

**sonder**  
SOLUTIONS

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# **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

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## Welcome to sonder SOLUTIONS

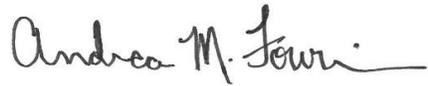
Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to **sonder SOLUTIONS**! We are thrilled that you have chosen to volunteer your time with us. Our organization depends on volunteers like you to ensure that we operate efficiently and successfully. Volunteers at **sonder SOLUTIONS** do everything from help conduct mock interviews to plan our events.

The Volunteer Handbook provides answers many of the questions you may have about the volunteer programs we offer. It covers policies and procedures, and our mutual responsibilities. You are responsible for reading and understanding the Volunteer Handbook, and for adhering to **sonder SOLUTIONS** policies and procedures. If anything is unclear, please discuss the matter with any **sonder SOLUTIONS** staff.

Again, on behalf of everyone at **sonder SOLUTIONS**, we welcome you to our volunteer program. Thank you for taking time to help us break down workforce barriers for individuals with disabilities. You are changing these people's lives, and we are so grateful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea M. Fournier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Andrea Fournier  
Executive Director

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## Purpose of This Handbook

This handbook has been produced to help you become a better **sonder SOLUTIONS** volunteer. This book will share with you a little of our history, philosophy, practices, and policies as well as all the benefits we will provide to you as a valued volunteer.

No volunteer handbook can answer all the questions you might have about our program. It is in our volunteer orientation that we can better get to know each other, express our views, and volunteer together in a harmonious relationship.

We hope this Handbook will allow you to feel comfortable with us. We depend on you – your success is our success. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. Your Volunteer Coordinator will gladly answer them. We believe you will enjoy your volunteer work and your fellow volunteers here. We also believe you will find **sonder SOLUTIONS** a great place to volunteer.

We ask that you read this Handbook carefully and refer to it whenever questions arise. We also suggest that you take it home, so your family can become familiar with **sonder SOLUTIONS** and our policies.

## Mission

Mission Statement: Empowering disadvantaged individuals and underserved populations with whole person employment and workforce development services designed to promote self-sufficiency and independence—by removing barriers, creating opportunities, and helping job seekers build careers in their communities.

## Volunteer Expectations

What You Can Expect from **sonder SOLUTIONS**:

- Respectfulness of your commitment, time, and confidentiality
- To be a part of a growing team
- Ongoing support from **sonder SOLUTIONS** staff
- An inclusive culture
- To be recognized and appreciated for your work

**sonder SOLUTIONS** is an inclusive, supportive organization where volunteers can expect to be treated with respect. We respect your valuable time and commitment to our program, as well as your right to confidentiality as a volunteer.

What **sonder SOLUTIONS** Expects from You

- Honor your commitment to our program
- Cooperate with **sonder SOLUTIONS** staff and fellow volunteers
- Be prompt and reliable
- Notify us of any changes to your commitment as a volunteer
- Keep all communications with or concerning the participants in our program confidential
- Maintain a respectful relationship with our participants

Our expectations are more clearly outlined in the Policies & Procedures section of this guide.

## Volunteering with sonder SOLUTIONS

### **The Orientation Process**

1. Attend Volunteer Orientation
2. Complete Volunteer Information Form
3. Complete Volunteer Agreement Form
4. Start Volunteering!

### **Positions**

There are a variety of opportunities to volunteer your time and skills at **sonder SOLUTIONS**. All of our programs are supported by volunteers. Volunteers teach and aid in our workshops and help with day-to-day operations. If you have a question about who you should be reporting to, contact the Communications Specialist and they will direct you to the appropriate staff.

Below is a summary list of the volunteer opportunities available. We also offer limited internship opportunities and additional opportunities to meet organizational needs. Contact the Communications Specialist for more information.

### **Volunteer Positions**

- Mock Interviewer
- Workshop Assistant
- Workshop Presenter/Instructor
- Ambassador
- Fundraising Assistant
- Special Events Staff

Volunteer opportunities are emailed to volunteers regularly as we have new sessions and events. Please check email folders to ensure you are receiving emails. To sign up for opportunities use the forms linked in the email or contact the Communications Specialist.

## Volunteer Policies & Procedures

As a new volunteer, it will take time to adjust to your new surroundings and the way things operate here at **sonder SOLUTIONS**. This Handbook is designed to help you adjust to your new role here and answer questions about the policies, procedures and expectations here at **sonder SOLUTIONS**.

Absences & Lateness: Volunteers are critical to **sonder SOLUTIONS'** mission. If you cannot make your volunteer shift for whatever reason, please notify our staff as soon as possible.

Volunteer can contact the following individuals:

Katrina Heller: Communications and Job Development Specialist  
916-249-0203 Ext. 1  
kheller@sondersolutions.org

Attendance: Sign-in time sheets help us track your volunteer hours. Please sign in when you begin your volunteer service and sign-out when you are finished.

Confidential Information: We have an obligation to our participants to maintain their confidentiality and respect their privacy. Every participant served by **sonder SOLUTIONS** has the right to confidentiality. That being said, however, every volunteer must use their best judgment. If you are aware of a participant issue that requires immediate help, please inform any **sonder SOLUTIONS** staff.

As you work with the staff, information of a confidential matter may be shared with you. You must not share this information with anyone who does not have a professional right or need to know it. This applies to making copies of any **sonder SOLUTIONS** records, reports or documents without prior approval. Release of any confidential information to unauthorized persons can result in dismissal from your service.

Dress Code: **sonder SOLUTIONS** has a casual dress code, but we ask that your attire be neat and conservative. If staff feels your attire is out of place, you may be asked to change into proper attire.

Equal Volunteering Opportunity: **sonder SOLUTIONS** provides equal volunteering opportunity for everyone regardless of age, sex, color, race, creed, national origin, religious persuasion, marital status, sexual orientation, political belief, or disability. All matters relating to volunteering are based upon ability to perform the job, as well as dependability and reliability.

Feedback: An efficient, successful operation and satisfied volunteers go hand in hand. Volunteer grievances are of concern to **sonder SOLUTIONS**, regardless of whether the problems are large or small.

In order to provide for prompt and efficient evaluation of, and response to, grievances, **sonder SOLUTIONS** has established a Feedback Procedure for all volunteers. It will always be **sonder SOLUTIONS'** policy to give full consideration to every volunteer's opinion. There will be no discrimination against or toward anyone for his or her part in presenting grievances.

Under this policy, a grievance is defined as any event, condition, rule, or practice which the volunteer believes violates his or her civil rights, treats him or her unfairly, or causes him or her any degree of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the job. A grievance may also deal with an attitude, a statement, or an opinion held by a manager or volunteer.

The Feedback Procedure is as follows:

1. Address **sonder SOLUTIONS** staff: If you feel that any volunteering condition, policy, practice, or action by sonder SOLUTIONS is unjust, you should tell your Volunteer Coordinator about it and discuss the matter confidentially and in private with him or her. If for some reason your Volunteer Coordinator fails to offer you the opportunity to discuss the matter, or if the discussion does not lead to a satisfactory conclusion, then proceed to the next step.
2. Meet with the Executive Director: The Volunteer Coordinator's immediate supervisor, the Executive Director, will review the grievance and ask you to meet with them. At this meeting, you should feel free to openly discuss your complaint and substantiate your reasons for feeling the way you do. In most cases, the matter will usually be resolved at this stage.
3. Meet with the Board: Following the meeting with our Executive Director, if you are still displeased with the decision rendered, you should bring the problem directly to our Board. The problem will be discussed with all concerned and a final decision rendered. The Board's decision will be binding on all. The sole purpose of this Feedback Procedure is to give each volunteer and **sonder SOLUTIONS** a chance to clear up any problem, complaint, friction, or grievance.

When volunteering your time with **sonder SOLUTIONS**, we ask that you refrain from soliciting any political and religious beliefs. While some of our participants are very religious, we ask that you maintain a personal yet professional relationship with them throughout your time as a volunteer. We ask that you do not solicit your own business enterprise or any other private charities.

Standards of Conduct: By agreeing to volunteer with us, you have a responsibility to **sonder SOLUTIONS** and to your fellow volunteers to adhere to certain guidelines for conduct. **sonder SOLUTIONS** tries to keep rules to a minimum. The purpose of the rules is not to restrict your rights, but rather to be certain that you understand what conduct is expected and necessary. When each person is aware that he or she can fully depend upon fellow volunteers to follow the rules of conduct, then our organization will be a better place to volunteer for everyone.

Substance Abuse: **sonder SOLUTIONS** has no desire to intrude into its volunteers' personal lives. However, both on-the-job and off-the-job involvement with any mood-altering substances can have an impact on our agency and on **sonder SOLUTIONS'** ability to achieve its objective of safety and security. Therefore, all volunteers are expected to report to the organization free of the effects of any mood-altering substances. The possession, sale, or usage of mood altering substances while volunteering is a violation of safe volunteer practices and will be subject to dismissal.

Volunteers who show signs or evidence of having consumed alcohol and/or drugs will not be permitted entrance to **sonder SOLUTIONS**. Violators will be dismissed from all volunteer programs.

Grounds for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Gross misconduct or insubordination
- Reporting for a volunteer assignment under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Theft of property or misuse of agency funds, equipment or materials
- Falsifying statements on the volunteer application or during the interview process
- Illegal, violent or unsafe acts
- Abuse or mistreatment of clients, volunteers or staff
- Releasing confidential information
- Unwillingness to support and further the mission of the organization

Unacceptable Activities: We expect each person to act in a mature and responsible way at all times. However, to avoid any possible confusion, some of the more obvious unacceptable activities are noted below. Your avoidance of these activities will be to your benefit as well as the benefit of **sonder SOLUTIONS**. If you have questions concerning any volunteer or safety rule, or any of the unacceptable activities listed, please see your Communications Specialist for an explanation.

If a volunteer violates any rules established by **sonder SOLUTIONS**, including the following rules, that person may be subject to discipline up to, and including, immediate discharge.

- Willful violation of any agency rule; any deliberate action that is extreme in nature and is obviously detrimental to **sonder SOLUTIONS**
- Willful violation of security or safety rules or failure to observe safety rules or **sonder SOLUTIONS** safety practices; failure to wear required safety equipment; tampering with **sonder SOLUTIONS** or safety equipment
- Negligence or any careless action that endangers the life or safety of another person
- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited at any **sonder SOLUTIONS** event designed for the participation of minors
- Possession or use of all illegal drugs or other illegal substances is prohibited
- Excessive tardiness or absenteeism
- Unauthorized possession of dangerous or illegal firearms, weapons or explosives on agency property or while on duty
- Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence or making threats of violence towards anyone on agency premises or when representing **sonder SOLUTIONS**; fighting, or horseplay, or provoking a fight on agency property, or negligent damage of property
- Insubordination or refusing to obey instructions properly issued by your Volunteer Coordinator
- Threatening, intimidating or coercing fellow volunteers on or off the premises - at any time, for any purpose
- Theft of agency property or the property of fellow volunteers or clients; unauthorized possession or removal of any agency property, including documents, from the premises without prior permission from management; unauthorized use of agency equipment or property for personal reasons; using agency equipment for profit
- Dishonest, willful falsification or misrepresentation of your application for volunteering or other volunteer records; alteration of agency records or other agency documents

- Breach of confidentiality of personnel information
- Malicious gossip and/or spreading rumors; engaging in behavior designed to create discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another volunteer on the job; willfully restricting volunteer output or engaging others to do the same
- Immoral conduct or indecency on agency property

## **Contact Information**

Listed below are the members of our leadership and volunteer team. If you have any questions, you can contact members of our lead team listed below and we will happily put you in touch with an appropriate staff member.

**Andrea Fournier:** Executive Director (916) 249-0203 Ext 2 [afournier@sondersolutions.org](mailto:afournier@sondersolutions.org)

**Sophie Trasher:** Employment Services Advisor Community (916) 249-0203 [strasher@sondersolutions.org](mailto:strasher@sondersolutions.org)

**Katrina Heller:** Communications and Job Development Specialist (916) 249-0203 Ext 1 [kheller@sondersolutions.org](mailto:kheller@sondersolutions.org)

**sonder SOLUTIONS Office:** 2880 Sunrise Blvd. Suite 213 Sacramento, CA 95742

**Phone:** (916) 249-0203

**Office Hours:** 9:30 am – 4:00 pm, Monday – Friday

## Volunteer Agreement

sonder SOLUTIONS believes in the inherent ability of every individual in our program to make positive changes in their life and to become self-sufficient through gainful employment.

In pursuit of this goal, volunteers are expected to keep all information regarding the women in our program confidential and to treat everyone with respect. If there is a situation in which you feel a staff member should be aware of a problem regarding one of the individuals in our program, contact sonder SOLUTIONS staff to determine the best possible solution. Failure to comply with these policies may result in dismissal from volunteer staff and/or civil or criminal prosecution in accordance with applicable statutes.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I been given a copy of the sonder SOLUTIONS Volunteer Handbook. I understand that it summarizes sonder SOLUTIONS' volunteer guidelines and expectations of me as a volunteer. I understand that volunteering with sonder SOLUTIONS is not for a specified term and is at the mutual consent of sonder SOLUTIONS and myself. I agree to abide by the Policies and Procedures laid out in the Volunteer Handbook.

By signing this form, I agree to:

- Honor my commitment to the program
- Cooperate with the sonder SOLUTIONS staff and fellow volunteers
- Be prompt and reliable
- Notify sonder SOLUTIONS staff of any changes to your commitment as a volunteer
- Keep all communications with or concerning the women in our program confidential
- Maintain a respectful relationship with students/graduates and sonder SOLUTIONS staff
- Model professional behavior, through both dress and decorum
- Discuss any and all issues with sonder SOLUTIONS staff
- Respect each individual's right to self-determination
- Promote the safety of the participants, staff and volunteers by adhering to all sonder SOLUTIONS' rules and guidelines

Please keep, this is your copy.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_