

Southside

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Volunteer Handbook

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SECTION 1 – WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Southside Community Connections! Volunteers are the backbone of our organization. Without volunteers working to support Southside Community Connections and its programs, The Little House, Wheels, and Village on the Hill, we would not be able to provide these programs and services to the community.

Southside Community Connections (SCC) (legal name is Southside Senior Services) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. SCC supports The Little House, Village on the Hill and the WHEELS and WAVE programs for the benefit of residents in Groveland, Big Oak Flat and surrounding communities.

Our mission is to provide health, recreation, social interaction and lifelong learning experiences in a multigenerational setting to benefit active adults who live in Southern Tuolumne County. SCC recognizes, respects, and strives to meet the needs of adults in our community. We offer activities, programs, and meeting space for the youngest to the most senior adults, in a warm, comfortable and friendly environment. We rely on a group of dedicated and committed volunteers to be our ambassadors in the community and to help support our four primary programs.

THE LITTLE HOUSE (TLH) supports the needs and enriches the lives of community members through various programs and activities in a multi-generational environment. The Little House is a popular community gathering place, offering complimentary Wi-Fi, information about social services available in Tuolumne county, congregate lunches, classes and lectures, health and fitness programs, and special events. Individuals interested in leading a program at The Little House can contact The Little House Supervisor at TLH@southsidecommunityconnections.org or 209-962-7303.

WHEELS is a membership program that provides door-to-door transportation for medical appointments, shopping and errands in the Groveland area, as well as transportation to Sonora for medical appointments (only), for anyone 60 and over who is unable to drive due to recent surgery, illness, age or access to a vehicle. The program relies entirely upon volunteers who use their own vehicles to provide rides. People wishing to learn more about being a volunteer Wheels Driver can contact our Transportation Coordinators at Wheels@southsidecommunityconnections.org or 209-962-6952.

WAVE provides free bus and mini-van transportation from Groveland to Sonora and Modesto for medical appointments, shopping and errands, and other out of county locations such as Fresno and the Sacramento area for medical appointments. SCC launched the grant-funded WAVE

(**Wheels And Village Express**) program on June 1, 2021, to supplement the Wheels program. Anyone is eligible to ride. WAVE's 8-person bus can accommodate wheelchair-bound and other disabled individuals. The 3-passenger mini-van is used when there are fewer riders. This program does not use volunteers. Transportation Coordinators who manage the Wheels program can be reached at Wheels@southsidecommunityconnections.org or 209-962-6952.

VILLAGE ON THE HILL (VOH) Based on the philosophy of "Neighbors Helping Neighbors," SCC's Village on the Hill serves adults over age 50 through various programs and services—enabling Village members to remain at home with safety, dignity and respect. VOH is a membership program that serves Village members (aged 50 and over) through various services that enable them to remain in their own homes with safety, dignity and respect. Our screened and trained volunteers offer safe and confidential assistance with challenging tasks and lend friendly support through personal calls and visits. Individuals interested in volunteering for this program can email Wheels@southsidecommunityconnections.org or call 209-962-7303.

See program brochures for more detailed information.

SECTION 2- VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Volunteers must agree to comply with the following Code of Conduct before being accepted as a volunteer. This Code of Conduct is intended, not only to establish ethical standards for volunteers, but also to protect those persons who become enrolled in or attend SCC programs. Certain activities are inconsistent, incompatible or in conflict with the duties of volunteers. The following is a copy of the form that must be submitted with the volunteer application:

As a volunteer for Southside Community Connections (SCC), or any of its programs, I am committed to:

Personal responsibility

- Be dependable, maintain a neat, clean appearance, and recognize the commitment and responsibility to my volunteer assignment(s).
- Accept assignment(s) consistent with my interest, abilities, and available time and with an open mind and willingness to learn, completing them in a timely manner and in accordance with procedure set forth in training and the procedure manual.
- Refrain from using the prestige or influence of the position for personal advantage.
- Avoid conflict of interest situations and refrain from actions that may be perceived as such. Volunteers should reveal any potential or actual conflicts of interest as they arise.
- Not accept tips, gifts, and loans, request meals to be paid for, or otherwise accept anything else of value for my volunteer work.
- Seek approval from the Volunteer Coordinator prior to taking any action or making statements that may significantly affect or obligate SCC or its programs, including public statements to the press.
- Endeavor to avoid the appearance of any impropriety in the performance of all responsibilities and duties of the assignment, maintaining a high level of integrity at all times.
- Address ethical concerns by speaking directly with the colleague with whom I have the concern; and when necessary, report such to the Volunteer Coordinator in the defined chain of command.

Respect

- Treat all individuals with a sense of dignity, respect, patience, consideration and worth. Make a personal commitment to be nonjudgmental about cultural differences, living conditions and the life-style of each person with whom I work.
- Refrain from profane and abusive language and disruptive behavior that is dangerous to self and others.
- Abstain from the use of photo, audio or video recording equipment unless authorized.
- Respect all confidential information. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves the organization, volunteer, client, member or other person.
- Refrain from advocating or proselytizing for specific political, social, and/or religious beliefs.
- Recognize I have a moral obligation to report cases of suspected adult abuse or neglect to the Program Coordinator.

- Respect and use all equipment appropriately and as required for my assignment. Abstain from the personal use of equipment or resources owned by SCC or its programs.
- Understand that all forms of harassment are prohibited. This includes sexual, cultural, ethnic, age, religion, disability race, sexual preference, etc. and that a hostile environment or behavior such as vulgarity, rudeness, sarcasm and yelling is not acceptable.

Safety

- Not use, possess, manufacture, distribute, dispense or be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics or controlled substances at any time while acting as a volunteer. Prescribed medication is acceptable as long as Volunteer can perform duties in a safe manner.
- Avoid conduct, both on and off duty, which would jeopardize program effectiveness.
- All items of clothing must be suitable, and should not contain offensive or objectionable material (slogans or graphics).
- Report suspicious activities to the Program Coordinator or SCC Board.
- Recognize that I have a responsibility to adhere to the rules and procedures of SCC and its programs. Failure to do so or failure to satisfactorily perform my volunteer assignment may cause me to be subject to removal from the program.

SECTION 3 - WORKING WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE LIMITATIONS

As a volunteer you may find that you will be helping or have contact with individuals who have limitations such as hearing, sight, mobility, etc. Please use the following suggestions to help you be more comfortable in these situations.

1. Be considerate of the extra time it might take for someone with a disability to get things said or done. Let the person set the pace in talking or walking.
2. Speak directly to anyone who has a disability. Don't consider a companion or interpreter to be a conversational go-between.
3. Give whole, unhurried attention to anyone who has difficulty speaking. Don't speak for him or her, but give help when needed. Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting. When necessary, ask questions that require short answers or a nod or shake of the head.
4. Don't pretend to understand someone with a speech difference when you do not. Don't be afraid to let him or her know that you do not understand. Be patient, not only with them but also with yourself.
5. Speak calmly, slowly, and distinctly to anyone who has a hearing problem or other difficulty understanding. Stand in front of them, speak directly to them, and use natural gestures to aid communication. When full understanding is doubtful, try writing notes.
6. Do not assume anything. If you have a question about what to do, how to do it, what language or terminology to use, what assistance to offer, ask them. They should be your first and best resource.
7. Offer assistance, quietly and tactfully, if it seems needed, but don't overdo it or insist on it. Respect the person's right to reject help or to indicate the kind of help needed.
8. If, for whatever reason, you cannot assist in the way that is asked, be open in discussing this with them. You have a right to set limits on what you can and cannot do.
9. Do not pet or otherwise distract service dogs; they are working and must not be distracted.
10. Be alert to the possible existence of architectural barriers in places you may want to enter with anyone who has a disability. Watch for inadequate lighting and other hazards.

SECTION 4 - SAFETY AND BOUNDARIES

The following are some guidelines to ensure your safety as well as the safety of the person you are helping as well as their property.

- **DO** maintain a neat & clean appearance at all times.
- **DO NOT** wear perfume, cologne, or strong smelling aftershave while helping a member or client or while volunteering
- **DO** be polite and courteous. All shall be treated with respect and in a culturally appropriate manner.
- **DO** respect clients' rights to confidentiality at all times.
- **DO NOT** smoke when a member, client, program attendee or other volunteer is present. This rule applies to members and clients. No smoking is allowed in any SCC building or on SCC grounds.
- **DO NOT** be responsible for personal items other than your own.
- **DO** refer members or clients to SCC staff if they contact you to ask for a service or ride directly.
- **DO** respect the personal space of members, clients and those attending programs at The Little House. Ask before giving anyone a hug.
- **DO NOT** lift something that is too heavy for you. If you aren't sure about it, don't attempt it
- **DO** call 911 for assistance if someone falls and cannot get himself or herself up on their own, Then, contact the Executive Director.
- **DO NOT** attempt to help them get up as this may cause further injury.
- **DO** provide feedback to the Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director.
- **DO** wear, or have visible, easy to read SCC identification (ID Badge) when acting as a volunteer (optional).
- **DO** contact SCC Staff if you have a concern about a member or client's living conditions.
- **DO** call 911 for emergency assistance if a member, client, program attendee, or other volunteer seems suddenly unwell, in distress or expresses feeling ill and is obviously undergoing some onset of illness. Then, contact SCC Staff.

- **DO** fill out an Incident Report Form in case of an accident (including damage to property), injury or issues of concern (such as harassment, unusual behavior, etc).

Village on the Hill Service Providers Only:

- **DO** only perform services with which you feel comfortable.
- **DO NOT** perform a service outside of the approved services list. Use the phrase, "I need to confirm..." if there is a service you feel uncomfortable performing or if you are unsure if it is appropriate to offer it and advise the Program Coordinator of the request.
- **DO NOT** attempt to do a service if you do not have appropriate training, tools or experience to perform it.

Wheels Drivers Only:

- **DO** open and close vehicle doors when clients enter or exit the vehicle and provide assistance as necessary to or from the main door of the place of destination.
- **DO** announce the name of the building and its location, left or right of car, upon arrival. If picking a client up at this location identify where you will pick the client up (i.e. in front of the building, etc.).
- **DO** ask the passengers in the process of being seated if they would like assistance fastening of the seat belt, when necessitated by the client's condition.
- **DO** confirm, before allowing the vehicle to proceed, that all clients are properly secured in their seat belts. (Exception: Only a client who has a letter, carried on his/her person and signed by the client's physician, stating that the client's medical condition prevents the client from using a seat belt, may be transported without a fastened seat belt).
- **DO** provide an appropriate level of assistance to clients, when requested, or when necessitated by a client's condition.
- **DO** assist clients, as needed, in the stowage of mobility aids, groceries, etc. if you are physically able to do so.
- **DO NOT** eat or drink, except water, while providing client transportation.
- **DO NOT** wear any type of headphones while driving.

SECTION 5 - ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS

Unfortunately, as a volunteer, there are times you may encounter situations of elder abuse. Please keep the following information in mind if you run into anything remotely resembling abuse and follow the procedure noted below.

What is Elder Abuse and Neglect?

It is all of the following - physical abuse, neglect, financial abuse, abandonment, isolation, abduction, or other treatment, resulting in physical harm or pain or mental suffering, or the deprivation by a care custodian of goods or services that are necessary to avoid physical harm or mental suffering.

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

- Physical abuse – inflicting physical pain or injury on a senior, e.g., slapping, bruising or restraining by chemical or physical means.
- Sexual abuse – non-consensual sexual contact of any kind.
- Neglect – the failure by those responsible to provide food, shelter, health care or protection for a vulnerable elder. **This includes self-neglect.**
- Exploitation – the illegal taking, misuse or concealment of funds, property, or assets of a senior for someone else's benefit.
- Emotional abuse – inflicting mental pain, anguish, or distress on an elder through verbal or nonverbal acts; for example, humiliating, intimidating, threatening, isolation, or threatening institutionalization.

Warning Signs

- Bruises, pressure marks, broken bones, abrasions and burns.
- Unexplained withdrawal from normal activities, a sudden change in alertness and unusual depression.
- Sudden changes in financial situation.
- Bedsores, unattended medical needs, poor hygiene, unusual weight loss, unsafe housing conditions. Self-neglect is also a reason to contact Adult Protective Services.
- Belittling, threats and other uses of power and control by spouses and/or caregivers. At least 60% of elder abuse is perpetrated by a family member, including adult children and spouses (National Council on Aging, 2021).
- Strained or tense relationships, frequent arguments between caregiver and senior.

Reporting

Volunteers have a moral obligation to report any suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation. Concrete evidence is not deemed necessary for reporting. Our policy is that, at a minimum, you report the suspected abuse to either the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Program Director both of whom are mandated reporters. You may also report the abuse directly to Tuolumne County Adult Protective Services (APS) if you would like, at (209) 533-5717.

Information concerning the individual at risk will be investigated by either the Volunteer Coordinator or Program Director and may be reported to the Department of Family and Children Services (for individuals under the age of eighteen) or to Adult Protective Services (APS) for people with disabilities or seniors.

Procedures

1. Volunteers may submit forms directly to APS or call them at (209)533-5717. Reports can be made anonymously. Please also notify SCC Staff.

2. In the event that a Volunteer is involved in an Alleged Abuse Report:
 - The volunteer will not be issued additional assignments while the allegations of abuse are investigated. If the volunteer is exonerated of charges following the investigation, the volunteer will be eligible for new assignments.
 - During the investigation, the volunteer may not have any contact with members, clients or participate in programs until the investigation is complete.
 - A substantiated charge of a volunteer involved in mistreatment, abuse, exploitation or neglect of anyone will result in immediate, permanent removal from the volunteer roster. Substantiated charges will be reported to local law enforcement authorities for further investigation and possible criminal charges.

SECTION 6 – SCC POLICIES

The following policies have been developed to protect the interest of both volunteers and people served by SCC. A copy of each policy is provided during orientation.

- **Background Check**
- **Donation**
- **Confidentiality**
- **Harassment**
- **Drug Free “Workplace”**
- **Identification Badge**
- **Photo Release**
- **Termination**

BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

A background check must be conducted for each volunteer associated with SCC. All volunteers must agree to allow SCC to perform a criminal background. Further, a driving record check must be conducted for each volunteer driver. Background checks will be ordered through a 3rd party system approved by the SCC board. All confidential information listed on the authorization form, such as social security number and driver license number, will be redacted as soon as the request has been entered in the 3rd party service system.

DONATION POLICY

1. Volunteers must protect the privacy regarding voluntary contributions made by members, clients, and program attendees.
2. All contributions will be used to support SCC unless designated for a specific program such as Wheels or Village on the Hill.
3. No eligible person may be denied service because he or she will not or cannot make a donation or contribute to the cost of service.
4. Volunteers are not allowed to receive personal donations (tips).

The principle of confidentiality is basic to the maintenance of professional ethics and community respect. Members, clients, and program attendees as well as volunteers expect their

circumstances and personal matters to remain confidential. SCC is obligated by law and ethics to reciprocate. Confidentiality of information is maintained for the protection of all.

1. All staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting the confidentiality of members, clients, or program attendees at all times.
2. All written and unwritten information concerning members, clients, or program attendees are considered confidential. Written information will be maintained in locked, confidential files. Only those with a "need to know" will have access to these files. No one may remove these files from the office without authorization.
3. When it is necessary for confidential file to be used outside the office, all appropriate steps must be taken to safeguard the materials.
4. SCC may use confidential information for the purposes as described in the Release of Information.
5. A record of any release of confidential information will be kept in the appropriate file.
6. At times SCC may be legally required to report certain types of unsolicited information received from a member, client, program attendee, or their family members, caregivers, etc. An example may be suspected elder abuse. All such reports will be documented in the appropriate file.
7. The fact that a situation has been made public through any of the news media does not alter the fact that a member's, client's, or program attendee's information should remain confidential.

HARRASSMENT POLICY

Southside Community Connections has a zero-tolerance policy regarding harassment of another volunteer, staff member, member, client, or program attendee which creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment.

1. All forms of harassment are prohibited. This includes sexual, cultural, ethnic, age, religion, disability, race, sexual preference, etc.
2. Sexual harassment. Each volunteer has a responsibility to maintain an environment free of any form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is any conduct or communication that the receiving party may find unwelcome or offensive. Examples include but are not limited to:

- a. Sexual flirtations, touches, advances, or propositions;
- b. Verbal communication of a sexual nature, including humor, graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body; sexually degrading language
- c. The display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, including nude photographs or illustrations.

Any sexual activity, consensual or otherwise, is strictly prohibited.

3. Hostile Environment. Examples of prohibited behavior include the use of vulgarity, rudeness, sarcasm, yelling, etc.
4. Any volunteer who observes actions or words by a staff member, fellow volunteer, member, client, or program attendee that constitutes harassment has a responsibility to:
 - a. Tell the individual that their action or words are unwelcome and are considered harassment;
 - b. Report the concern to any member of SCC Staff or the SCC Board of Directors.
5. All complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly in a manner that is impartial and confidential.

DRUG FREE "WORKPLACE" POLICY

1. All staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance at any SCC facility and/or during any of the programs offered or sponsored by SCC.
2. Any violation of the prohibitions in #1 will be considered to be just cause for suspension and/or discharge as a volunteer.
3. Volunteers will notify SCC in writing of any criminal drug status conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five calendar days after such conviction.

SCC IDENTIFICATION BADGES

It is important that our clients, members, and people who attend our programs feel comfortable with our volunteers. Because of this, all volunteers are provided an SCC Identification Badge. Badges will be provided at the volunteer orientation. We urge volunteers to wear their identification badge when meeting a client for the first time or whenever it seems appropriate.

MEDIA RELEASE

Occasionally, SCC activities may be photographed, videotaped, or audio-taped for educational, publicity, or fundraising purposes. Volunteers are required to complete the Media Release Form indicating if they give permission to appear in videos, photos or audio recordings without compensation (e.g., as part of brochures, slide shows, websites, etc.).

VOLUNTEER TERMINATION

1. Non-approval of a Volunteer applicant:

A volunteer may be removed from consideration for a position at the discretion of the SCC Board or in the following circumstances:

- Volunteer applicant has made falsifications, misrepresentations, or material omissions or has practiced any other deception in the application process.
- Applicants will be immediately removed from consideration for falsification of any information related to prior convictions or if the information in the background check indicates a conviction of any of the crimes that render individuals ineligible for volunteering. Potential volunteers who have a past conviction of abuse, exploitation or neglect will not be considered for volunteer service.
- Volunteer applicants for services that require driving clients, members or driving on behalf of SCC will also be subject to a DMV check with the CA Department of Motor Vehicles. Any applicant cited for DUI or with repeated traffic violations or accidents will not be eligible to drive for SCC.

2. Resignation:

SCC understands that volunteers are not permanent. A volunteer may decide to stop volunteering at any time. The volunteer is asked to give as much notice as possible of a resignation or a leave of absence from the program. To help the organization grow and learn from its experiences, volunteers are asked to participate in an informal exit interview when leaving the volunteer program.

3. Termination:

SCC may dismiss a volunteer at the discretion of the board or for failing to fulfill the duties of their position or meet the basic standards set by the organization. Grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, misconduct, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while volunteering, theft of property or misuse of the organization's property, verbal or physical abuse of members, failure to fulfill volunteer obligations and breach of confidentiality.

SECTION 7 – VOLUNTEER TIME TRACKING

Tracking volunteer time is important to SCC for a variety of reasons. It helps SCC recognize volunteers who have provided exceptional service. It also helps SCC when filing grant applications.

Volunteers are asked to submit volunteer time as they complete their volunteer assignments. Information may be submitted in a variety of manners depending on the task performed. These include:

- Drivers submit time for rides given by completing the information on the e-mail issued to them regarding the ride. The Transportation Coordinators enter this information into a tracking database.
- VOH service providers submit time for each service provided by respond to the service confirmation email when it's done with time it took to complete. The Transportation Coordinators enter this information into a tracking database.
- Program Leads submit their time directly to the TLH Supervisor, via the attendance log in each classroom.

SECTION 8 – VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Volunteer recognition acknowledges accomplishments, reinforces efforts and is a sign of appreciation. We all appreciate being recognized in a meaningful way for our efforts. When volunteers feel appreciated and important, they are more likely to feel connected to the organization and continue their involvement.

SCC is committed to recognizing our volunteers on an ongoing basis and at an annual recognition event. We hope this event will:

INSPIRE...re-enthusiase you for future service opportunities.

HIGHLIGHT ACHIEVEMENTS...allowing us to say thank you for everything you do for the organization.

EDUCATE...everyone participating in the celebration about the scope, meaning, and value of volunteer services to SCC and the community

HELP US HAVE FUN TOGETHER...sharing in a job well done and providing an opportunity for volunteers & staff to build relationships and think of future ways to serve together.

SECTION 9 – INSURANCE COVERAGE

SCC Insurance Coverage

1. **SCC General Liability**

a.	General Liability	\$	1,000,000
b.	Fire Damage	\$	100,000
c.	Medical Expense	\$	10,000
d.	Auto Liability	\$	1,000,000
e.	Damage of Premises	\$	250,000

2. **Cimaworld Volunteer Insurance**

- a. Up to \$1,000,000 in personal liability Insurance
- b. Volunteers who drive up to \$500,000 in excess automobile liability insurance above the volunteer's own insurance.

NOTE: This policy has a sexual, abuse and sexual molestation endorsement.

3. **Accident Policy for Volunteers**

a.	Death	\$	50,000
b.	Dismemberment	\$	50,000
c.	Paralyzed	\$	25,000
d.	Medical Limit	\$	75,000

Wheels Driver Insurance Coverage Requirements

Wheels driver must carry motor vehicle insurance limits as follows:

- a. \$100,000 bodily injury each person and
- b. \$300,000 each occurrence with property damage of \$100,000 or
- c. Single limit of liability of \$300,000

Driver personal insurance is the primary liability protection and must be issued by a company authorized to do business in California.