

## Background

From its founding in 1980-81, volunteerism has been an integral part of Sound Rivers work and mission. Today, Sound Rivers volunteers donate more than a thousand hours annually and are part of the collective ecosystem of partners and people, working together for a healthy Neuse and Tar-Pamlico Rivers and communities.

Sound Rivers strives to create and maintain a safe environment that is inclusive, just, fair and consistent in which all people are treated with dignity, decency and respect. By sharing common standards of acceptable behavior, Sound Rivers can offer a respectful experience for those donating their time and talent as volunteers.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to convey expectations of acceptable behavior of Sound Rivers volunteers and to define the roles, responsibilities, and processes related to reporting, investigation, and mitigation of reported misconduct.

By signing this Volunteer Code of Conduct, you agree to follow its guidelines for the duration of your time spent volunteering with Sound Rivers in any capacity, including in your communications prior to or after your participation in any event or activity.

## All Sound Rivers Volunteers are expected to represent the following Standards of Conduct:

- Treat every person you encounter with respect and courtesy, including the use of others' chosen names and preferred pronouns.
- Assume the best intentions of Sound Rivers staff and fellow volunteers.
- Conduct yourself with professionalism, humility, and restraint.
- Avoid comments or behaviors which might cause another person to become uncomfortable or offended. What constitutes offensive language or behavior is subjective. Please be sensitive to the fact that those with different life experiences may find actions or language offensive that might not seem so to you.
- Model 'Leave No Trace' principles in everything you do.
- Conduct and participate in activities with safety as the highest priority, while minimizing risk and impacts.
- Conduct and participate in activities without the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs.\* Tobacco use is prohibited at volunteer activities and events and inside our buildings and vehicles.
- Respect our natural and cultural resources and the ways that other people connect with one another and our natural environment.
- Avoid conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest arises when a personal interest conflicts with a responsibility to act in the best interests of Sound Rivers and Sound Rivers' mission.
- Stay informed of Sound Rivers guidance and recommendations.

\* If Alcohol is served during a volunteer event or business function, volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner.

## Violations of Rights, Responsibilities, and the Code of Conduct

The following is not an exhaustive list, but provides examples of misconduct:

- Willful disregard of safety rules and expectations which create unsafe situations.
- Harassment of any sort. Harassment can be sexual, psychological, or physical. Harassment can be verbal, digital, deliberate, unsolicited, or unwelcome.\*\*
- Violence, threats of violence, or disruption
- Offensive or hate speech directed at any group, person or nationality based on their perceived race, religion, gender, gender-identify, nationality, or sexual orientation
- Bullying of another person
- Illegal behavior
- Misuse of Sound Rivers assets, facilities or equipment

\*\*Harassment: These behaviors include but are not limited to: offensive physical actions such as lewd gestures; statements meant to humiliate a person publicly or individually; the use of racial slurs or "jokes"; sexually explicit communication that is either written or spoken; any unwelcome physical contact with other volunteers, staff, or clients; any unsolicited comments regarding a person's physical appearance, any unwanted sexual attention; harassment due to a person's race, color, gender, identity, religion, language, medical condition, age, culture, national origin, gender expression, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

## What to do in the Event of a Violation

If you believe that the Code of Conduct has been violated, please report the violation using one of the following methods:

Report the violation through the Sound Rivers online [incident report tool](#). Or contact the Sound Rivers Executive Director at 252-402-5644 or [heather@soundrivers.org](mailto:heather@soundrivers.org)

## Investigation

If Sound Rivers receives a complaint through the online incident report tool or other means, it will be investigated and a decision will be made in a timely manner and with discretion and respect.

## Breaches of the Volunteer Code of Conduct

By failing to uphold the ethical considerations in this document, volunteers should expect disciplinary action. It is at Sound Rivers discretion whether to issue a warning or to terminate services as a volunteer. Sound Rivers has the right to release or terminate volunteers at its discretion. Sound Rivers is not responsible for any monetary losses accrued as a result of breaches of conduct.

By signing this Volunteer Code of Conduct, I indicate that I have read, understood, and agree to uphold and abide by the outlined values. I also agree to accept consequences as a result of not following our Volunteer Code of Conduct.

All minor volunteers are required to have this signed by their parent or guardian.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_

Print \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Trap City and Location \_\_\_\_\_