

JOB OPENING AT CURRENT

Retail Associate | Lead Shop Operations

Location: 223 W. Main Street, Washington, North Carolina

Position type: Part-time

Schedule: Hours To Be Discussed, Prefer Afternoons to Early Evening

Compensation: \$16 - \$19 per Hour, Depending On Qualifications

Reports to: Owner

About CURRENT

CURRENT is a thoughtfully curated retail and creative space in historic downtown Washington, NC. We bring together distinctive children's products, imaginative play, creative activities, workshops, and experiences for families.

We want our shop to feel beautiful, welcoming, organized, and connected to our local community. We are looking for someone who enjoys both the details of retail and the bigger picture of creating an exceptional customer experience.

About the Role

The Retail Associate is a key team member who helps lead the daily operation of CURRENT. This is a hands-on position for someone who is confident in serving customers, takes initiative, notices what needs to be done, and can keep the shop running smoothly without constant direction.

When the owner is away, you will be trusted to oversee the day-to-day shop experience, make routine operational decisions, and serve as the primary point of contact for customers and the assistant associate(s). When the owner is present, you will help manage the flow of daily operations so the owner can focus on business development, merchandising strategy, partnerships, and long-term growth of the business.

We are looking for someone who takes pride in the shop as if it were their own, while understanding that they are working within the owner's vision, policies, and priorities. This role is unique, highly desirable, and incentivized for the right candidate. The founder/owner is open to offering opportunities for partnership/shared ownership, or offers high potential for growth and pay increases, depending on the interest and capabilities of the candidate.

Key Responsibilities

Daily Shop Operations

- At times, open and/or close the shop according to established procedures.
- Ensure the shop is clean, organized, stocked, and ready for customers.
- Monitor the overall flow of the store and play space, addressing routine needs before they become problems.
- Follow opening, closing, safety, cleaning, and cash-handling procedures.
- Identify operational issues and communicate them promptly to the owner.
- Keep daily tasks moving without requiring constant reminders.

Customer Experience & Sales

- Welcome customers warmly and provide thoughtful, knowledgeable service.
- Learn CURRENT's products, activities, policies, and brand story.
- Help customers select toys, gifts, creative products, and other merchandise.
- Operate the point-of-sale system and assist with purchases, returns, and exchanges according to policy.
- Answer routine questions about play sessions, workshops, and events.
- Resolve ordinary customer concerns professionally and refer exceptions to the owner.
- Support sales through genuine recommendations, product knowledge, and attention to customer needs, not pressure-based selling.

Retail Merchandising & Inventory

- Maintain attractive, orderly displays that reflect CURRENT's aesthetic.
- Restock merchandise, monitor low inventory, and keep shelves and displays presentable.
- Receive deliveries, check items against packing slips, and flag discrepancies or damage.
- Assist with inventory counts, pricing, tagging, and product organization.
- Notice which products customers respond to and share observations with the owner.
- Help maintain a consistent, elevated, and welcoming shopping experience.

Play Space & Creative Activities

- Help maintain the play space, miniature playhouses, toys, props, and shared materials.
- Monitor general conditions and reinforce play-space policies.
- Assist with workshop preparation, material setup, cleanup, and activity transitions.
- Help prepare for birthday parties, private events, and seasonal programming as assigned.
- Report hazards, damaged items, incidents, or other safety concerns promptly.

- Understand that customer supervision responsibilities remain with parents or caregivers unless a specific program establishes a different, approved arrangement.

Team Leadership & Communication

- Provide direction and task support to the Assistant Retail Associate during assigned shifts.
- Delegate routine tasks clearly and respectfully.
- Set a positive example for customer service, cleanliness, reliability, and professionalism.
- Communicate shift updates, customer concerns, inventory needs, and outstanding tasks to the owner.
- Follow established procedures while using sound judgment to address routine, unexpected situations.
- Know when to make a decision independently and when to involve the owner.

Decision-Making Authority

The Retail Associate is trusted to make routine day-to-day decisions within CURRENT's established policies and budget.

The owner retains authority over business strategy, purchasing commitments beyond approved limits, staffing decisions, compensation, major refunds or exceptions, vendor agreements, policy changes, and other significant financial or operational decisions.

The Retail Associate should communicate concerns early, document important issues, and seek guidance when a situation falls outside their authority.

Qualifications

Preferred qualifications

- Previous retail, hospitality, customer service, or comparable experience.
- Experience opening or closing a business, handling transactions, or maintaining inventory.
- Strong organization, communication, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to prioritize tasks and work independently.
- Confidence helping customers while maintaining a welcoming, professional atmosphere.
- Reliability, sound judgment, and attention to detail.
- Comfort learning point-of-sale systems, booking software, and other digital tools.
- Interest in children's products, creativity, art, play, gifts, or community-focused retail.

We value practical experience and demonstrated responsibility over a particular job title or degree. Experience in a small business or boutique environment is a plus.

What Success Looks Like

- The shop is ready for customers, clean, organized, and operating smoothly.
- Customers feel welcomed, supported, and confident shopping at CURRENT.
- Daily responsibilities are completed without repeated reminders.
- The assistant associate receives clear direction and stays productively engaged.
- Inventory, sales, customer issues, and safety concerns are communicated accurately.
- The owner can step away from daily operations with confidence, when necessary.
- The team protects CURRENT's atmosphere, standards, and reputation.

Ideal Candidate

You are observant, dependable, thoughtful, and proactive. You notice the display that needs attention, the customer who needs help, the task that should be completed before closing, and the issue that needs to be communicated.

You enjoy being part of a small team and can balance warmth with accountability. You do not need every step spelled out, but you are comfortable asking questions when needed. You take pride in doing things well and understand that small details shape the overall customer experience.

Physical & Scheduling Requirements

The role may involve standing and walking for extended periods, reaching, bending, moving merchandise and supplies, and completing routine cleaning and setup tasks, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Availability requirements, including weekends, holidays, or occasional events, will be discussed during hiring.

The store is planned to be open between 5 to 7 days a week, between the hours of 10 am - 5 pm. Evening hours may be requested (but not required) at times for private parties or rentals. Flexible availability is a plus but not a requirement of this role. Some business hours will be open to the public while other hours will be private rentals.

The business plans to hire specialty artists and guest independent contractors to fill the role of workshop leaders, art instructors, and other guest roles within the business. You will be asked to work both independently, in partnership, and with a team.

How to Apply

Please send your résumé or a summary of your relevant experience, along with a brief note explaining why you are interested in CURRENT, to info@downtowncurrent.com.