodation, and we have grown from there. We now have over 300 employees, and more than 30 services in Limerick, Dublin, Clare, Kerry, Cork, and Tipperary including emergency homeless accommodation, transitional homeless accommodation, social housing and community-based services for tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention, mental health and recovery.

NOVAS is a Trauma Informed Practice organisation, and the principles of collaboration, diversity, respect, and trust are embedded in our way of working together.

Our services are provided through support of our partners in local government through the Local Authorities, HSE, and other donors and funders.

Delegation and Reporting

The Locum Catering Assistant has decision making remit for the areas of identifying, planning, cooking and delivering quality food provision, whilst supporting the needs of NOVAS clients in collaboration with clients and colleagues across the Dublin Services and the Catering team. In the absence of the line manager, or at times, the Locum Catering Assistant may be required to consult with and take direction from the relevant Service Manager, Senior Services Manager or Head of Operations.

Oversight for the work in this role is provided by the Quality Services Sub Committee of the NOVAS Board of Directors.

The Locum Catering Assistant will always operate in a professional and respectful manner, maintaining high quality standards of work in accordance with the values and mission of NOVAS. Their decision making will always be informed by the best interests of the clients and ensuring cost effective value for money, use of donations and public money.

Challenges

The nature of our work involves supporting the most vulnerable people who often have complex needs and may be survivors of trauma. As a result, during the course of your work you may engage with sensitive and confidential matters that require empathy, compassion and pragmatism. You may also encounter clients or tenants who are in distress, displaying challenging behaviours or struggling to moderate their behaviour. Patience, respect, and an ability to remain professional and focused on deescalating is essential. Further training will be provided in Trauma Informed Practice or Crisis Prevention.

As an organisation that is largely funded by public money, effective use of resources is a continuous focus and challenge.

| Key Accountabilities | |
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| Accountability | Achieved by |
| Quality Client Service Delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with clients in a way that is trauma informed, person-centred, respectful, and responsive to their needs, supporting independence and wellbeing through food and nutrition. Where appropriate under the direction of the Catering Manager or Service Manager: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assist in planning menus and preparing meals according to agreed menus and nutritional guidelines. Where required, assist clients with activities to progress their goals in meal preparation, nutrition awareness, and healthy eating as outlined in their Support Plans, ensuring accurate recording of all actions. Assist with the delivery of meals to the Dublin Services as required and recorded in line with policies and procedures. Encourage participation by clients in food-related group activities, such as cooking workshops, meal tastings, or client coffee mornings, to gather client feedback and enhance engagement. Where appropriate, actively participate in case or support planning review meetings, sharing observations, challenges, and feedback regarding clients' engagement with meal-related activities. Support clients to raise concerns or complaints or to provide feedback relating to catering services when necessary, and work collaboratively to resolve issues and maintain positive relationships. Follow organisational policies and procedures for confidentiality and any safeguarding concerns relating to vulnerable adults or children in the service. |
| Safe & Effective Service Delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain attention to your own Health & Safety and remain vigilant to any Health & Safety risks in the kitchen, dining areas, or service environment that could impact colleagues, visitors, or clients. Correctly log and report any Health & Safety risks, equipment faults, or required repairs and maintenance issues in line with organisational procedures. Assist in maintaining kitchen, dining, and food preparation areas to a high standard, including cleaning, sanitising, and organising workstations, storage areas, and high-touch surfaces. Ensure familiarity with contents of kitchen risk assessments and notify the Catering Manager or Service Manager of any newly emerging risks related to food safety or operational hazards. Ensure incidents, accidents, or near misses in the kitchen or service areas are appropriately recorded according to established procedures. Be proficient in basic first aid for colleagues and visitors as required, with necessary training provided, including use of CPR and AED devices where appropriate. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As delegated by the Catering or Service Manager, support the implementation of fire safety measures in kitchen and dining areas, ensuring regular checks are conducted and promptly escalating issues. • Support compliance with food safety, hygiene, and infection prevention measures, including HACCP standards, daily cleaning schedules, and proper storage of food and equipment. • Participate in Health & Safety and food safety audits and assist in implementing any recommendations. • Maintain all required training and certifications relevant to food safety, health & safety, and operational compliance. |
| <p>Teamwork</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When new team members are recruited actively participate in their induction and training to help them settle into the team. • Communicate clearly with colleagues during handovers, in records and in relation to clients. • Proactively report any concerns about the service or suggestions for more effective practices, equipment or resources to the Catering Manager. • Applying Trauma Informed Practice to colleague relationships as well as clients. Assume good intent, be curious about their experiences and support one another. • Support effective running of the service by being mindful of the impact of absence or lateness on colleagues and providing as much notice as possible to the management team. |
| <p>Safe Cash Handling</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all cash in the service is handled safely and in line with procedures. • Ensure donors receive receipts when donations are made directly to the service and that the fundraising team is informed. • Ensure the accrual of expenses is agreed in advance with your line manager when required and that the correct process for applying to receive expenses is followed. • Ensure no unauthorised expenditure is made in the service without authorisation from the budget holder (Catering Manager). • Report any concerns about use of funds to the Catering Manager or a member of the Finance Department. |
| <p>External Collaboration</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be responsive to queries from service funders for information in line with our data protection policy, mindful of appropriately protecting information, client privacy and client consent. Keep your Line Manager informed of any communication with service funders. • Establish good working relationships with NOVAS teams in other services to share learning and best practice. • Establish good working relationships with local external service providers. • Ensure your line manager and colleagues are aware of your appointments if required to leave the service during duty. |

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| <p>Reporting & Record Keeping</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all records on Salesforce, PASS or other systems are inputted in a timely manner and are an accurate record of events based on facts not opinions. • Honour Client Consents and ensure information about Clients is not shared beyond their authorisation. • Ensure no sensitive information is accessible by persons not authorised to see it. • Ensure records no longer required are safely destroyed (shredded) in line with NOVAS policies. • Participate in Service Audits as requested. • Prepare and provide reports of your work to your line manager as requested. • Complete organisational documents as requested. |
| <p>Supervision, Support & Development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in regular supervision with your line manager. • Work under the direction of and in collaboration with your line manager and the wider management team. • Work to help the organisation achieve the aims and objectives of the strategic plan in line with our values and mission. • Participate in team meetings, case management meetings, and other organisational events as required. • Familiarity and compliance with all relevant policies and standards. • Participate in relevant and required training events. |
| <p>Information Management</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure data and personal information relating to clients, tenants, colleagues, and other members of the organisation or its stakeholders, are kept safe and secure using the correct systems and procedures, is collected for legitimate purposes, and is safely destroyed when appropriate. • Ensure clients are aware of how to access information about themselves and support any requests from them to access information. |

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

Documentary evidence of qualifications and eligibility will be confirmed at the end of any recruitment process, candidates who do not possess the essential requirements, on the date of application will not be offered a position. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they meet the essential criteria of the person specification.

The appropriate candidate will have:

- A **minimum of one year's experience** working in a kitchen or food service environment.
- Knowledge of **HACCP principles** and experience applying **food safety procedures** in practice.
- Previous experience in **sandwich making, food preparation, and basic meal production.**
- A good working knowledge of **hygiene, health and safety, and infection prevention and control standards.**
- The ability and willingness to follow **direction, policies, and procedures.**
- The ability to work effectively as part of a **kitchen team**, as well as to work **independently** when required.
- Administrative skills sufficient to accurately complete **HACCP records, cleaning schedules, delivery checks, and other required documentation.**
- An understanding of the **needs of vulnerable adults**, including people experiencing homelessness, and the ability to work in a respectful, non-judgmental, and professional manner.
- A commitment to maintaining **high standards** of customer care, professionalism, and service delivery.
- Willingness to engage in **required** training, including food safety, health & safety, and safeguarding, and to keep all certifications up to date.

Desirable Criteria

It would be an advantage for the candidate to have:

- Previous experience working within **the homeless sector or a similar social care or community-based setting.**
- **Additional experience in catering or food services** beyond the minimum required, including high-volume or service-based food preparation.
- **A full driver's licence**, with the ability to assist with deliveries or transport between services as required.
- Familiarity with working in **regulated or compliance-led environments**, including adherence to policies, procedures, and quality standards.
- Experience of working in a **fast-paced or flexible service environment**, with the ability to adapt to changing service needs. Experience and knowledge in the area of vulnerable adult or child protection and associated legislation and guidelines.
- Experience of working in, or a strong interest in the charity or not-for-profit.

NOVAS Employment Benefits

NOVAS is committed to attracting and retaining the best talent in service of our clients and tenants and values the hard work and commitment of our employees.

Detailed below are a range of benefits you receive as a NOVAS employee.

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| Support & Supervision | Every employee will have regular planned one-to-one meetings with their line manager as well as Team Meetings and Monthly All Staff Town Hall meetings in order to ensure you are connected to and supported by your colleagues and the organisation. |
| Learning & Development | NOVAS will fully fund a wide range of required training programmes, or role specific training, including First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling, Trauma Informed Practice. |
| Career Progression | NOVAS is committed to supporting the development and career progression of our employees by building skills for role transitions, leadership preparation, and management development. |
| Salary Scales | NOVAS has defined salary scales and has committed to awarding annual increments to employees depending on sustained funding. |
| Annual Leave | 26 Days annual leave plus bank holidays. |
| Pension | A direct contribution pension with a 5% employer and employee contribution totalling 10%. |
| Employee Assistance Programme | Our Employee Assistance Programme provided by Inspire Wellbeing gives employees access to free confidential counselling and a suite of online mental health and wellness tools. |
| Further Education Support | With the help of your line manager, you can apply for financial support, study leave, or exam leave days to complete external professional qualifications to help further your career. |
| Sick Pay | 2 Weeks full and 2 weeks half sick pay certified. |
| Maternity Leave | 18 weeks full pay which can be pro rata across duration. |