

stronger

together

now.

TEAM MEMBER'S HANDBOOK

Contains fundamental principles that all team members must comprehend and follow to ensure professionalism within our organization.

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VALUES & VISION



We are a 501(c)3 community outreach organization that aims to improve connectedness and provide resources for the people of the Inland Empire through free public events, giving markets and outreach programs.

Our mission is to help underserved communities in the Inland Empire by providing access to programs, organizations, resources and events.



**Founded: August 14, 2020
Incorporated in California: April 23, 2021**

ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

- 1. Timeliness reflects professionalism as a whole and shows others we respect their time to conduct business. As such, all STN team members will make a point to be onsite at any given event, workshop, meeting, session or assembly 20-30 minutes prior to the scheduled time on the STN calendar. Every team member will have access to STN Google calendar and must use it exclusively to conduct STN business.**
- 2. STN recognizes that an occasional absence may occur, as defined by policies for holidays, vacations, jury service, funerals, family and medical leave, personal leave, military leave, voting, etc. Time off from work is unpaid unless the Stronger Together Now has established a specific policy providing pay for time off.**
- 3. A team member's absence will be considered excused if covered by policy and the team member provides proper and timely notification deemed satisfactory to STN leadership, which includes Kai King, Janelle Guerrero, and/or Vickie Davis. Timely notification means calling in on the day of absence or providing advance notice for absences which can be anticipated.**
- 4. A team member's absence will be deemed unexcused when the team member fails to call in, gives a late notice, fails to give advance notice for an absence which could be anticipated, exceeds the number of length of absences as defined by policy or authorized in advance by the STN leadership. Unexcused absentees are subject to corrective discipline or termination as defined in policies on discipline and separation of employment.**
- 5. Excessive absenteeism is defined as two or more instances of unexcused absence in a calendar month. Such excessive absenteeism is subject to corrective discipline. Any eight instances of unexcused absenteeism in a calendar year are considered grounds for dismissal.**

ATTIRE

POLICY & PROCEDURES

All attire must be work appropriate to the activity, event, or role being performed. At minimum, daily attire as an STN team member will include the following:

- **STN shirt provided by leadership.**
- **Fitting jeans with no tears or loud designs.**
- **Shoes that are comfortable, clean, and cover then entire foot. These could be tennis shoes, dress shoes, or something in between. At no point are flip flops, open-toe sandals or house shoes allowed.**
- **All clothes must project professionalism. Clothes that are too revealing or inappropriate are not allowed.**
- **Yoga pants must be a dark, single color and not see through material. If unsure, do not wear them. No loud colors or patterns.**
- **Cargo shorts are allowed only if they fit and are mid-thigh.**
- **All clothes must be clean and in good shape. No rips, tears, or holes allowed.**
- **Team members must avoid clothes with inappropriate or offensive designs.**
- **If a jacket is to be worn, it will be dark or jean with no logos or designs. STN shirt will be viewable at all times.**
- **Lanyard and badge will be worn when in front of clients, partners, admin, staff, students and other external parties.**

Attire for business meetings, workshops, galas, and formal events will include business casual to business formal dress code. In these cases, all team members will be required to wear suits, ties, shirts, blouses, mid-calf skirts, dresses and appropriate dress shoes. Heels will not be higher than 3 inches.

When an employee disregards the STN dress code, the discipline policy and procedures section will be implemented, per page 9.

DRUG, ALCOHOL & SMOKING POLICY & PROCEDURES

1. Whenever team members are working, operating any Stronger Together Now vehicle, are present on Stronger Together Now premises, or are conducting STN-related work off-site, they are prohibited from:

- Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing or dispensing an illegal drug (to include possession of drug paraphernalia).**
- Being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug as defined in this policy.**
- Possessing or consuming alcohol unless at STN-led event that has alcohol on site and authorization has been given by STN leadership.**

2. The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug, illegal controlled substance or alcohol in a team member's body system, while performing STN business or while in an STN facility, is prohibited.

3. Stronger Together Now will also not allow team members to perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that are adversely affecting their ability to safely and effectively perform their job duties. Team members taking a prescribed medication must carry it in a container labeled by a licensed pharmacist or be prepared to produce the container if asked.

4. Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to an appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

Team and individual goals/objectives are set for the outlined performance or contracted period. Goals that are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time based) increase team member's motivation and commitment to goal attainment, leading to greater performance and productivity.

Regular communication between leadership, contracted employees, board members, and volunteers is critical during the managing phase of the performance management cycle.

Through formal and informal conversations, all parties are kept abreast of progress towards the successful completion of goals and expectations. These discussions also enable leadership to provide timely feedback and coaching as the year unfolds. Because the performance cycle spans several months, it is important for leadership and members of the team to keep track of key performance highlights and challenges that occur during the year. These notes will help immensely when it's time to prepare the annual review.

At the conclusion of the evaluation cycle, leadership will meet together to discuss collective performance as well as review of individual performance. In the case of leadership review, the Compliance Committee will be invited to provide feedback and such feedback will be documented as part of leadership's performance file. If SMART goals have been set (planning phase) and ongoing communication/feedback has taken place (managing phase), the overall outcome of the annual review should come as no surprise.

When merit increases are available, team members may receive an increase to their contracted pay as a reward for meritorious performance. It is important to remember that performance increases should be differentiated between employees based upon their overall performance ratings and, in general, top performers should receive higher pay increases.

PROFESSIONALISM POLICY & PROCEDURES

To encourage professionalism across the team, leaders of the organization will ensure the following and team members will follow suit.

- 1. Foster a culture of inclusivity, where everyone on the team feels they matter and belong. By encouraging greater assertiveness in the team, leaders will encourage team members to push themselves to reach a higher standard, the very core of true professionalism.**
- 2. Set a strong example. This should go without saying, but promoting professionalism within STN, is demonstrated first by direct leadership. This includes but is not limited to avoiding team politics and favoritism, keeping communication channels open, demonstrating honesty, dressing professionally in all environments when representing the organization, and holding oneself to the highest possible standard to the team.**
- 3. Encourage a sense of accountability and responsibility. Leaders will exude both by apologizing when a mistake is made and taking accountable action to correct the mistake and/or situation. This approach will be encouraged by every team member with a clear sense of responsibility for their part in each task. Leaders will clearly communicate expectations to the team so each task is clear.**
- 4. Regulate and manage emotions, rather than letting them dictate behavior. For team members who struggle with self-control, coaching will be provided.**

When interacting with students, staff, admin and contracted employees at schools under Academics contract, or with whom we do business through other means, assemblies, consultation, prospective clients, STN team members will remain professional at all times.

This includes but is not limited to the following:

- excel in the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required by their role;**
- deliver their work to the best of their abilities, even on tough days;**
- go above and beyond their job description, but not overextend themselves in a way that could compromise the organization or be misinterpreted by leadership or peers;**
- constantly look for opportunities to grow and improve the organization and themselves;**
- not partake in fraternization with any person with which we do business or provide services. Such relations are considered unethical, controversial, and/or problematic, and transgresses legal, moral, or professional norms that connote impropriety, unprofessionalism or lack of ethics. Relationships of this nature are grounds for dismissal. Any conflicts of interest will be openly reported once known.**

DISCIPLINE

POLICY & PROCEDURES

1. **Verbal Warning**: Team members will be given a verbal warning when they engage in problematic behavior. As the first step in the progressive discipline policy, a verbal caution is meant to alert the team member that a problem may exist or that one has been identified, which must be addressed. Verbal warnings will be documented and maintained in the team member's personnel file. A verbal caution remains in effect for the remainder of employment.

2. **Written Warning**: A written warning is more serious than a verbal warning. A written warning will be given when a team member engages in conduct that justifies a written warning or the team member engages in unacceptable behavior during the period that a verbal warning is in effect. Written warnings are maintained in an employee's personnel file and remains in effect for the remainder of employment.

3. **Suspension**: A suspension without pay is more serious than a written warning. A team member, including those in leadership, will be suspended when he /she/they engage in conduct that justifies a suspension or the team member engages in unacceptable behavior during the period that a written warning is in effect. An team member's suspension will be documented and, regardless of the length of the suspension issued, will remain in effect for the remainder of employment/term.

4. **Termination**: A team member will be terminated when he/she/they engage in conduct that justifies termination or does not correct the matter that resulted in less severe discipline.

USE OF STN PROPERTY POLICY & PROCEDURES

All Stronger Together Now property – including desks, storage areas, work areas, lockers, file cabinets, credenzas, shared working spaces in Studio D, computer systems, cellular telephones, modems, copying machines, donations, tables, chairs, pop-up tents, signage, and vehicles – must be used properly and maintained in good working order. All photos, videos, flyers, business cards, media, merchandise, databases, and documents that represent STN initiatives, programs, outreach, events or ideas, are the intellectual property of STN and will be confiscated upon dismissal/leave.

Team members who lose, steal, or misuse STN property may be personally liable for replacing or repairing the item. STN reserves the right, at all times and without further notice, to inspect and search all STN property for the purpose of determining whether this policy or any other policy of STN has been violated, or when an inspection and investigation is necessary for purposes of promoting safety in the workplace or compliance with state and federal laws.

These inspections may be conducted during or outside of business hours and in the presence or absence of the affected team member. Team members should use the property only for business purposes. Use of e-mail or the internet for personal, non-business, purposes is prohibited during compensated or volunteered work time.

HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION POLICY & PROCEDURES

DISCRIMINATION

It is a violation of Stronger Together Now's policy to discriminate in the provision of employment opportunities, benefits or privileges; to create discriminatory work conditions; or to use discriminatory evaluative standards in employment if the basis of that discriminatory treatment is, in whole or in part, the person's race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information or marital status.

Discrimination of this kind may also be strictly prohibited by a variety of federal, state and local laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1967 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This policy is intended to comply with the prohibitions stated in these anti-discrimination laws. Discrimination in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

HARASSMENT

Stronger Together Now prohibits harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, and will take appropriate and immediate action in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this policy.

For purposes of this policy, harassment is any verbal or physical conduct designed to threaten, intimidate or coerce a team member, co-worker, volunteer, leadership, or any person working for or on behalf of Stronger Together Now. The following examples of harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal harassment includes comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person's national origin, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, body, disability or appearance, including epithets, slurs and negative stereotyping.
- Nonverbal harassment includes distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of national origin, race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, appearance, disability, sexual identity, marital status or other protected status.

INTERNET & SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Team members shall not use STN property, equipment, and/or facilities for any illegal, unethical or immoral purposes. For example, STN's facilities and/or equipment shall not be used to access child pornography, obscenity, or hate literature and shall not be used to transmit defamatory, derogatory or false messages.

Team members shall not share personal information concerning themselves or their team members via the internet or on social media accounts. Social media use and decorum is a direct reflection of STN as an organization and the team member as its representative. Be constructive and considerate of all information shared on social media, as it directly and indirectly reflects STN as an organization.

Internet and e-mail access shall not be utilized to communicate any confidential or sensitive commercial information unless prior approval is obtained from leadership or designate.

Team members shall not download software onto any STN property from the internet unless prior approval is obtained. Team members are not to participate in any use of the computer system which might infringe copyright, other intellectual property rights or licensing agreements.

Team members shall not utilize the STN's property, facilities, and/or equipment in a manner which may compromise the integrity of the system or the systems performance.

Team members shall not open any attachment where the source is suspect. All e-mail attachments shall be checked to ensure that they remain free from viruses before they are opened or downloaded. STN assumes no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any unauthorized use of software, information or materials sent, received or transmitted through the internet or e-mail.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURES

All injuries that require first aid treatment only, must be reported to leadership (COO) immediately, to be documented and to direct the team member for immediate support.

Team members who experience a work-related injury or illness should seek immediate medical attention and promptly report to the COO.

If transportation to a hospital, doctor's office or a team member's home is necessary, STN leadership will arrange it. All work-related incidents, illnesses, near misses and hazardous conditions, no matter how slight, must be reported to the COO. Once notified of the incident or illness, leadership must complete an incident report form, notify the COO, and begin an investigation of the root cause(s).

It is essential that team members operate within scope of practice, as outlined by the contract that is in place with each entity. Currently, our organization does not have a commercial vehicle, nor do we have permission to transport any student.

When interacting with students, staff, admin and contracted employees at schools under Academics contract, or with whom we do business through other means, assemblies, consultation, prospective clients, STN team members will remain professional at all times as outlined in the professionalism section. This also includes ensuring one's safety comes first and creating healthy boundaries to allow scope of services to be performed, but do not extend beyond one's scope of practice, nor put oneself or the organization in jeopardy. This approach is intended to prevent harm across the board.

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

If you have STN business or credit card, you may use it for the following expenses under the following guidelines prior to approval. Card use applies to leadership (CEO, COO, CFO) only.

- **Ground Transportation for STN-approved travel:**
 - Taxi Fare/Uber/Lyft (Up to \$100 per fare).
 - Rental Car (Up to \$200 per day inclusive of taxes and fees).
- **Meals and Entertainment:**
 - All meals are approved for business-focused board meetings, workshops, programs, and events. Keep track of all team members or individuals present, in case info is requested for auditing.
 - Up to \$400 per meal or entertainment experience (entire party) and up to \$2,000 per calendar year –
 - Grocery and alcohol expenses are also approved for STN-focused use. Please share the program/event name with COO so it may be added to monthly bookkeeping entries.
- **Airfare and Lodging:**
 - STN does not conduct business outside of the US at this time. When applicable, this section will be updated to include airfare and lodging.
 - At times, lodging may be needed in state of CA for events located outside of SB county, to either support partnered events, or celebrate annual team celebration. In these circumstances, AirBNB or hotels are approved for card use by leadership.
- **Products, purchases, or services:**
 - Printing of documents, flyers, signage and badges.
 - Merchandise
 - Equipment (such as computers, printers, heat press, items needed to ensure STN remains operational).
 - Tables, chairs, table cloths, pop-up tent, hangers, items for donation/outreach, filing cabinets, shredders, book shelves, organization resources, anything office-related.

COMPLIANCE & SIGNATURE POLICY & PROCEDURES

COMPLIANCE

- 1. Verification of Clearance:** team members must provide proof of DOJ clearance as part of the onboarding process. Failure to obtain clearance may result in termination.
- 2. Maintaining Clearance:** team members are required to maintain their DOJ clearance throughout their employment with Stronger Together Now. Any subsequent arrests or criminal charges must be reported to the Company Operations Officer (COO) immediately.
- 3. Confidentiality:** all information obtained through the Live Scan process will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Access to this information will be restricted to authorized personnel within the COO.
- 4. Review and Updates:** this policy will be reviewed annually by leadership and Compliance Committee to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Any necessary updates will be communicated to team members in a timely manner.

5. Contact Information:

For questions or concerns related to this policy, team members may contact Janelle Guerrero, the COO at stn_ie@proton.me.

****Effective Date: 20 May 2024****

Acknowledgement of Team Member

Signature: _____

Acknowledgement of Company Operations Officer (COO)

Signature: _____