4430 MENCHACA RD, AUSTIN, TX 78745 | NAVIGATION@SUNRISEAUSTIN.ORG | 512-368-2685

Sunrise Volunteer Handbook

MISSION, VISION, VALUES

MISSION: Sunrise offers pathways to housing for people experiencing homelessness through low-barrier access to wraparound services by providing innovative, trauma-informed, and person-centered programming that engages our communities and leads system-wide transformation.

VISION: We envision a community where people experiencing homelessness have innovative, whole-person solutions to address the whole-person trauma of being unsheltered.

TRUST: *Safety Builds Trust*
We recognize the complex challenges individuals face in their lifetime and give trauma-informed care from initial contact that provides emotional and physical safety for all while creating a dependable safety net that minimizes risk.

CHOICE - *Autonomy to Choose*
We affirm each person as the expert in their own life as they take the next right step to wholeness and diligently walk alongside them as they explore their options.

COLLABORATION - *Better Together*
We build and encourage active relationships with community partners to improve systems and change culture while leveraging diverse perspectives to solve complex problems.

INNOVATION - *Relentless Innovation*
We are driven by curiosity towards strategic, effective and creative ideas that lead us outside our comfort zone. We make data-informed decisions that pursue meaningful, sustained outcomes while growing from our experiences and educating others to improve our work and our community.

EQUITY - *Designed for All*
We originate from the Christian faith and believe that our community is best served when diversity and inclusion are embedded in everything we do. We create an environment that brings together unique perspectives, removes obstacles for marginalized populations most disproportionately harmed by homelessness to attain their personal goals, and actively work towards dismantling the systems that perpetuate inequity in our community.

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SUNRISE SERVICES

The Sunrise Hub day center provides basic needs, resources, and support to people experiencing homelessness Monday through Friday from 9 am to 1 pm. Volunteers support the Sunrise Hub in the following ways:

- Sunrise Cafe (prepping and serving meals and beverages)
- Sunrise Shop (distributing clothing Tuesdays and Thursdays)
- Sunrise Clothing Closet (sorting and organizing clothing donations)
- Sunrise Mailroom (filing and distributing mail)
- Special Projects

Across the organization, Sunrise provides the following types of services to our clients on a daily basis:

- Benefits Specialist Appointments
- Bus Passes
- Coordinated Assessments
- Communities for Recovery Intakes
- Computer Lab with 1x1 support
- Device Charging & storage
- Financial Aid for move-in costs
- Food
- Food Stamp Applications
- HMIS ID Printing
- Housing Resources
- Housing Check-Ins
- Hygiene Items
- Mail Services
- Medication Storage
- Mental/Medical Healthcare Appointments
- Narcan
- Pet Food & Supplies
- Showers
- Social Security Card Assistance
- Wellness Coordination

For an up-to-date list of programs and services visit the Sunrise website.

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We serve hundreds of people everyday and we could not do this without dedicated, hard-working, compassionate volunteers like you! Your hard work keeps our mission moving forward. The types of volunteer opportunities include:

Sunrise Café
For those interested in our most visible form of service, feeding the unsheltered, you can volunteer to work in our Sunrise Cafe. The Cafe is set up from 8:15 - 9 am and plates meals and desserts for clients from 9 am - 1 pm. We also make and serve coffee & tea throughout the day. All food is served to clients outside and requires being able to stand for long periods of time. The Cafe shuts down around 1 pm, which requires cleaning of the walkthrough kitchen, the lobby, and the storage room, daily from 1 - 1:30 pm. Your responsibilities can also include accepting and storing food donations daily.

Sunrise Chefs
Cook casseroles, pasta, soups, make sandwiches, bake cookies, desserts, or whatever other nutritious food your heart desires at home, then drop the food off to us at Sunrise: *weekdays between 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.* We have non-perishable items (rice, pasta, canned foods, etc.) and frozen items in our donation station, as well as aluminum pans that Sunrise Chefs can pick up to use. Extra ingredients provided by cooking volunteers are always appreciated!

Clothing Shop
Sunrise receives lots of clothing donations (seasonal, non-seasonal, male, female, tops, bottoms, etc.) from around the community. As such, we need volunteers to weigh, sort, and organize clothing on a weekly, if not daily, basis; the usable clothing is then hung on clothing racks for distribution to our clients. The “Sunrise Shop” is a volunteer-run store hosted every Tuesday and Thursday, where we help clients select clothing and shoes that will serve their needs (prioritizing freedom and dignity of choice).

Mailroom
Sunrise acts as a mailing address for almost 10,000 clients in the Austin area! Mailroom volunteers sort, file, and distribute mail daily and utilize a digital tracking system to confirm when mail was most recently picked up by a client. Our mail window is open weekdays from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. for distribution; additional sorting and filing is done after 1 pm and on some Second Saturdays.

Second Saturdays
On the Second Saturday of each month, Sunrise opens its doors to the community for mass volunteerism. Volunteers work a single two hour shift, 9-11am or 11:30am-1:30pm, on Saturday - receiving instructions on a wide range of projects for the Navigation Center. Tasks include, but are not limited to groundskeeping, organizing clothing and food pantry, power-washing the sidewalks, gardening, neighborhood trash cleanups, deep cleanings, kit-building, storage organization, and more. We also host a volunteer orientation for any new volunteers following the volunteer event.

Special Group Projects
Volunteers help lead volunteer groups in collaboration with staff. Group activities include sorting donations, hanging clothes, creating hygiene kits, assembling first aid kits, and making capital improvements to the building and grounds. Location is indoors and/or outdoors at the Sunrise Hub, 4430 Menchaca Rd, Austin, TX 78745.

Creative and Administrative
Volunteers occasionally assist with data, website management, storytelling, copy writing, videography, photography, and graphic design. Location is virtual with in-person meetings as needed.

Special Events
Volunteers can support a variety of special events including but not limited to community tabling opportunities, Sunrise community engagement events, and Sunrise client events (Thanksgiving, Christmas Bonfire, Point in Time Count, etc.).

SUNRISE HUB SERVICES WORKFLOW

Food
Food and drinks are served Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. until 1 p.m. The food line outdoors is frequently long and forms around the sidewalk from Menchaca Rd. up to our front doors. Clients receive two entrees, a snack/fruit or dessert, and coffee/tea each time they step up to the table, with supplementary items available in our self-serve area when available. They are welcome to go through the line *as many times as they want*, but they must go to the back of the line to wait their turn again. We serve most meals cold, with microwaves available for heating their food, and we limit the number of folks waiting at the microwave area to four. Folks are not allowed to crowd the food table and must wait behind a cone before being asked to step up to the table to select their meals.

Clothing
The “Sunrise Shop” opens for clients from 10am to 12pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Clothes and shoes are weighed, sorted, organized, hung, and redistributed on a daily basis. Clothing organization is typically done in Rooms 1 and 4, which are part of the classroom building behind the A-frame. The “Clothing Shop” is hosted up front in our green lawn area, near the food line. *Clients are able to request additional/emergency clothing from the hub tables at any time; requests are subject to staff availability and discretion. You can direct a client to the tables if they are in urgent need and it is outside of “Sunrise Shop” hours.

Mailroom
The mailroom is inside of the Sunrise Hub. Mail is accessed through the mail window which faces Menchaca Rd, Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Clients *must show ID* to receive mail; all clients who pick up mail are logged into our mail tracker system as a touch point for their case management across service providers. There is also a text line where people can inquire as to whether they have mail for pickup.

Chefs
Sunrise is currently in the midst of a major kitchen remodel, therefore we are unable to cook or bake onsite. Sunrise Chefs are asked to pick up ingredients from the Donation Shed, take them home, cook at their convenience, then return the food promptly for distribution.

Various Support items
Hygiene products, pet food, and replacement IDs are available from the Express Line on the Programs side of the house every weekday; you can refer a client to the Express Line if they are already in Sunrise's database as a client.

Case Management
Sunrise's case management line forms in front of the table closest to Redd St. Clients can sign up for their Coordinated Assessment and other programmatic support from the Programs side of the house. You may gently encourage clients to go through the Programs line if they have not done so.

YOUR VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

We cannot open our doors without you and we thank you for the personal investment you make in our organization's mission! Every volunteer is valuable, and everyone's time, talents, and efforts are special gifts that are appreciated and never taken for granted.

Sunrise commits to providing our volunteers with the best opportunities possible. You will:

- Be assigned appropriate tasks according to your skills, interest, availability, and training
- Receive training and supervision for the tasks accepted
- Be treated as a fellow team member who contributes to Sunrise's goals
- Expect that Sunrise will be a good steward of your time
- Be given appropriate expressions of gratitude and recognition
- Work in a safe, compassionate environment where everyone is treated as a whole human being

Sunrise Key Staff

Meet the team! The Sunrise Staff page is kept up-to-date if you want to check out all of our wonderful staff and interns.

Key staff volunteers will interact with at the Sunrise Hub include the following:

- Community Engagement Coordinator
    - Lindsey Sermons, MSW
    - lindsey@sunriseaustin.org

- Operations Coordinator
    - Michelle Hazelwood
- Client Services Specialist
    - Kaye Papale
- Community Connector
    - Diane Holloway
- Day Center Director
    - Antoine Holley
- Hub Program Manager
    - Brendon York
- Crisis Intervention Specialist
    - Matt Becker

MINORS

Please keep the following in mind if you plan to bring a youth volunteer:

Age Guidelines and Supervision

Volunteers ages 12-15 can participate in non-client-facing tasks and must remain with a parent or guardian at all times.
Volunteers ages 16-17 may participate in non-client facing tasks without parent or guardian supervision, and may support client-facing activities only if a parent or guardian is onsite.

Planning to Bring a Minor?

If you're already signed up for a shift and want to bring a youth volunteer, please email volunteer@sunriseaustin.org or message Sunrise staff on GivePulse before your shift so we can confirm availability and plan tasks.

Minor Release Form Required

A signed Minor Volunteer Release Form is required for every shift a youth attends, even if they've volunteered before. We'll have copies available onsite if needed and it's also on GivePulse under "Documents".

Walk-Ins with Minors

If you arrive with a youth volunteer and haven't notified staff in advance, we'll do our best to accommodate but participation may be limited based on space, safety, and task needs.

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VOLUNTEER ETHICS & CODE OF CONDUCT

Sunrise expects all volunteers to conduct themselves with kindness, professionalism, and common courtesy at all times. At Sunrise you agree to:

- Represent Sunrise as a Volunteer only; you are unable to represent yourself as a staff member.
- Display respect and courtesy for Sunrise staff, fellow volunteers, community partners, and our clients at all times.
- Respect the privacy of our clients being served by Sunrise and hold in confidence sensitive, private, and personal information. Remember that client stories are theirs to tell, not ours.
    - *Photographs are not allowed* without a signed consent form, and only staff may secure these.
- Follow through and complete accepted tasks, dress in attire that is appropriate for the job and environment, and be prepared for your shift.
    - We kindly ask that volunteers be flexible in their task assignment, as priorities may change based on scheduling gaps and other circumstances.
- Only sign up for shifts you are certain you can attend. If an unforeseen circumstance arises, promptly contact the Community Engagement Coordinator as soon as you know you cannot make your shift. Keeping shifts staffed appropriately prevents burnout in your fellow volunteers.
    - If a volunteer repeatedly misses shifts and/or cancels at the last minute, they may be unable to sign up for future shifts until they have spoken with a staff member.
- Report any emergencies or unsafe conditions to an appropriate staff member. Do NOT intervene in the event of an altercation; alert a staff member. *(see Safety below)*
- Keep personal opinions and actions separate from those made as a volunteer of Sunrise.
- Be neutral on matters of religion and refrain from promoting religious or political viewpoints when interacting with clients, volunteers or staff. Our goal is to have low to no barrier access to services; there can be no religious litmus test for our clients.
- Refrain from criticizing the Navigation Center to fellow volunteers, on social media, or in public. Complaints should be addressed to the Leadership staff at systemteam@sunriseaustin.org.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries with clients. Do *not* provide special treatment, outside services, or gifts to clients beyond your volunteer duties at Sunrise.
- Maintain professional, appropriate relationships and boundaries with other volunteers, staff members, community partners, and/or clients.

SAFETY

The safety of staff, interns, volunteers, employees of partner organizations, church members, and campus visitors is of primary importance to us at all times. Our clients are typically well-behaved, grateful, and kind, but it is important to remember that being unhoused means living in trauma. Therefore, when a client demonstrates emotional distress, and verbal or physical aggression, as a volunteer, you will disengage from the client and move to a safe space promptly.

All physically aggressive interactions are to be deferred to and handled by trained Sunrise staff and law enforcement ONLY. *Volunteers are not to intervene under any circumstance.*

If a client enters the building inappropriately or unguided by a case manager, promptly inform Sunrise staff. Staff will verbally engage the client and attempt to persuade them to exit peaceably.

Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy

Our agency is committed to creating a respectful and inclusive environment, free from discrimination and harassment. We have a zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other status protected by law.

Workplace Environment

Every individual has the right to volunteer in a professional atmosphere that fosters equal opportunities and is free from discriminatory practices, including harassment. Our zero-tolerance policy means that any form of harassment or discrimination based on legally protected characteristics will not be tolerated.

Definitions:

- Discrimination involves making any volunteer-related decisions based on a protected characteristic such as race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, disability, national origin, marital or veteran status.
- Harassment is unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or non-verbal, based on a protected characteristic, that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment or interferes with an individual's volunteer experience. Examples include slurs, negative stereotyping, threats, denigrating jokes, or the display of hostile materials.
    - Harassment also includes abusive, insulting, or otherwise harmful behaviors directed at another person.

- Sexual Harassment includes but is not limited to any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct of a sexual nature when:
    - Submission to such conduct is made a condition of volunteering;
    - Submission to or rejection of such conduct affects volunteer comfort and safety;
    - The conduct creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment.
    - Examples include unsolicited sexual advances, suggestive comments, inappropriate jokes, crude gestures, or unwanted physical contact. Sexual harassment can be verbal, nonverbal, or physical in nature.

Reporting

If you experience or witness discrimination or harassment *by a staff member*, report it immediately to people@sunriseaustin.org. HR will promptly investigate all reports confidentially and appropriate action will be taken based on the findings.

If you experience or witness discrimination or harassment *by a fellow volunteer*, report it immediately to communityengagement@sunriseaustin.org. Your Community Engagement team will promptly investigate all reports confidentiality and appropriate actions will be taken based on the findings.

No Retaliation

Retaliation for reporting in good faith or participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. If you believe you have been retaliated against, you may file a complaint following the procedures outlined above.

Consequences for Code of Conduct Violations

If a volunteer is found to have violated the Code of Conduct, appropriate actions will be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the nature and severity of the misconduct. However, Sunrise maintains a zero-tolerance policy for confirmed cases of harassment (sexual or otherwise) or discrimination. Any violation involving harassment or discrimination will result in immediate and decisive consequences, including termination of the volunteer relationship. Sunrise is firmly committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment, and any behavior that undermines these values will be addressed with the utmost seriousness.

Based on the values of quality, responsibility, and accountability, nonprofit board members, employees, interns, and volunteers commit to acting in the best interest of achieving the agency's mission at all times.