

**Volunteer/Intern/Staff Manual
Policies and Procedures**

Sinkunia Community Development Organization (SCDO)

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Policies and Procedures Regarding Our Youth Programs

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Sinkunia Community Development Organization (SCDO). This manual will provide you with useful information about the policies and procedures of our youth programs. Please take the time to read this manual so that you are fully aware of your role and responsibilities as a volunteer.

Preamble

"As an organization working with children and youth, we deem it fit to have certain policies and procedures in place that will serve as guide posts in our daily interactions with these vulnerable groups. Also, since the bulk of our programs are delivered by volunteers, we need policies and procedures in place that will guide and protect the volunteers against any criminal offence and possible lawsuits. The policies and procedures will also serve to protect all program participants, (herein defined as children, youth and families participating in our programs), against professional misconduct from any of the volunteers".

Mission/Mandate

"Sinkunia Community Development Organization (SCDO) is a non-profit organization committed to promote the successful settlement and integration of immigrant and refugee children, youth and families in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada".

In accordance with the mandate/mission, Sinkunia Community Development Organization provides a range of programs that fall under four core service areas;

1. Mentoring for immigrant youth
2. After school support to immigrant children and youth
3. Educating immigrant families on the Canadian school system
4. Settlement and integration support to immigrant families.

Vision

"Sinkunia Community Development Organization strives to promote the development of healthy communities where basic human needs are met, equitable opportunities for education and employment exist, and children and families flourish in healthy relationships and vibrant communities"

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Volunteers of the Sinkunia Community Development Organization are representatives of the agency in the community and to individual clients. Therefore, it is imperative that they adhere to the following code of conduct. Failure to do so will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

The volunteer has the responsibility to:

- Treat everyone fairly within the context of their position, regardless of gender, ethnic background, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status;
- Conduct oneself in a manner consistent with the position of a positive role model, and as a representative of Sinkunia Community Development Organization
- Respect the dignity and privacy of participants by not divulging confidential information without consent, except when required by law as in cases of suspected child abuse
- Work in co-operation with fellow volunteers and employees
- Remain within the bounds of the volunteer position
- Meet the expectations of the position to the best of your ability.

Volunteer Policies

1.1 Purpose of Volunteer Policies

The purpose of SCDO volunteer policies is to provide overall guidance to volunteers within the agency. It is used for guidance only. It does not represent an agreement and management reserves the right to change or alter the policies at any time. If a volunteer has any questions or concerns regarding the policies, they should be directed to the Volunteer Coordinator or Program Manager.

Policies:

1. All Volunteers **must go through Security Clearance and child Welfare Intervention Checks** prior to their involvement with any of the children/youth programs
2. Volunteers **are not allowed** to transport children and youth in their private vehicles. If they do, they **must** provide drivers' abstract to ensure they have clean driving records prior to transporting any of the children or youth
3. Parents **must sign a waiver** to have their children and youth transported by volunteers
4. No sexual harassment of program participants, other volunteers or paid staff at any time while involved with any of the children and youth programs
5. No participant or volunteer will be **discriminated against** based on religion, race, sex, color or cultural background while participating in our programs
6. Volunteers will be encouraged to take reasonable action to prevent or eliminate discrimination against any of the participants based on #5 above. In other words, personal prejudices and beliefs (religious, ethical, political et cetera) are not allowed to affect their decisions regarding participants
7. Volunteers must go through an orientation and training session to introduce them to the programs prior to any involvement with the children/youth.

Volunteer Roles

1.1 Representation of the Agency

The volunteer will at no time take any action that will significantly impact the agency without prior consent of the agency. These actions may include, but are not limited to, involvement with the press, agreements or partnerships with other agencies, or any agreements involving contractual or other

financial obligations. Volunteers are to act as members of the agency in so far as their job descriptions, unless otherwise confirmed with the Volunteer Coordinator.

1.2 Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while working at the agency; whether this information involves a single staff, client, or overall agency business. All information must be brought forward to the volunteer coordinator if the volunteer has concerns regarding a staff member, volunteer or client. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in termination.

1.3 Dress Code

Volunteers shall dress themselves in a manner that represents a neat, clean and professional image appropriate for work with children and families. The dress code at the agency is "Business Casual".

1.4 Critical Incident

If a volunteer observes an incident involving a client they are required to report it to their supervisor. The supervisor will then complete an accident/incident report.

5. Re-assignment

Volunteers who are re-assigned to a new position at their request or that of the agency will be interviewed and oriented to the new position. A new job description and all necessary training will also be provided before the start of the new position.

1.6 Length of Service

All volunteer positions will have a set term of duration. This term will be determined upon the acceptance of a placement. All volunteer assignments will end at the completion of the term without pressure or expectation to continue. If a volunteer wishes to continue, a new term of service will be established with the volunteer co-ordinator.

1.7 Leave of Absence

Should the need arise; volunteers may be given a leave of absence at the discretion of the volunteer coordinator. This will not alter or extend the previously decided length of service, and, where possible, it will not interfere with the position held by the volunteer.

1.8 Orientation

All volunteers will be provided with an orientation to Sinkunia Community Development Organization programs and services. During the orientation, the volunteers will be provided with a tour of program locations, further information on the volunteer program, their assignment description, and any other detailed information necessary to perform their placement.

1.9 On-the-Job Training

All volunteers will receive the necessary training for them to complete their duties. The timing and method of training will depend on the position.

1.10 Volunteer/Staff Relations

Volunteers are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and vision of the agency. It is important that the relationship is treated with respect and understanding, as teamwork is required to accomplish the mandates of the agency.

1.11 Lines of Communication

Volunteers will receive all the necessary information about the agency and its clients to assist them in completing their work assignments. Volunteers will have access to memos, schedules and materials that are relevant to their assignment. The lines of communication should operate in both directions and exist formally as well as informally.

1.14 Absenteeism

When possible, volunteers are encouraged to complete their duties on a regular schedule. When a volunteer expects that they will be absent from a scheduled shift, they should inform the volunteer coordinator in advance if possible so that alternate arrangements can be made. Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteers work assignments and terms of service.

1.15 Dismissal of a Volunteer

Volunteers who do not adhere to the mission, vision, and procedures of the agency or who fail to satisfactorily perform their duties are subject to termination of service. This may include but is not limited to gross misconduct, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, theft or property misuse, abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers.

1.16 Resignation

Volunteers may resign from their position at any time. It is requested that the volunteer provide a written notice of resignation and reason as far in advance as possible.

1.17 Access to Agency Property and Materials

As necessary, volunteers will have access to all agency property and materials needed for them to complete their duties. Property and materials will be used only when needed for agency operations.

1.18 Insurance

Sinkunia Community Development Organization has a Liability and Accident Insurance in place for all our staff, volunteers, program participants and Board of Directors. However, volunteers are encouraged to consult with their own insurance agents regarding the extension of their personal insurance to include community volunteer work.

1.19 Conflict and Complaint Resolution Policy

Sinkunia Community Development Organization (SCDO) is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment characterized by constructive, productive and supportive relationships. Such relationships are often subject to contrasting styles of understanding and acting, and to different points of view. It is essential that we all recognize that human interactions are complex, often difficult, and that we all can contribute to their success.

All persons involved with SCDO have an obligation to communicate openly and respectfully with one another and to provide reasons for particular decisions or actions. When disagreements arise, greater understanding by

all is needed. The presence of conflict, if dealt with effectively, offers an opportunity for individual and organizational learning including the identification of policies and practices that need to be improved.

The Executive Director (ED) is ultimately responsible for ensuring that conflicts involving staff and volunteers are resolved in a satisfactory manner. The ED has a duty to inform the board of any conflicts that impinge on the organization's ability to function or may damage its reputation.

Conflicts should be addressed at the earliest possible opportunity as unresolved conflict can lead to a stressful, and in the worst cases, a poisoned work environment.

In the event that any person or group is experiencing a work-related conflict or has a complaint about the actions of another person, the following guidelines will apply:

1. Communicate directly with the person or persons whose actions is the cause of the complaint. People should reasonably expect to know if their behaviour or their decision is a problem for another person or group.
2. If the circumstances are such that the person with a complaint is unable or unwilling to communicate directly with the person or persons whose actions are the cause of their complaint, either for fear of it going badly, or of reprisal, the help of one other trusted person in the organization should be sought.
3. The Executive Director will resolve complaints and conflicts that cannot be resolved by those directly involved or their supervisor(s).
4. In circumstances where it is the action of the Executive Director that is reason for the conflict, the Board may address the complaint.
5. Communication of the complaint or conflict shall first be made verbally to the respondent or supervisor. If this does not lead to a resolution that is satisfactory to the complainant, the nature of the complaint should then be communicated in writing. If this fails to result in a resolution the written complaint should be sent to the executive director.
6. Third parties, acceptable to all those involved, may be of assistance in helping resolve the conflict in a (1) facilitation or mediation role where the goal is to help the parties restore a positive working relationship in the future, or (2) a decision-making /arbitration role where they investigate what happened and make a determination of who is responsible for the situation and what the consequences for the parties should be. The choice of these two approaches should be offered to the parties. If a mediated approach fails to resolve the matter, an arbitrated approach can be undertaken.
7. The parties will refrain from drawing others not directly involved into the process as a way of garnering support or gaining attention. Such actions include "copying" the written complaint by e-mail to others.
8. Complaints and conflicts shall be dealt with in a confidential manner. Meetings to resolve a complaint shall be open only to the parties and those attempting to resolve the complaint. The parties may have an advocate or supporter present. Meetings may be with the different parties individually, together or both. In the interest of openness, no minutes or written record of what is said in these meetings shall be recorded although, if the parties agree, the outcome of the meetings or a resulting agreement may be documented.ⁱ
9. Where the board is involved in a conflict resolution role, communication with it should be directly with the Chair not with the whole board. It is the chair's duty to inform the entire board of the existence of the conflict but the board may appoint one of their number, or an impartial party to help resolve the matter.

10. The parties, and those helping to resolve the conflict, should avoid communicating the details of a complaint, making or responding to allegations or giving advice by e-mail. Face-to-face communication, as difficult as it is, should be relied upon. E-mail messages can be used for arranging meetings or communicating details of the resolution process.
11. Either the Executive Director or the Chair of the Board have an obligation to act immediately in addressing a complaint if the physical and mental health and safety of any of the parties is perceived to be at risk. In doing so one of the parties may be granted a temporary leave of absence with pay until the issue has been satisfactorily resolved or for up to two weeks, whichever is shorter.
12. If threats to persons are made, or the Executive Director or Chair of the Board perceives a possible danger to a party or to other employees, including the possibility of one party being a danger to themselves, external professional assistance must be sought immediately.

1.20 Anti-Harassment Policy

Sinkunia Community Development Organization does not tolerate or condone any degree of harassment by anyone associated with the Organization. It is the responsibility of all staff, and in particular management, to promote harassment free environments in the workplace.

Authority

Executive director, managers, staff

Procedure

Sinkunia Community Development Organisation believes in the prevention of harassment and promotes a harassment-free environment in which all people respect one another and work together to achieve common goals. Harassment is defined as any unsolicited or unwelcome interaction, which directly or indirectly affects or threatens to affect a person's job security, prospects of promotions or earnings, working conditions or opportunity to secure a position. Harassment can include such things as verbal or physical abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts about any of the prohibited grounds. Sexual harassment can include pinching, patting, rubbing or leering, dirty jokes, pictures or pornographic materials, comments, suggestions, innuendos, requests or demands of a sexual nature. The behaviour need not be intentional in order to be considered harassment but may be offensive and/or intimidating. Such action may also engender fear or mistrust, and thereby compromise an individual's dignity or sense of self-worth. Any act of harassment committed by or against any employee, volunteer, child, or any other individual is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated.

Sinkunia Community Development Organization is committed to investigating reported incidents of harassment in a prompt, objective, and sensitive manner taking necessary corrective action and providing appropriate support for victims. No individual shall be penalized in any way for making a complaint or giving evidence in a harassment investigation.

The test to determine whether harassment has occurred is two-fold:

- Whether a person knew or ought to have known that the behaviour would be considered unwelcome or offensive by the recipient
- The recipient found the behaviour offensive

If an individual(s) believes they are being harassed, they should:

1. Immediately make the individual(s) aware that the behaviour is unwelcome and ask him/her to stop.

2. Report the incident to his/her supervisor, manager or executive director.
3. The recipient should keep a record of the incidents in question, which may include:
 - Name(s) of the individual(s) in question
 - The date, place, and time the incident(s) occurred
 - Name(s) of any witnesses
 - The event(s) that led up to the incident(s) in question
 - Any particular reason why the event(s) occurred
 - The actual incident that led to a complaint provided for reference only.
4. The confidentiality of the individuals concerned will be maintained. An investigation into the incident(s) will be undertaken immediately along with any additional steps necessary to resolve the problem. If the employee requires support or advice, they should contact their supervisor or executive director.
5. The complainant and the individual in question will both have individual interviews along with any individuals who may be able to provide additional and relevant information. Once all relevant information has been gathered, it will be reviewed with the appropriate departments to determine whether harassment has taken place. If the investigation reveals the occurrence of harassment or other unacceptable conduct appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be taken and all documents will be placed on the offenders file.
6. The complainant will be advised of the results of the investigation and no reference to the incident will appear in their work record.
7. Should the investigation fail to find fault, all documents will be destroyed and both parties will be

notified of the results of the investigation.

Harassment

SCDO believes and promotes harassment – free environment in which all people respect one another and work together to achieve common goals.

Harassment is defined as any unsolicited or unwelcomed interaction which directly or indirectly affect or threatens to affect a person's job security. Prospects of promotions or earnings, working conditions or opportunity to secure a position. Harassment include things likes
Verbal or physical abuse

Threats

Derogatory remarks

Jokes

Sexual harassment – pinching, patting, rubbing, leering, dirty jokes, pictures of pornographic materials, comments, suggestions, innuendos, request or demand of s sexual in nature. The behavior may not be intentional in order to be considered harassment. If the behavior compromise A person's worth and dignity, engender fear or mistrust. Any act of harassment committed by or against any employee, volunteer, child or any other individual is unacceptable conduct and must not be to tolerate.

1. At any point when an employer volunteer or child find this behavior to be a harassment, they should
2. Immediately alert the perpetrator that is unwelcome, so he/she should stop.
3. Report the incident to program supervisor, manager or the executive director
4. Recipient of the report should keep record of the incidents which may include;
 - Name(s) of the individual(s) in question
 - The date, place and time the incident(s) occurred
 - Names of any witnesses
 - The event(s) that led up to the incident(s) in question
 - Any particular reason why the event(s) occurred.

- The actual incident that led to a complaint

4 The confidentiality of the individuals concerned will be maintained. An investigation into the incident(s) will be undertaken immediately along with any additional steps necessary to resolve the problem. If the employer requires support or advice, they should contact their supervisor or executive director.

5 The complainant and the individual in question will both have separate interviews along with all witnesses with relevant information. After every information have been gathered, the appropriate department will review to determine whether harassment has taken place. If the investigation reveals the incident happened appropriate disciplinary measures including termination legal action will be taken and all documents placed on the offender's file.

6 The complainant will be advised of the outcome of the investigation and none of the outcome will be placed on their files

7 All document will be destroyed should the allegation proved false and the two parties will be notified

In the absence of any of these proceedings or if one party is not satisfied with outcome, the individual can contact Alberta Human Right Commission to file a complaint of harassment

Conflict and complaint resolution

All persons involved with the association have an obligation to communicate openly and respectfully with one another and to provide reasons for decisions or actions. When disagreement arises greater understanding by all is needed. The presence of conflict, if dealt with effectively offers an opportunity for individual and organizational learning, including the identification of policies and practices that need to be improved

One authority who is responsible for ensuring that conflicts involving staff and volunteers are resolved in a satisfactory manner is the Executive Director. He or she has the responsibility to inform the board of any conflict that impinge on the organization's ability to function or damage its reputation.

SCDO strive to address conflict at it earliest unset as an unresolved conflict can lead to a stressful, and in the worst cases, poisoned the work environment and slow down productivity. If any of our staff and affiliates experiencing work-related conflicts or has any complaint about the actions of another person, the following guidelines will apply;

- Communicate directly with the person or persons whose actions is the cause of the complaint. People should reasonably expect to know if their behavior or decision is a problem for another person or group
- In the case of the person not willing to communicate directly with the person whose actions are the cause of the complaint either for fear of it going badly, or of reprisal or losing a job, one can ask a trusted colleague or supervisor to be present before communicating the grievance.
- The ED will resolve complaints and conflicts that cannot be resolved by those directly involved or their supervisors
- In circumstances where it is the action of the ED that is the reason for the conflict, the board may address the complaint.
- Communication of the complaint or conflict shall first be made verbally to the respondent or supervisor, if this does not lead to a resolution that is satisfactory to the complainant, the nature of the complaint should then be communicated in writing. If this fails to result in a resolution, the written complaint should be sent to the ED.
- Third parties acceptable to those involved, may be of assistance in helping resolve the conflict in (a) facilitation or mediation role where the goal is to help the parties restore a positive working relationship in the future, or (2) a decision-making role where they

investigate what happened to determine who is responsible for the situation and what the consequences for the parties should be. If the mediated approach fails an arbitration approach can be undertaken.

- The parties will refrain from drawing others into the process as a way of garnering support or gaining attention. Such include, copying the written complaint by email.
- Complaint and conflicts shall be dealt with in a confidential manner. Meetings to resolve a complaint shall be open only to parties and those attempting to resolve the complaint. In the interest of openness, no record of what is said in these meetings shall be documented until an agreement is reached and the resolution documented.
- When the case is referred to the board the chair of the board is responsible to resolve the conflict and brief the entire board. The board may appoint a member to help the chair instead of the entire board.
- The parties helping to resolve the conflict should use face-to-face over texting or emailing details of the issues except using that means to call for a meeting.
- The ED and the chair have an obligation to act immediately in addressing complaint if there is a risk to physical, mental or health of the parties involved. In this case one of the parties may be granted a temporary leave of absence with pay until the issue has been satisfactorily resolved or for up to two weeks, whichever is shorter.
- If threats to persons are made or the ED and the board chair perceives a possible danger to a party or to employees, external professional assistance must be sought immediately.

Revised/Updated April 10, 2018
SCDO
