



VOLUNTEER MANUAL

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Welcome!

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Solid Ground. Volunteers are a vital part of our ability to serve the needs of our many communities. More than 25 of Solid Ground's 30 programs and services rely on your efforts and those of our other 6,000 volunteers. Solid Ground has specific volunteer positions to accommodate many different schedules and interests throughout King County and Western Washington. We hope that you find the duties of your particular job description to be fulfilling and that your volunteer experience with us is both rewarding and positive.

The following information package includes details about our organization and the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers. There are a wide variety of laws, regulations and standards with which Solid Ground must comply. We have established policies, procedures, structures and systems that provide a framework for agency operations and help us conduct our business in a consistent and organized way.

If you have any questions about this information, or any information presented in this manual, please contact Solid Ground's **Volunteer Coordinator** at **206.694.6825** or volunteers@solid-ground.org.

Once again, welcome and thank you. We are thrilled to have you here. Thanks to people like you, we are able to spend 85 cents of every dollar donated on direct client services. Last year, our community members donated more than 28,000 volunteer hours to support Solid Ground's mission to end poverty and undo racism and other oppressions that are root causes of poverty. We cannot achieve our mission without you!

Sincerely,



Gordon McHenry, Jr.
President & CEO
Solid Ground

Contact Information - Headquarters

Solid Ground's Headquarters building is located in Seattle's Wallingford neighborhood. We share a building with the FamilyWorks Food Bank & Resource Center and the Wallingford Branch of the Seattle Public Library.

- **Address:** 1501 North 45th Street, Seattle, WA, 98103-6708
- **Office Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:30am – 5pm (closed on Federal Holidays)
- **Phone:** 206.694.6700 • **Toll Free:** 1.866.297.4300 • **TTY:** 7.1.1
- **Fax:** 206.297.4300
- **Email:** info@solid-ground.org
- **Internet:** www.solid-ground.org

Driving Directions:

From I-5 (Northbound or Southbound):

- Take exit #169 to N 45th & N 50th streets.
- Head west on N 45th St into Wallingford for about 1 mile.
- Solid Ground is on the left side of the street on the corner of Woodlawn Ave N and N 45th St.

From Northbound Aurora Avenue / Highway 99:

- Exit to the right at N 46th St.
- Turn right at the light at the bottom of the exit, and curve right onto N 45th St.
- Solid Ground is on the right side of the street.

From Southbound Aurora Avenue / Highway 99:

- Exit to the right on N 49th St.
- Turn left on Fremont Ave N.
- Turn left on N 46th St, drive under Aurora, then veer right onto N 45th St.
- Solid Ground is on the right side of the street.

Parking: While there is a parking lot behind our Headquarters building, we encourage you to park in the many free spots around the neighborhood since our parking lot is extremely limited. For all other locations, please check with your supervisor for parking guidelines.

Sign In: At our Headquarters building, please sign in with our front desk on the second floor of the Solid Ground building. You will be asked to wear a Visitor badge at all times while on the premises. For all other locations, please check with your supervisor for sign in guidelines.

Contact Information - Other Sites

Sand Point Housing

Sand Point Neighborhood
6940 62nd Ave NE
Seattle, WA 98115

Brettler Family Place Phone: 206.694.6764
Sand Point Family Housing Phone: 206.753.4830
Santos Place Phone: 206.753.4820
Fax: 206.517.5495
Email: sandpoint@solid-ground.org

Broadview Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing

This facility is an undisclosed, secure location in Seattle. Approved volunteers will receive the address when appropriate.

Phone: 206.299.2500
Fax: 206.299.2514
Email: broadview@solid-ground.org

Marra Farm (Part of the Lettuce Link program)

South Park Neighborhood
9026 4th Ave S
Seattle, WA 98108

Phone: 206.694.6746 x3
Fax: 206.694.6777
Email: lettucelink@solid-ground.org

Seattle Community Farm (Part of the Lettuce Link program)

Rainier Valley Neighborhood
4015 Martin Luther King Way
Seattle, WA 98108

Phone: 206.694.6828
Fax: 206.694.6777
Email: urbanfarm@solid-ground.org

Our Mission, Vision & Values

Mission

Solid Ground works to end poverty and undo racism and other oppressions that are root causes of poverty.

Vision

Solid Ground believes our community can move beyond poverty and oppression to a place where all people have access to quality housing, nutritious food, equal justice and opportunities to thrive.

Values

Solid Ground is committed to working with compassion, integrity, accountability, creativity and an anti-oppression approach to end homelessness, hunger, inequality and other barriers to social justice. We value collaboration and leadership from the communities we serve.

Our History

Since 1974, Solid Ground (formerly the Fremont Public Association) has served the Seattle/King County community and beyond through:

- leadership in addressing homelessness, hunger and poverty
- creativity in developing new and innovative solutions to community challenges
- courage in speaking out against injustice and inequality

Solid Ground's roots are in the Great Society anti-poverty programs launched during Lyndon Johnson's presidency. Our progenitor was a public/private partnership called the North Seattle Community Service Center (NSCSC), which was funded through the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act. When the Nixon administration slashed federal funding for anti-poverty programs, the NSCSC closed its doors. In 1974, local activists re-formed the NSCSC as a private nonprofit called the Fremont Public Association (FPA). At that time, Fremont was one of Seattle's most economically devastated neighborhoods. Our first services – an emergency food bank, a clothing bank, and an employment program – reflected the desperate needs and the determined response of a mobilized and committed neighborhood.

Over the years, as the scope and severity of homelessness and poverty have increased, so too have our services. Today, Solid Ground is one of the largest multi-service agencies in King County. Whether it's homelessness, hunger, racism and other oppressions, or the struggles of working families living on low incomes, Solid Ground does not turn away from our community's most pressing and pervasive needs.

Programs & Services

This brief outline summarizes the structure of our primary programs and services. For more information about any of our programs and services, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator or visit our website at www.solid-ground.org.

Housing & Shelter

- Broadview Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing
- Family Shelter
- JourneyHome
- Sand Point Housing
 - Brettler Family Place
 - Sand Point Family Housing
 - Santos Place
- Homeless Prevention Programs
 - Financial Fitness
 - King County Housing Stability Project
 - Lifelong Housing Safety Net
 - Mortgage Counseling Services
 - Seattle Housing Stabilization Services
 - Tenant Counseling Services

Transportation

- Downtown Circulator Bus
- Seattle Personal Transit (SPT)

Food & Nutrition

- Apple Corps
- Cooking Matters
- Food Resources
- Food Security for Children
- Lettuce Link

Advocacy & Community Support

- Anti-Racism Initiative (ARI)
- ConnectUp
- Family Assistance
- Penny Harvest
- Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- Statewide Poverty Action Network

AmeriCorps

- MLK VISTA
- Washington Reading Corps (WRC)

Accountability Standards

Solid Ground must comply with a wide variety of laws, regulations and standards. Accountability is assured through a variety of methods, including assessment, auditing and reporting. Noncompliance can result in consequences that range from having to implement corrective action plans to the payment of fines or penalties. Solid Ground has established internal policies and procedures, structures and systems that are designed to ensure compliance with external requirements as well as help the agency conduct its business in a consistent and organized manner. These policies, procedures, structures and systems provide the framework for agency operations. They affect both how we operate as an agency and how we perform our individual job duties.

Agency Responsibilities

Solid Ground must ensure that its policies, procedures, structures and systems are communicated clearly to all volunteers, carried out consistently throughout the agency, and accompanied by clear expectations and consequences for noncompliance. As part of this process, management and supervisory staff must ensure that volunteers have a clear understanding of their individual job duties and responsibilities as well as the relationship between their jobs and those of other staff. They must also make sure that volunteers receive regular feedback on their job performance.

Expectations of Volunteers

In the same way that the agency is held accountable by external sources, volunteers at all levels of the organization must be held accountable for the work that they do. In this regard, volunteers are expected to:

- Perform all required job functions and duties
- Communicate with supervisors regarding problems and issues that need to be addressed
- Complete assigned tasks within established deadlines
- Work cooperatively with other staff and volunteers
- Take responsibility for mistakes, errors or problems that they create
- Seek information or assistance when something is not clear
- Maintain a professional attitude at all times
- Familiarize themselves with relevant policies and procedures and utilize this information as necessary to carry out their work

Boundaries

Solid Ground cannot deliver services and support to our communities without our generous volunteers. But the ultimate responsibility for the safe and effective delivery of programs and services rests with the Solid Ground staff. If you have any questions about staff versus volunteer roles and responsibilities, please talk with your supervisor for more information.

Volunteer Policies

The policies stated in this handbook are intended as guidelines only and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the agency. These policies should not be construed as and do not constitute a contract guaranteeing volunteer employment for any specific duration.

Volunteer Orientation

All volunteers are required to attend a volunteer orientation. This orientation will give volunteers the opportunity to learn more about the agency as a whole and meet volunteers in other programs of the agency.

Background Checks

All prospective volunteers are required to have a Washington State Patrol Criminal Background Check completed before volunteering at Solid Ground. In considering a volunteer, we may conduct an investigation of his/her background on behalf of the agency to prevent individuals with certain criminal histories from working with vulnerable populations.

Children as Volunteers

Due to the nature of our agency and the services we provide, the minimum age for volunteers is 18 for most of our programs. Lettuce Link and Brettler Family Place do have some volunteer roles that are appropriate for volunteers under 18, which require signed waivers and/or proof of liability coverage. For all other programs, exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

Volunteer Hours

Volunteers make a significant contribution and we must keep accurate records of all volunteer hours for our grantors, financial records and insurance. We ask that you record your volunteer hours per the procedure of the program for which you are volunteering. Please check with your supervisor if you have any questions related to this process.

Individual Volunteer Records

The Volunteer Coordinator will maintain files on each volunteer. These files will include all legally required materials and information about the volunteer's work history at Solid Ground. These include but are not limited to: a Solid Ground volunteer application, position description, Washington State Patrol background check, trainings attended and any performance evaluations. Access to this information is restricted to people who need to know this information based on implementing a restriction for work activity that is an essential function of the job, an emergency situation, contract compliance or other legal requirements.

Absences

In the case of an emergency, the volunteer must notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible. If the volunteer is not able to contact the supervisor, he or she should contact other site staff or Solid Ground's Volunteer Coordinator. The regular, dependable attendance of each volunteer is an essential part of our programs.

Equipment Use

For any volunteer role that requires the use of office, farm or repair equipment, the volunteer will receive specialized policies and procedures training by their supervisor. Your supervisor will let you know if this will be an aspect of your position.

Volunteers as Drivers

In order to drive for Solid Ground, volunteers must provide the Volunteer Coordinator with a copy of their driver's license and their current proof of insurance. In the case of an accident in their personal vehicle, the volunteer's insurance will be the primary insurance. Use of Solid Ground vehicles is prohibited without first attending a defensive driving course offered by Solid Ground's Seattle Personal Transit program. Volunteers who drive their personal vehicles for Solid Ground business may be eligible to be reimbursed for mileage at the current Federal Travel Regulation Rate. Please check with your supervisor for details regarding these processes. Please also note that volunteers are strictly prohibited from transporting clients at any time.

Working with Children

For any volunteer role that requires working with children under the age of 18, the volunteer will receive specialized policies and procedures training by their supervisor. Your supervisor will let you know if this will be an aspect of your position.

Agency Property

All Solid Ground property and donations must remain on site, unless otherwise approved by an appropriate staff person.

Accessibility to Services

All volunteers may access Solid Ground services for which they meet the requirements, and all persons who receive Solid Ground assistance may also serve as volunteers with the agency, although in a department different from that at which they receive services. Status as a volunteer will not affect the manner in which clients access services.

Termination of Volunteers

Voluntary terminations occur when the volunteer initiates the separation. This includes but is not limited to written or oral resignation. Involuntary terminations occur when the volunteer does not initiate the separation. This includes but is not limited to unsatisfactory work, absenteeism, misconduct or program reorganization.

Organizational Policies

The following policies are organization-wide and must be adhered to by all volunteers.

Confidentiality Policy

It is vital that we respect the privacy of our clients with regard to anything you see, hear or witness and that their circumstances remain strictly confidential. Volunteers cannot disclose client information to anyone, including other clients, volunteers or individuals on or off Solid Ground premises.

Exceptions are as follows:

- Where mandated by law
- To prevent a clear and immediate danger to persons
- When a defendant in a civil, criminal or disciplinary action arising from the contract
- In accordance with a written waiver

Volunteers are to responsibly store and dispose of all records and documents in ways that maintain confidentiality per your specific program's established procedures. Any violation of a client's confidentiality will be grounds for dismissal from all volunteer duties.

Communications Policy

Only volunteers who have prior approval should speak to the media on Solid Ground's behalf. If you do not and you are contacted by a reporter or blogger, please let them know that Solid Ground will be pleased to respond, but the reporter/media contact must first contact the Solid Ground Communications Office, which coordinates media contacts.

Cultural Competency Policy

It is essential to Solid Ground that our clients, volunteers, donors, and staff are treated with respect and courtesy. Please remember that your actions are representative of the agency. Solid Ground volunteers are responsible for communicating respectfully with people of all cultures, languages, ages, genders, gender preferences, races, physical abilities, ethnic backgrounds and religions.

Anti-Racism Initiative (ARI)

Solid Ground's mission is to work to end poverty and undo racism and other oppressions that are root causes of poverty. We strive to be accountable to all of the communities we serve, dismantle any institutional barriers that prevent people from accessing our services, and ensure our services meet clients' needs. If you would like any more information about our ARI, please contact your supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Volunteers are to avoid placing themselves in a position that may create or lead to a conflict of interest or the appearance of one. Volunteers may not make contact with clients outside of program-related activities, unless a previous relationship exists or this is approved by the volunteer's supervisor. Volunteers are not allowed to accept gifts, rides or services from clients and should not offer gifts, rides or services to clients.

Drug & Alcohol Policy

Solid Ground receives funding from the federal government and, as such, is subject to the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988. Volunteers are required to notify the agency of a conviction of any drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days following the conviction. No volunteer will report to work or will work impaired by any substance, drug or alcohol, lawful or unlawful. Exceptions will be limited to lawful medications and will be based strictly on an assessment of the volunteer's ability to perform his or her regular duties safely and efficiently. No volunteer at any worksite will possess any quantity of substance, drug or alcohol, lawful or unlawful.

Exceptions will be limited to:

- Lawful over-the-counter drugs in reasonable amounts
- Other lawful prescription drugs in reasonable amounts

Except as specifically described above, we strictly prohibit:

- The possession, use or trafficking of alcohol or drugs, legal or illegal, while on Solid Ground premises or time or while representing Solid Ground.
- The possession, use or trafficking of illegal drugs at any time, on or off the job.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, legal or illegal, while on Solid Ground's premises or time or while representing Solid Ground.
- The unlawful manufacture, distribution or dispensation of controlled substances (including alcohol) on any of Solid Ground's premises, or any other area at which a volunteer is to perform work for Solid Ground.
- The use of legal (over-the-counter or prescription) medication is not a violation of this policy, provided you obtain your supervisor's permission before beginning work if you are taking a legal medication that may affect your performance or safety.

We may require that you provide a medical opinion that you are fit for duty while taking the medication before allowing you to work. Volunteers who manufacture, dispense, distribute, possess or use controlled substances (including alcohol) on the job are subject to immediate discharge, and any drugs confiscated will be turned over to local law enforcement officials.

Weapons

Weapons are prohibited on Solid Ground premises, including parking lots of Solid Ground facilities. Weapons readily available off premises, for instance in a vehicle driven to Solid Ground, are also prohibited. This policy applies to weapons of all kinds, including guns, knives and related paraphernalia such as ammunition.

Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment

Solid Ground is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. All volunteers are expected to be sensitive to, and respectful of, their coworkers and others with whom they come into contact while representing Solid Ground. Solid Ground prohibits harassment in all forms, whether due to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual preference, status as a veteran, political ideology or any other reason protected by law.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping
- threatening, intimidating or hostile acts
- denigrating jokes
- written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace
- making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

Reporting Harassment or Discrimination

Any employee or volunteer who is aware of any instances of any type of harassment must report the alleged act immediately to her/his supervisor. If the volunteer is uncomfortable in discussing the matter with the supervisor or if the supervisor is not available, the volunteer should report the alleged act immediately to the Human Resources Director or designee. This applies to harassment or discrimination caused by anyone with whom a volunteer comes into contact as part of their work: Solid Ground staff and supervisors, community service providers, other volunteers, coworkers, customers, vendors or others.

All reported incidents will be investigated within the following guidelines:

- All complaints will be kept confidential to the fullest extent possible. This means they will be disclosed only to witnesses and others as necessary to allow us to investigate and respond to the complaint, to management and as may be required by law.
- We will not permit retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith complaint or who cooperates in good faith in an investigation.

Health & Safety

For more detailed safety procedures and building floor maps, please refer to the additional safety packet.

Safety Information

Please report any hazardous or unsafe conditions immediately to your supervisor or other Solid Ground staff. Call 9.1.1 for any fire, police or medical emergencies. For more information, see the Emergency Procedures packet provided by your supervisor.

Personal Hygiene

As with any workplace, good hygiene is important. Please be sure to maintain cleanliness by practicing frequent hand washing or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when facilities are not present, keeping any cuts or wounds dressed, and not volunteering when ill. We also recommend that all volunteers be current on their vaccinations and immunizations.

Insurance & Liability Coverage

If a volunteer is injured at Solid Ground while actively volunteering, they must report it immediately to their supervisor. An Incident Form (available through your supervisor or Solid Ground Human Resources) MUST be completed by the volunteer and their supervisor. If more than standard first aid is required, a note releasing the volunteer back to the volunteer position must be received by the supervisor before the volunteer returns to work.

This document provides a brief statement of several of Solid Ground's major policies. It is not intended, and should not be construed, as a comprehensive statement of Solid Ground's policies and procedures.