

Certification Director

Position Summary:

The Certification Director's role is to lead the Certification Department and oversee PCO's Certification, Inspection, and Materials Programs, which includes performing supervisory duties for program managers and assistant managers. The Certification Director is a key member of the Leadership Team, ensuring departmental progress and accountability, managing resources, and developing and implementing a strategic, operational plan in line with PCO's mission, vision, and core values.

Team Statement:

The Certification Director leads the Certification Department, which has the following areas of responsibility:

1. Certification, Inspection, Materials Programs
2. Compliance and Enforcement
3. Policy Development

The Certification Director's work focuses on all areas listed above.

Primary Duties & Responsibilities:

Executive

- Partners with the Director of Operations and Executive Director in the development of PCO's strategic goals and objectives.
- Implements, evaluates, revises, and achieves performance outcomes of PCO's Strategic Plan, specifically as it relates to the Certification Department.
- Creates and supports a workplace culture of caring, purpose, and results, ensuring collaborative, strategic, and values-based decision-making that results in high team morale, cross-departmental engagement, and effective customer service.
- Advocates for and implements systems, policies, and processes that support organizational excellence and ensures change is implemented with clear and direct change management steps.
- Attends Board of Directors meetings as requested and/or prepares and presents reports to the Executive Director and board as requested.
- Maintains accurate departmental performance metrics and reports to staff and Leadership Team monthly.

Certification, Inspection, Materials Programs

- Identifies program development needs and implements plans and objectives for the Certification Department in coordination with PCO's Strategic plan, including partnering with each department supervisor.
- Ensures that certification, inspection, and materials programs operate in accordance with organizational goals.
- Facilitates, plan, and conduct PCO meetings related to certification issues with relevant stakeholder groups (internal & external) to ensure clear, timely, and open communication and inclusive, collaborative, and creative problem-solving.
- Establishes network opportunities to collaborate or partner with other organizations involved in organic certification, related agricultural certification, inspection and materials programs to ensure PCO is an industry leader and maintains high value for its clients.

- Consults with the full Certification Department and direct reports on an ongoing basis to support process and procedure feedback and make any necessary changes in a timely manner with a transparent work plan, including deadlines and responsibilities.
- Maintains a working understanding of the USDA organic regulations and National List, as well as internal PCO policy and procedures as outlined in PCO Manuals.
- Leads Certification Database development and maintenance by serving as lead of key user group and a liaison between PCO and the Certification Database Developer, acting as the help desk point of contact for certification related issues, tracks and reports on open helpdesk tickets.

Policy Development

- Participates in Policy Team meetings and collaborates as necessary.
- Collaborates on policy development needs.
- Represents PCO to the National Organic Program (NOP) and National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), and at meetings, as assigned.
- Oversees and collaborates on writing NOP/NOSB comments, as assigned.
- Collaborates on communications to all stakeholders with relevant information about national, regional and local policies, regulations and initiatives related to PCO programs.
- Oversees implementation of standards including changes to regulations, standard operating procedures, work instructions, or guidance documents.
- Supports the development and implementation of all policies, ensuring those policies are documented and accessible to staff.

Compliance and Enforcement

- Ensures PCO's Certification Program is in compliance with USDA organic regulations and accreditation requirements.
- Participates in audits and accreditation related activities as needed (site visits, witness audits, etc.)
- Oversees the preparation and submission of certification documents required by the NOP and other accreditors to maintain accreditation.
- Collaborates with the Quality Manager and directly oversees complaints, investigations, appeals, legal actions, and other high-stakes issues for optimal outcomes.
- Performs tasks required for satisfying non-compliances as assigned by the Quality Manager.

Financial Planning and Management

- Meets financial objectives by estimating requirements, submitting an annual budget, and scheduling expenditures.

People Management

- Oversees and manages the Certification Department by providing staff leadership, coaching, and mentoring, and develops direct reports to drive necessary culture, business performance, and strategic goals.
- Coordinates and coaches team(s) to achieve operational metrics within their areas of responsibility and succeed in their roles. Ensures personal as well as professional growth through oversight and guidance of staff development training programs.
- Responds to staff feedback and concerns with a sense of urgency, collaboration, and accountability. Listening, planning, and providing solutions to support gaps.
- Partners with HR and hiring supervisors to hire, supervise, evaluate, and terminate certification staff.

- Completes regular performance reviews and manages any other people issues in conjunction with HR.
- Ensures customer service-oriented certification approach is prioritized, fostered, and maintained by all program staff.

Other

- Facilitates and guides teams in the creation of goals that align with the organization's strategic plan.
- Evaluates target performance initiatives by analyzing and interpreting data and metrics; leverage findings to improve program deliverables.
- Maintains professional and job-specific knowledge by attending workshops, reviewing publications, establishing personal networks, and participating in professional associations, representing PCO at public events as assigned.
- Provides reports on information, trends, initiatives, etc., relevant to PCO programs and strategic plans.
- Responds to requests for interviews from media as assigned.
- Contributes to PCO's quarterly newsletter as assigned.
- Ensures PCO representation on working groups and task forces within the industry.
- Any other task relevant to these duties or the mission of the organization as assigned by the Executive Director.

Job Requirements:

- Position
 - Bachelor's degree or equivalent work experience in a related field.
 - Minimum seven years of relevant professional experience in organic certification or auditing programs.
 - Minimum of five years in organizational leadership level position managing managers.
 - Successful track record in organizational management and supervisory experience, and experience with strategic planning, project management, and budget oversight.
 - Skilled at: building collective buy-in, complex project management, high-level decision making, and organizational change management practices.
 - Leadership experience managing people from multiple departments and successfully developing a strong team through: performance metrics, staffing, and interdepartmental collaboration.
 - Highly competent using spreadsheets, data reporting, data analysis tools, internet research, and database oversight.
 - Strong knowledge of organic standards, certification procedures and regulatory compliance.
 - Experienced in reporting to Boards and governance bodies.
 - Commitment to collaboration, integrity, transparency, and a demonstrated track record in building and supporting diverse, inclusive, and equitable work environments.
 - Excellent organizational skills.
 - Public speaking or teaching experience.
 - Ability to attend conferences, meetings, training or other events that involve travel.
- General
 - Analytical problem-solving ability.

- Ability to manage multiple priorities and perform within deadlines.
- Excellent communication, writing and interpersonal skills.
- Able to work with minimal supervision while understanding the necessity for communicating and coordinating work efforts with others. Must be able to develop a work plan and perform in a team environment.
- Computer proficiency: word processing, spreadsheets, internet research, databases.
- Performs work with utmost honesty and integrity. Criminal background check is required.
- Understands and appreciates the importance of extraordinary customer service.
- Dedicated to PCO's mission.
- United States citizen or legally approved to be employed in this position in the United States.

Class: Full-time, exempt

Reports to: Executive Director

Direct Reports: Certification Program Assistant Managers, Inspection Program Assistant Manager, Material Program Assistant Manager

Physical Requirements / Working Conditions:

- Climate-controlled office environment
- Minimal physical requirements other than occasional light lifting
- Moderate travel required