



***SEEC Volunteer Handbook***

***2020***



8905 Fairview Road, Suite 300  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
[www.seeconline.org](http://www.seeconline.org)

## **Welcome to SEEC!**

SEEC's Volunteer Handbook provides context about SEEC, our philosophy, programs and services as well as how volunteers are a vital part of the fabric of our community. SEEC's Volunteer Handbook is not a contract of employment nor is it intended to create contractual obligations of any kind. We hope that you'll find the information included in this handbook to be beneficial to your volunteering experience with SEEC.

We are excited that you are accepting the opportunity to make an impact in the lives of the people we support. Without your support and assistance, SEEC would be limited by the reach and capacity of what is funded by the state and local authorities. Volunteers provide a much-needed capacity-building to SEEC's core staff base. Additionally, volunteers create additional community-connectedness for the people we support, which is vital in reducing the biggest barrier faced by individuals with disabilities, that of loneliness.

Please review the policies, procedures, and working conditions described in this handbook. You will be asked to affirm that you have read, understand, agree to abide by, and acknowledge your receipt of this volunteer handbook.

If you have any questions, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator the Human Resources Department, both would be glad to answer them.

Again, welcome to SEEC and best of luck!



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## SEEC OVERVIEW

SEEC is a progressive nonprofit agency providing a wide range of supports to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live lives of their choosing. Our goal is to become a community of excellence that honors, respects, and assists people with developmental disabilities as they direct their lives toward work, relationships, recreation, and personal development. Our role is to create supports for people to identify their hopes and dreams, and access the resources needed to achieve their vision.

We strive to partner with people with disabilities, their families, and the community to plan, create, provide, and sustain customized support services that help people with disabilities enjoy typical, socially valued lifestyles. It is extremely important that people who are considering volunteering at SEEC understand SEEC's philosophy and chose to support our agency based on mutual goals.

## SEEC MISSION

To help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to direct their lives with dignity, choice, authority, and responsibility

LIVE



WORK



THRIVE



## PERSON-DRIVEN SUPPORTS

SEEC's Person-Driven supports mean the people we support will:

- Choose where and with whom they live
- Choose with whom they want to be friends, coworkers, neighbors, lovers
- Choose how, where and with whom they spend their days
- Create & tweak their own schedules and are supported in continuous exploration and learning



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## LIVE

SEEC's Person-Driven supports help people to live by:

- Choosing to live in their family or own home such as apartments and houses in the community that are situated in desirable neighborhoods and where the person is the owner or renter with their own lease;
- Knowing their rights and exercising those important to determine their own destiny and make informed decisions;
- Building relationships in conscious and intentional ways to make friends and create or deepen social capital and social network;
- And connecting with neighbors, friends, and colleagues in their environments and using these natural supports to live as independent a life as possible.



## WORK

SEEC's Person-Driven supports help people to work by:

- Recognizing their talents and contributions and identifying ways to put these gifts to good use in paid employment, and/or social impact;
- Learning about the benefits of work and where personal interests and skills may lead to a job or business;
- Finding and using opportunities to contribute through work, volunteering, and giving back of their own talents;
- And spending days in meaningful ways that help move closer to building a career and achieving one's dreams.



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## THRIVE

SEEC's Person-driven supports help people thrive by:

- Contributing as community members while discovering skills, gifts, and interests to contribute to their communities;
- Obtaining and maintaining roles that are valued by our society, including employee, homeowner, friend, member, volunteer, neighbor, business owner, taxpayer, voter, etc.;
- Accessing routine opportunities to grow and develop intellectually, socially, spiritually, physically, and emotionally;
- Becoming known as valued members of their communities;
- And gaining Independence and making choices.



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## OUR IMPACT



**350+**

People supported to be fully engaged in their communities



**200+**

Employers partnering with SEEC to strengthen our community's workforce



**60%**

The percentage of people SEEC supports who earn income (as compared with national average of 20%)

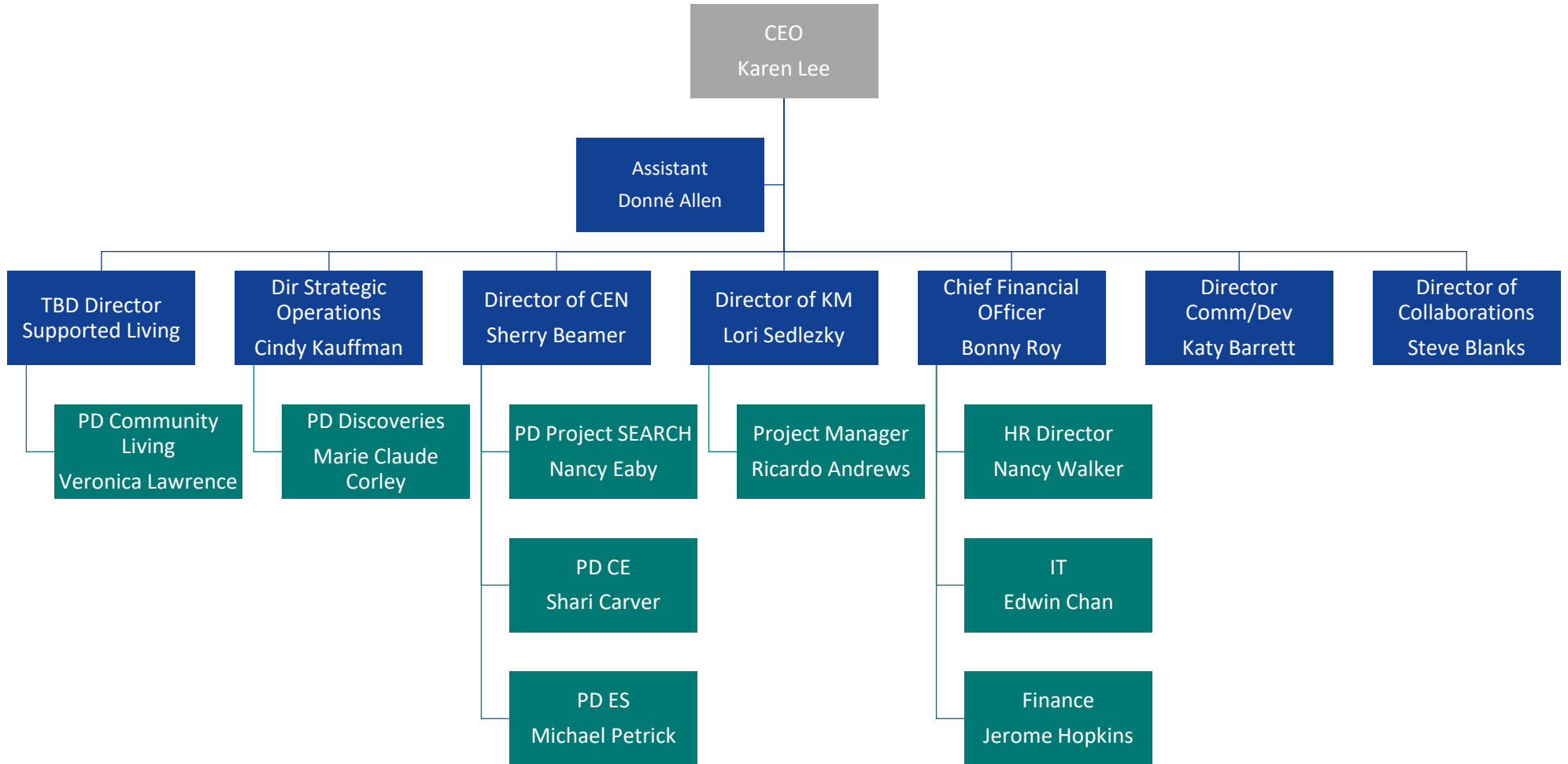


**200+**

Professionals statewide who have advanced their career development by participating in collaborations lead by SEEC

[Type here]

## SEEC's Organizational Chart



CEN = Community Employment Network  
KM = Knowledge Management  
PD = Program Director  
CE = Community Engagement  
ES = Employment Services





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**SL = Supported Living**

**CEN= Community Engagement Network**

**Comm/Dev= Communications and Development**

**KM = Knowledge Management**

SEEC currently operates through three main departments providing Person-Driven services and supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Supported Living, Discoveries, and the Community Employment Network. In addition, we provide two newer services—Behavioral Support Services, and Parent to Parent.

## **Supported Living (SL)**

### Individual Supports

This program assists people in their educational, recreational, fitness, and social endeavors with individualized supports. Individual Supports serve people who reside in their own home and are assisted by a circle of support. SEEC's community engagement coaches work with each person to create a monthly schedule of well-rounded, meaningful experiences that provide personal enrichment and prosperous employment. Our coaches provide training and assistance as needed, and when appropriate, help to develop or obtain adaptive equipment to help each person become as independent as possible.

### Community Living (CL)

Community Living provides support 24 hours a day, seven days a week if needed. Most people supported in SEEC's CL department live with a roommate in an apartment or townhouse in Montgomery County. SEEC staff work with each person to ensure their home represents how they want to live. Supports range from drop-in assistance with grocery shopping and bill paying to 24-hour support for those with more significant needs



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## Discoveries

Discoveries provide customized and person-centered assistance for individuals with disabilities to learn how best to personally develop and thrive in their local community. We focus on getting to know the people we support, to learn what is important to them and what interests they have in gaining independence and/or participation in their community. We use this knowledge to provide customized supports toward desired outcomes as defined by the individual, be it Increased Independence in personal care and home management or Increased Participation and Independence in community events and experience

## Community Employment Network (CEN)

### Employment Services

Through Employment Services, SEEC supports more than 100 people who work in paid positions in office settings, retail establishments, hotels, restaurants, government and nonprofit agencies throughout Montgomery County and the District of Columbia. Staff facilitates experiences to help job seekers identify their vocational interests and ideal conditions of employment. Our supports include a discovery process which leads to the creation of a Customized Employment Plan and Visual Resume for the job seeker to use in their employment search. Employment Services staff also work with area employers to expand job opportunities that are mutually beneficial to the job seeker and the business community.

### Project SEARCH

SEEC's replica Project SEARCH program is a 10-month intensive school-to-work internship program in partnership with The Ivy Mount School and coordinated with four businesses in the DC metro area: National Institute of Health (NIH), Montgomery County Government, Smithsonian Institution, and Embassy Suites/Hilton Hotel. All Project SEARCH participants exit the program with marketable employment skills and robust resumes that can lead to paid employment.

### Community Engagement



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A program providing meaningful day, community access services through the typical work week. Community Engagement develops personalized daily schedules that allows individuals to explore their employment and personal goals. The program uses Person-Centered Thinking and Planning to create customized opportunities for employment, education, recreation, and social activities. All supports are delivered in the community and reflect each person's strengths, needs, interests and desires.

### **Behavioral Supports Services (BSS)**

Offers array of services to people needing behavioral, social, or emotional support. Throughout the process, the primary focus is to enhance the person's independence and inclusion in their community. These services may include the initial consultation, assessment process, behavior plan development, and behavior support implementation training. With the addition of BSS, Direct Support Professionals will be better trained to implement the behavior plan and will have in-house or local education should they need more training.

### **Parent to Parent**

SEEC's Parent to Parent (P2P) program is a free and confidential service designed to connect Montgomery County parents and caregivers of children with special needs (age birth to 21) with trained volunteer mentors who have experience raising children with disabilities. It is based on the philosophy that peer support from veteran families is often the most helpful way to provide emotional support and practical information to parents in need. The P2P program connects parents on a one-to-one basis where contact may be made by phone, face-to-face, or via email.



## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM VISION

To empower people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live, work, and thrive by maximizing employment opportunities and social capital.



## WHY SEEC?

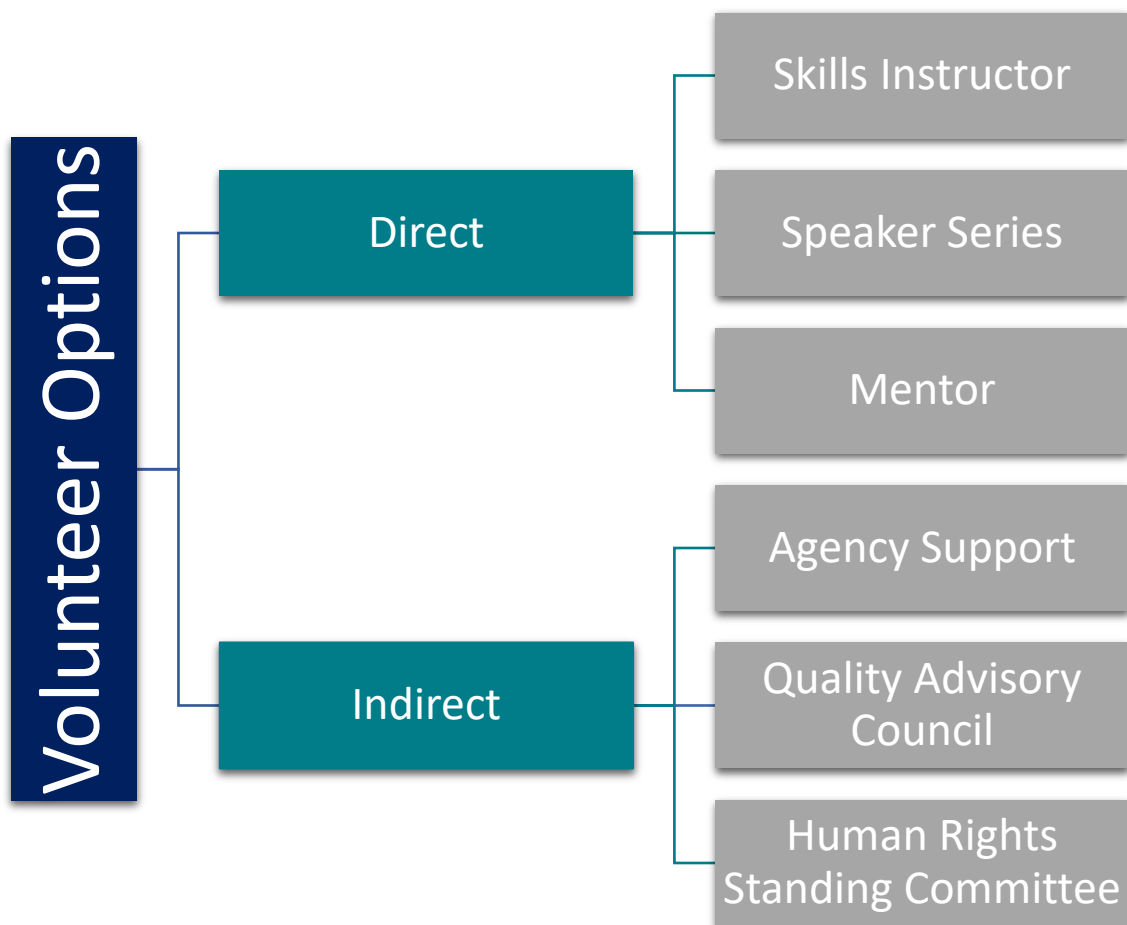
SEEC provides volunteers with meaningful experiences that may be educational, social, or enriching. Volunteers are strategically matched to volunteer opportunities at SEEC based on their skill set, availability, and interests. In addition to the community benefits of volunteering at SEEC, volunteers may:

- Receive Disability 101 training
- Explore interests with room for growth within the program
- Broaden social or professional networks
- Gain opportunities to attend SEEC events, trainings, and meetings
- Practice professional skills
- Gain experience in the world of nonprofits and Disability Services
- Receive Student Service Learning (SSL) Credit
- Receive formal and informal recognition



## VOLUNTEER OPTIONS

Volunteers at SEEC are categorized as either direct or indirect. Direct volunteers work directly with the individuals receiving services from SEEC. Indirect volunteers typically do not work directly with the individuals receiving supports from SEEC. Both direct and indirect volunteers provide services that will improve the effectiveness and scale by which we support people at SEEC.





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### Skills Instructor

Skills Instructors teach a professional skill, life skill, or hobby to a small group of adults with disabilities. Specific skills could be workplace etiquette, time management, finances, health, technology, cooking, music/art, dance, etc. Other topics may be coordinated as well.

### Speaker Series

Volunteers host a job seeker or a small group of job seekers with disabilities at their place of work. Volunteers share the specific job positions, duties, environment, relationships, and finances related to their line of work in an immersive shadowing or job trial experience.

### Mentor

Job\*, Health, or Financial mentors are matched with an individual or small group of individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities needing support in the corresponding area. Mentors meet monthly with the mentee and their Direct Support Staff.

*\*Includes Mock Interviewers*

### Agency Support

Agency Support Volunteers work alongside SEEC staff at our administrative offices or during SEEC events. SEEC is looking for volunteer photographers, videographers, translators, and events/fundraising volunteers.

### Quality Advisory Council Member

A committee that helps ensure that people receiving supports from SEEC are living lives of their own choosing and working towards their goals and dreams

### Human Rights Standing Committee Member

The Committee ensures that policies, programs and activities of SEEC are consistent with the rights and dignities of the people SEEC supports. This includes promoting innovative, quality support services and viewing complaints of human rights violations and actions taken to correct and/or remedy such violations.



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## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Key Areas**

- **General Professional and Business Conduct Policies**
- **Record and Information Confidentiality Policy**
- **Importance of Respectful Interactions**
- **Other Administrative Requirements**



## Professional Conduct

All volunteers must follow the rules of conduct that will protect the interests of volunteers, staff, and the individuals SEEC supports. The following are some examples of inappropriate conduct that could lead to dismissal of volunteer activities:

- Failure to abide by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Falsification of timekeeping records
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, manufacture, distribution, sale, transfer, dispensation or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of Company-owned or customer-owned property
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in the workplace
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized use of telephones, or other Company-owned equipment
- Using Company equipment for purposes other than business (e.g., playing games on computers or personal Internet usage)
- Unauthorized disclosure of business “secrets” or confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct

### Dress Code

All volunteers are representatives of SEEC and are responsible for presenting a positive image during any volunteer service. Some volunteers will serve at SEEC offices where business casual attire is appropriate. Many volunteers will serve off site in the community where the people we support live, work, and recreate. These environments vary from small quiet classrooms to loud busy recreation centers. For volunteers, both casual and business casual attire may be appropriate. Volunteers will be instructed by their supervisor of appropriate dress prior to serving.





### **Workplace Etiquette**

Please be aware of the appropriate etiquette of the environment in which you are serving. If serving at the SEEC offices, please be respectful of the employees' need to work. Keep noise and distractions to a minimum. Be considerate and respect another's space.

### **Computer and Business Equipment Policy**

In order for SEEC to meet business objectives in a secure and timely manner, we must have a Computer Usage policy. Instituting such a policy demonstrates the commitment SEEC has to safeguard corporate information assets. That commitment must extend from every individual involved in business operations.

- All data on information systems at SEEC is classified as Company Proprietary Information.
- Any attempt to circumvent SEEC's security procedures is strictly prohibited.
- Unauthorized use, destruction, modification, and/or distribution of SEEC's information or information systems are strictly prohibited.
- All SEEC's information systems will be subject to monitoring and auditing at all times. Users acknowledge that they have no expectation of privacy with regard to their activity on SEEC's information systems.
- Use of any SEEC's information systems or dissemination of information in a manner bringing disrepute, damage, or ill-will against SEEC is not authorized.
- Individual passwords will be kept strictly confidential. In no situation should a username and password be given to another individual.
- Misuse, as defined in this policy, will be handled directly with the offender and could include disciplinary action up to and including discharge

### **Internet Usage**

If volunteer duties require internet usage, Volunteers mustn't use SEEC's network to:

- Download or upload obscene, offensive or illegal material.
- Send confidential information to unauthorized recipients.
- Invade another person's privacy and sensitive information.
- Download or upload movies, music and other copyrighted material and software.
- Visit potentially dangerous websites that can compromise our network and computers.
- Perform unauthorized or illegal actions, like hacking, fraud, buying/selling illegal goods and more.



### **Smoke Free Workplace**

Our goal is to have a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted at any time in SEEC work areas, including SEEC vehicles or in areas used to provide services for the individuals we serve. If smoking is allowed outside of the building, smokers should be considerate of coworkers, customers, and members of the public. Help to maintain a clean entryway by depositing cigarettes in appropriate containers and staying far enough away from doors so that smoke does not blow into the building.

### **Workplace Harassment**

SEEC is committed to a work environment that is harassment-free for all employees and volunteers. Harassment includes but is not limited to: verbal, physical, visual, and innuendo. Volunteers should report any incidents of harassment to their supervisor, the Executive Director, or the Director of Human Resources

### **No Solicitation**

Volunteers may not solicit any volunteer or employee during volunteer activities, nor may volunteers distribute literature in work areas at any time. Under no circumstances may a volunteer disturb the work of others to solicit or distribute literature to them during their working time. Persons not employed by SEEC may not solicit SEEC employees for any purposes during that employee's scheduled work time.

### **Workplace Violence**

SEEC aims to provide a safe workplace for all including the people we support, volunteers, staff, interns, and visitors. SEEC does not tolerate any violence by or against volunteers, employees, interns, visitors, and the people we support. If a volunteer witnesses a violent or potentially violent situation, they should report the matter to a supervisor or the Director of Human Resources. If the situation is urgent and people are in danger dial 9-1-1. Any act or threat of violence will not be tolerated by SEEC and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.



## Confidentiality of Records and Information

SEEC has an obligation to the individuals we support to maintain their confidentiality and privacy in accordance with [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 \(HIPAA\)](#). SEEC will maintain a policy that employees, interns, volunteers, contractors and financial and business operations partners may not disclose, divulge, or make accessible confidential information belonging to, or obtained through their affiliation with SEEC to any person, including relatives, friends, and business and professional associates, other than to persons who have a legitimate need for such information and to whom SEEC has authorized disclosure. All SEEC volunteers shall use confidential information solely for the purpose of performing services as a volunteer for SEEC. This information may include, but is not limited to, information on individuals we provide services to, employees, interns, volunteers, contractors and financial and business operations. Confidential information may be information in any form: e.g., written, electronic, oral, overheard or observed. Access to all information is granted on a “need to know basis.” A “need to know” is defined as information that is required in order to do your job. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law. During your daily work, you may be exposed to information that is considered strictly confidential. This information should not be discussed with anybody. All business records provided to you or in your possession must be returned to SEEC upon termination.

## Respectful Interactions

SEEC values workplace harmony and reinforces respectful relations between staff, people we support, families, volunteers and other members of the community. We maintain a person-first approach with the people we support and ALL other members of our community, and the use of person-first language is fundamental to this core value. In addition, it is critical that SEEC does not tolerate any forms of abuse and neglect

### **Respect, Abuse, and Non-Negotiables**

SEEC will not tolerate any form of abuse, negligence, or flagrant discrimination. Should any party in the partnership break the zero-tolerance policy, immediate action will be taken, up to dismissal from the agency.

- **Abuse/Negligence of Individual Supported:** If you believe the health and safety of an individual is at risk for any reason, **immediately** contact your supervisor to intervene, investigate, and resolve. All cases of alleged abuse and neglect are taken seriously, and reported to authorities according to SEEC policies and DDA regulations.



- **Abuse and Discrimination to Volunteers:** Given SEEC's policy respecting the backgrounds of ALL people we support and ALL staff members & volunteers, it is critical that volunteers equally respect SEEC staff and people supported. If you feel your assigned supervisor is not a good match, please reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator. Please be as courteous and professional as possible, never creating uncomfortable situations.

## Administrative Requirements

### Background Checks

Volunteers that will be working directly with individuals with developmental disabilities or in proximity to confidential information will be required to get a criminal history background check prior to volunteering.

### Photograph and Press Release

SEEC staff uses photographs and video as a way to share positive experiences, events, stories, and successes from our programs. Volunteer images may be used by SEEC for videos, email blasts, recruiting brochures, newsletters, magazines, general publications, website and/or affiliates. Volunteers will be asked to sign a Photograph and Press Release Consent form prior to volunteering.

### Media Policy

Volunteers are encouraged to repost or share content from SEEC's official media platforms. Any media obtained during a volunteer's service activity should be approved by SEEC's Communications Department before being posted or shared. Should a volunteer post any non-SEEC related content on their social media accounts it should not be attributed to SEEC unless prior written permission from SEEC staff has been given. Occasionally, reporters from the media (TV and newspaper) may investigate incidents or collect information on the quality of community programs. It is highly recommended that all volunteers follow these guidelines when dealing with the media and unexpected visitors:

- Volunteers should alert their supervisor
- Volunteers should not speak to media unless given prior written consent from SEEC's Director of Communications



- Volunteers and Staff should politely respond to request for information with “You’ll have to speak with our Director of Communications or Executive Director” and give them the SEEC main telephone number which is 301-576-9000

### **Youth Volunteer/ Student Service Learning (SSL)**

All volunteers under the age of 18 must have signed written consent of a parent or guardian prior to providing volunteer services. Students volunteering for service-learning credit hours should notify their supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **Record Management**

The Volunteer Coordinator maintains records of each volunteer throughout the organization. Records include dates of volunteer service, volunteer activity performed, contact information, and emergency contact information. All records including the volunteer application, reference checks, and background checks are confidential. Volunteer information is to be kept on file for a minimum of 7 years post service. Should any volunteer records need updating, the volunteer should contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **Attendance and Time**

Attendance and punctuality are important to the operations of the volunteer program. Volunteer shifts will be subject to specific time constraints, so it is important for volunteers to be on time to all volunteer shifts. Volunteers should notify their supervisor in advance if they are unable to perform volunteer duties on a scheduled shift. Volunteers are responsible for recording their volunteer hours each month and will be oriented to our volunteer hour tracking system prior to serving.

### **Emergency Procedures**

- **First Aid**: In the event of a medical emergency—call 9-1-1 if necessary and seek out a staff member who is trained in administering first aid or CPR if you are not trained yourself. Keep calm and reassure the individual that help is on the way.
- **Fire**: Know the location of fire pull alarms and emergency exits. Stay away from the fire scene if you are not directly involved in removing persons to safety, avoid using the telephone after the fire is reported. Above all, be ready and know the special fire procedures in your work area. Know what you should do in the event of a fire.



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### **Resignation/Termination**

The Volunteer Coordinator or the volunteer may terminate the relationship at any time without cause or prior notice. It is our hope that volunteers will inform their supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator of their resignation with as much notice as possible to ensure the schedules of the people we support can be updated.



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## Receipt of Volunteer Handbook

I have received and will carefully read SEEC's Volunteer Handbook. I understand that I will be expected to abide by all of its rules of conduct, terms and conditions.

I understand this Handbook is merely a guideline of SEEC's policies and procedures. I also acknowledge that:

- The provisions in the Employee Handbook may be updated from time to time without notice at the discretion of the Agency;
- The Volunteer Handbook is not intended to create a contract of employment and should not be construed as a contract;
- SEEC has the right to terminate my volunteer at any time with or without cause and with or without notice and I have the corresponding right to resign at any time;

I understand that a signed copy of this acknowledgment will be stored with the Volunteer Coordinator.

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Volunteer Name (Please print)

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Volunteer Signature

Date



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## VOLUNTEER SERVICES DAILY OPERATIONS

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Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 9am-5pm\*

\*Talk with your supervisor and check our events calendar to plan ahead for scheduled closures  
<https://www.seeconline.org/events/>

## KEY CONTACTS

Volunteer Program | [volunteer@seeconline.org](mailto:volunteer@seeconline.org)

Melissa Michaels, *Volunteer Coordinator* | [mmichaels@seeconline.org](mailto:mmichaels@seeconline.org)  
301.346.9860

Steve Blanks, *Director of Collaborations* | [sblanks@seeconline.org](mailto:sblanks@seeconline.org)  
301.318.4948

SEEC Offices | 301-576-9000