



“Building Bridges of Hope to a Cure”

# **Volunteer Handbook**

**Version 2.0**

## Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF Volunteer Handbook

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**DOCUMENT ACCEPTANCE and RELEASE NOTICE**

This is release/version 2.0 of the **Volunteer Handbook**.

The Volunteer Handbook is a managed document. For identification of amendments, each page contains a release number and a page number. Changes will be issued only as a complete replacement document. Recipients should remove superseded versions from circulation. This document is authorized for release per attached electronic approval document.

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### 1.0 Volunteer Handbook Introduction

Volunteers are an important and valued part of the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF. We hope that you enjoy volunteering with us and feel a part of our team.

This agreement tells you what you can expect from us, and what we hope from you. We aim to be flexible, so please let us know if you would like to make any changes and we will do our best to accommodate them.

#### 1.1 *Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF Will Do Our Best:*

- To introduce you to how the organization works and your role within the organization and to provide any training you need to the best of our abilities.
- To provide regular communication, support and a point of contact so that you can tell us if you are happy with how your tasks are organized and get feedback from us, as well as to respect your skills, dignity and individual wishes and to do our best to meet them.
- To reimburse your travel and meal costs per our current travel and expense policy with prior approval by the President/CEO.
- To consult with you and keep you informed of possible changes.
- To apply our equal opportunities policy.
- To apply our dispute procedure if there is any problem

#### 1.2 *The Volunteer, We Expect You:*

- To help Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF fulfill its mission.
- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability.
- To follow the organization's procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and members.
- To maintain the confidential information of the organization and of its members.
- To meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed to and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible.

#### 1.3 *What Is SYNGAP?*

A mutation in the SYNGAP1 gene results in non-syndromic intellectual disability in children ranging from moderate to severe with attention deficits, impulsivity, and/or mood disorders. Two thirds of the children also have epilepsy. In recent findings SYNGAP1 has been a gene linked to autism. However, we need to improve our ability to accurately diagnose this specific disease and the percentage is unknown of how many of these children's and adults have been diagnosed with autism. Most children benefit from occupational, physical and speech therapy emphasizing that early diagnoses and developmental intervention is important to insure that affected children reach their full potential. Currently there are no treatments as researchers and clinicians are still trying to understand the biology of the disease. It is projected that SYNGAP1 mutations affect tens of thousands of people worldwide and are suffering from this debilitating neurological disorder.

### ***1.4 How We Started – Bridge the Gap - SYNGAP ERF History***

Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF began in September of 2014. A group of parents of children living with SYNGAP1 mutations came together to begin a new journey. The common bond is one driven by a desire to raise awareness and search out treatments to improve quality of life for these inspiring individuals.

### ***1.5 Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF Mission***

Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation is a voluntary health organization dedicated to improving the lives of those afflicted with SYNGAP by raising awareness and developing funds to promote research towards new medical treatments and diagnostic tools.

#### **Specific Functions**

1. To disseminate timely and accurate information about Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation to patients, family members, physicians, and other interested parties.
2. To encourage, advise, and establish standards for clinics specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation.
3. To encourage and foster biomedical and other pertinent research on Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation.
4. To aid and encourage the formation of Chapters and to provide assistance and guidance to enhance their effectiveness.
5. To undertake all actions as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors to carry out the foregoing purposes to the extent permitted under state and federal law.

### ***1.6 Role of the Board of Directors***

The President/CEO and the Board of Directors does delegate authority and responsibility to the delivery of authorized services and meeting corporate obligations to comply with corporate regulations.

### ***1.7 Representing Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation***

Prior to any action or statement which might significantly affect or obligate Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from a Board member or designated member. These activities may include but are not limited to public statements to the press, collaboration or joint initiatives or any agreements involving contractual or financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the organization as specifically indicated within their position, and only to the extent of such written or spoken specifications.

### ***1.8 Media Inquires***

The public relies on Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation for providing accurate information on SYNGAP, provide a response to media inquires as soon as possible, generally within 48 hours of a request. Individuals designated to speak on the organizations behalf include the President/CEO, Board Members, Medical Advisory Board Members and others who have received written/verbal permission.

### ***1.9 Confidential Information and Intellectual Property***

Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation has sole entitlement and copyrights to any intellectual property that is conceived or developed by volunteers, employees and its agents during the course of service to the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation. Intellectual property includes inventions, discoveries, and original works of authorship as defined by US patent, trademark, and copyright law. Questions about this policy should be directed to the President/CEO.

### ***1.10 Copyright Information***

All written information, text, images, digital files, code and photos are owned by and are Copyright © 2015 Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation and are intended for personal use only. No information or images belonging to the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation may be reproduced or redistributed in any form or by any means without prior written permission from Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation

### ***1.11 Workplace Safety and Injuries While Volunteering***

All volunteers are expected to follow appropriate safety guidelines while volunteering.

However, even under the best circumstances, an accident may occur.

If a volunteer is injured, even slightly, the volunteer is expected to immediately stop the activity that caused the injury and seek first aid or medical attention if necessary. The volunteer should not resume the activity until treatment has been provided and/or he or she has been given the approval from a doctor to continue the activity. Volunteers who become unable to work because of a volunteer related illness or injury must inform their supervisor/contact as soon as possible.

### ***1.12 Dispute/Conflict Resolution***

From time to time, Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation volunteers get into conflict with one another regarding actions that someone believes to be inappropriate.

There are at least three kinds of conflicts: (A) policy interpretation disputes; (B) internal decision-making disputes; (C) disruptive personal behavior. The appropriate process for handling each of these is discussed below.

Conflicts may arise when there is controversy involving the interpretation, application or disregard for Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation bylaws, policies, guidelines or other governing procedures. The President/CEO and Board provide guidance on

the interpretation of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation by-laws and policies. When there is a dispute regarding interpretation, volunteer leaders should seek clarification from the President/CEO and/or Board.

Disagreements can arise between interests over priorities for action, strategies and tactics, and the allocation of resources. All disputes between volunteers should be resolved at the most local level possible.

Disagreements can also arise due to disruptive personal behavior that is disrespectful of others personally, disrespectful of agreed-upon decisions or disrespectful of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation policies. All disputes over personal behavior that may violate standards of conduct should be resolved at the most local level, and informally, whenever possible. Volunteers are encouraged to express regrets, accept apologies, and move on. Even the best of us can get angry from time to time and say something unnecessarily rude; we can make genuine mistakes from time to time in ways that may end up violating Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation policy.

Should a volunteer have a concern regarding the policy, procedure or actions of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation the first step is for he/she to report the concern to the designated supervisor/contact. The designated supervisor/contact will make an attempt to resolve the issue.

If the supervisor is not able to resolve the concern, the volunteer should proceed with the second step and take the concern to the President/CEO/Board who will consider the facts, conduct an investigation, make recommendations and respond back to the volunteer.

If necessary, step three would involve a written summary prepared by the volunteer explaining his/her concerns, and reasons for the dissatisfaction with the outcome in step two. The written summary will be reviewed by the Executive committee and the decision presented will be final.

### ***1.13 Serious Misconduct***

- Physical or sexual assault or violent threats toward others, including bringing firearms to Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation offices, meetings or events.
- Embezzling funds or misdirecting Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation funds, membership lists or other assets for activities not authorized by the responsible entity.
- Use of racial slurs or other derogatory language regarding gender, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Fraud, libel, defamation or illegal activity of any kind in the conduct of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation business.
- Illegal or unethical professional conduct outside the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation if that misconduct could significantly damage the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation its staff, its members or its assets.
- Harassment, threats or any action directed toward Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation employees or volunteers that violate policy.



### ***1.14 Members Not In Good Standing***

A member who is delinquent in dues or has acted in violation of the bylaws may be considered a member not in good standing. The Board shall present the name(s) to the Executive Committee, with the Board's recommendation, to the President/CEO as needed for a final determination before placing the member into a "Member not in good standing" category or expulsion, as the board sees fit. No one in this category shall have a right to vote on any matter and shall forfeit the ability to sit on the Board of Directors or any committee. They shall also forfeit the right to use the name of the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation in any way, shape or form.

## **2.0 Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation Code of Conduct**

### ***2.1 General Moral Imperatives***

*As a Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation representative (defined as Board Member, staff person or volunteer) I will...*

**a. Contribute to society and human well-being.** This principle concerning the quality of life of all people affirms an obligation to protect fundamental human rights and to respect the diversity of all cultures.

**b. Avoid harm to others.** Well-intended actions, may lead to harm unexpectedly. In such an event the responsible person or persons are obligated to undo or mitigate the negative consequences as much as possible. One way to avoid unintentional harm is to carefully consider potential impact on all those affected before decisions are made.

**c. Be honest and trustworthy.** Honesty is an essential component of trust. Without trust an organization cannot function effectively. The honest professional will not make deliberately false or deceptive claims.

**d. Conflict of Interest.** As representatives we have a duty to be honest about all/any circumstances that may lead to conflicts of interest. At any time I am representing Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation; I must avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest and must avoid actions that would reflect negatively on Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation.

Representing Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation may at times place individuals in situations where their statements or actions could be interpreted as carrying the "weight" of a larger group of professionals. An Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation representative will exercise care to not misrepresent Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation or positions and policies of the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation, and should insure to clearly state positions other than those specifically sanctioned by the organization as personal in nature.

**e. Be fair and take action not to discriminate.** The values of equality, tolerance, respect for others beliefs, and the principles of equal justice govern this imperative. Discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin, or other such factors is an explicit violation of the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation and will not be tolerated.

**f. Honor property rights including copyrights and patents.** Violation of copyrights, patents, is prohibited by law in most circumstances. Even when it is not so protected Copies should be made only with proper authorization. Unauthorized duplication or publishing in paper or electronic form of copy written materials is not permitted.

**g. Give proper credit for intellectual property.** Members are obligated to protect the integrity of intellectual property. Specifically, one must not take credit for other's ideas or work.

**h. Respect the privacy of others.** There is potential for violating the privacy of individuals and groups. It is the responsibility of members/volunteers to maintain privacy and integrity of individuals. This includes taking precautions to ensure the accuracy of data, as well as protecting it from unauthorized access, purposeful or accidental disclosure without prior consent. As is appropriate and, in some cases required by law, written consent may be necessary.

**i. Honor confidentiality.** The principle of honesty extends to issues of confidentiality of information whenever one has made an explicit promise to honor confidentiality. The ethical concern is to respect all obligations of confidentiality to members and individuals seeking the assistance of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation.

**j. Treat others with respect.** Courtesy and respect for others are fundamental principals witch apply in all aspects and to all individuals with whom we interact. As representatives, we represent Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation with each contact. This principal applies equally to the treatment of fellow representatives.

## ***2.2 Specific Professional Responsibilities***

**a. Strive to achieve the highest quality, effectiveness and dignity in both the process and products of professional work.** Excellence is perhaps the most important obligation of a professional. Each representative must strive to achieve the highest quality and to be cognizant of the serious negative consequences and poor reflection on the organization that lesser quality generates.

**b. Acquire and maintain professional competence.** Excellence depends on individuals who take responsibility for acquiring and maintaining professional competence. A representative must participate in setting standards for appropriate levels of competence, and strive to achieve those standards.

**c. Know and respect existing laws pertaining to professional work.** Representatives must obey existing local, state, province, national, and international laws. Policies and procedures of

the organization must also be obeyed. If one decides to violate a law or rule for any reason, one must fully accept responsibility for one's actions and for the consequences.

No medical advice should be given by non medical professionals with the exception of data posted in our Fact Sheet and from the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation Web Site.

**d. Accept and provide appropriate professional review.** The organizations success depends on professional reviewing and critiquing. Whenever appropriate, individual members should seek and utilize peer review as well as provide review of the work of others.

**e. Honor contracts, agreements, and assigned responsibilities.** Honoring one's commitments is a matter of integrity and honesty. For members and professional volunteers this includes ensuring elements perform as intended. Also, when one contracts for work with another party, one has an obligation to keep that party properly informed about progress toward completing that work.

A member/volunteer has a responsibility to request a change in any assignment that he or she feels cannot be completed as defined. The major underlying principle here is the obligation to accept personal accountability for professional work.

**f. Access computing and communication resources only when authorized to do so.** No one should enter or use another's computer system, software, or data files without explicit permission. No one shall make changes to computer system or web site without first obtaining approval for each instance. No exceptions.

### **2.3 Organizational Leadership Imperatives**

**a. Articulate social responsibilities of members of the organization and encourage full acceptance of those responsibilities.** Because organizations of all kinds have impacts on the public, they must accept responsibilities to society. Organizational procedures and attitudes oriented toward quality and the welfare of society will promote well being thereby serving the public interest and fulfilling social responsibility. Organizational leaders must encourage full participation in meeting social responsibilities as well as quality performance.

**b. Create opportunities for members of the organization to learn.** Educational opportunities are essential to facilitate optimal participation of all organizational members Opportunities must be available to all members to help them improve their knowledge and scope

**c. Speak up when you have questions or disagree, but support the final decision of the organization.** Once an issue has been discussed and decided, support it and defend it. We may make mistakes, but we do so in good faith and act in the best interest of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation. Address rumors and misunderstandings.

**d. Accept responsibility** Take on your share of the work. Do your best, ask for help and look for ways to improve prior practices.

**e. Stay actively engaged** It is our energy that feeds this organization and gets its results. Absent this energy and direction, the organization will become stagnant and not meet its goals or its mission. Our work is too important to too many to permit such an absence of focus or progress

**f. Conflicts within the organization** Conflicts and concerns will be address by the Executive Committee within a reasonable time frame depending on the time of year and issues involved. Members need to have an understanding for and respect the Executive Committee’s response and decision. Once the Executive Committee reviews the conflict/concern and renders a decision, the decision, like others, is final and should be respected by all involved.

### ***2.4 Whistleblower and Non-Retaliation Policy***

The Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation Code of Ethics requires directors, officers, employees, and volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities.

As employees and representatives of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

### ***2.5 Reporting Responsibility***

It is the responsibility of all directors, officers, employees, and volunteers to comply with and to report violations or suspected violations of the Code of Ethics, Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation policies, or laws in accordance with this policy.

### ***2.6 No Retaliation***

No director, officer, employee, volunteer, or contractor who in good faith reports a violation of the Code, Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation policies, or law shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence.

An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF prior to seeking resolution outside Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation.

### ***2.7 Reporting Violations***

Directors, officers, employees, and volunteers should share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, employees and volunteers should report to the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation President/CEO.

However, if an employee or volunteer is not comfortable speaking with the Executive Director or is not satisfied with the response, that employee or volunteer is encouraged to report to any officer of the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation’s Executive Committee.

### ***2.8 Acting in Good Faith***

Any good faith report, concern or complaint is fully protected by this policy, even if the report, question or concern is, after investigation, not substantiated. Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Code, Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation policy, or law. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and have been made maliciously or with knowledge that they were false will be treated as a serious disciplinary offense.

### ***2.9 Confidentiality***

Upon the request of the complainant, Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation will use its best efforts to protect the confidentiality of the complainant for any good faith report. Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

### ***2.10 Handling of Reported Violations***

All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation. The complainant will be informed that follow-up has or is occurring within a reasonable time after the President/CEO/or board officer has received the complaint or report. The Executive Committee shall be informed of all such complaints or reports.

### **3.0 Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation Document Retention and Destruction Policy**

This policy specifies how important documents (hardcopy, online or other media) should be retained, protected and eligible for destruction. The policy also ensures that documents are promptly provided to authorities in the course of legal investigations or lawsuits.

#### ***Document Retention Schedule***

The following types of documents will be retained for the following periods of time. At least one copy of each document will be retained according to the following schedule.

#### **Corporate Records**

Article of Incorporation to apply for corporate status	Permanent
IRS Form 1023 (in the USA) to file for tax-exempt and/or charitable status	Permanent
Letter of Determination (for example, from the IRS in the USA) granting tax- exempt and/or charitable status	Permanent
By Laws	Permanent
Board policies	Permanent
Resolutions	Permanent
Board meeting minutes	Permanent
Sales tax exemption documents	Permanent
Tax or employee identification number designation	Permanent
Annual corporate filings	Permanent

#### **Financial Records**

Chart of Accounts	Permanent
Fiscal Policies and Procedures	Permanent
Audits	Permanent
Financial statements	Permanent
General Ledger	Permanent
Check registers/books	7 years
Business expenses documents	7 years
Bank deposit slips	7 years
Cancelled checks	7 years
Invoices	7 years
Investment records (deposits, earnings, withdrawals)	7 years
Property/asset inventories	7 years
Petty cash receipts/documents	3 years
Credit card receipts	3 years

**Tax Records**

Annual tax filing for the organization (IRS Form 990 in the USA)	Permanent
Payroll registers	Permanent
Filings of fees paid to professionals (IRS Form 1099 in the USA)	7 years
Payroll tax withholdings	7 years
Earnings records	7 years
Payroll tax returns	7 years
W-2 statements	7 years

**Personnel Records**

Employee offer letters	Permanent
Confirmation of employment letters	Permanent
Benefits descriptions per employee	Permanent
Pension records	Permanent
Employee applications and resumes	7 years after termination
Promotions, demotions, letter of reprimand, termination	7 years after termination
Job descriptions, performance goals	7 years after termination
Workers' Compensation records	5 years
Salary ranges per job description	5 years
I-9 Forms	5 years after termination
Time reports	3 years after termination

**Insurance Records**

Property Insurance policy	Permanent
Directors and Officers Insurance policy	Permanent
Workers' Compensation Insurance policy	Permanent
General Liability Insurance policy	Permanent
Insurance claims applications	Permanent
Insurance disbursements / denials	Permanent

**Contracts**

All insurance contracts	Permanent
Employee contracts	Permanent
Construction contracts	Permanent
Legal correspondence	Permanent
Loan / mortgage contracts	Permanent

Leases / deeds	Permanent
Vendor contracts	7 years
Warranties	7 years

**Donations / Funder Records**

Grant dispersal contract	Permanent
Donor lists	7 years
Grant applications	7 years
Donor acknowledgements	7 years

**Management Plans and Procedures**

Strategic Plans	7 years
Staffing, programs, marketing, finance, fundraising and evaluation plans	7 years
Vendor contacts	7 years
Disaster Recovery Plan	7 years

***Document Protection***

Documents (hardcopy, online or other media) will be stored in a protected environment for the duration of the Document Retention Schedule. Computer backup media will be included.

***Document Destruction***

Hardcopy of documents will be destroyed by shredding after they have been retained until the end of the Document Retention Schedule. Online copies will be destroyed by fire or other proven means to destroy such media after they have been retained until the end of the Document Retention Schedule.

***Provision of Documentation for Investigations or Litigation***

Documents requested and subpoenaed by legally authorized personnel will be provided within 5 business days. The Board Chair and CEO will authorize provision. No documents will be concealed, altered or destroyed with the intent to obstruct the investigation or litigation.



## **4.0 Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation Travel and Reimbursement Policy**

As a non-profit organization dedicated to SYNGAP awareness, stewardship of our resources is essential. Our policy is to reimburse individuals for approved, reasonable, proper and necessary travel expenses incurred in conjunction with approved Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation initiatives. It is Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation policy that all travel be conducted in the least expensive manner consistent with efficient travel.

### **4.1 Related Policies and Procedures**

#### **4.1.1 Local Travel**

a. **Mileage Reimbursement.** Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation will reimburse actual and necessary expenses. This includes mileage in a privately owned vehicle (POV), and related tolls and parking. Mileage costs will be reimbursed at the current Government approved rate.

b. **Parking and tolls. If not reimbursing for mileage,** Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation will reimburse for parking and tolls associated with a local or long distance trip.

#### **4.1.2 Long Distance Travel**

a. **Air Travel.** Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation will pay for airfares to approved destinations. Travelers must use the lowest available airfare consistent with efficient travel. Travelers will be reimbursed for special promotional tourism or economy fares as long as these fares do not exceed the lowest available coach fares. Airline tickets in excess of \$500.00, must be pre-approved by the Executive Committee prior to travel.

First class and international travel is not reimbursable.

In cases where cancellation fees/penalties are incurred as a result of a change of plans, the fees will be reimbursed if there is a valid business. Examples of acceptable business reasons include the organization canceling or altering the trip, or delays in flight connections. The explanation of any fees/penalties should be attached as documentation with the travel expense report. In instances where these fees/penalties are incurred without adequate explanation, the cost of the fees/penalties will not be reimbursed.

b. **Lodging Costs.** Accommodations that meet business and personal needs and offer good value should be selected. Travelers should use standard single room accommodations at medium range hotels. The additional cost of room upgrades (e.g., suite, executive floor, room with a view, etc) are not reimbursable. Receipts for all lodging must be attached to the expense report and

itemized by expense category (meals, telephone, parking, etc.). Travelers will be reimbursed for actual lodging costs.

c. **Hotel Phone Surcharges.** Personal phone calls to the Traveler's home are reimbursable while traveling more than 50 miles from the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation Office. Travelers should use the hotel's long distance phone service only as a last resort because hotel surcharges can be as much as 100% of the actual cost of the call. Personal cell phones are encouraged as the primary mode of communication during travel.

d. **Meals.** Meal reimbursement includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. Excluded are alcoholic beverages, entertainment expenses and other types of personal expenses not relating to these specific meals.

Volunteers are reimbursed for actual meal costs (not a per diem) up to a maximum of \$35 per day while traveling out of town on business. Receipts are required for reimbursement. Meals charged to a hotel bill are not lodging, and will count toward the daily maximum reimbursement amount.

For employees traveling to the following cities in North America, the daily meal expense reimbursement will be up to a maximum of \$50:

- CA: Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Sunnyvale/Palo Alto/San Jose
- FL: Miami
- Washington D.C. and immediately surrounding areas
- IL: Chicago
- MA: Boston
- NY: New York City
- WA: Seattle

e. **Automobile Rental.** Automobiles should be rented only when the cost advantages are clearly justified (i.e., the cost of the rental car would be less than using taxis, etc.). Travelers are expected to use one of the lower cost car rental firms. All rental car receipts received by the traveler must be submitted with the expense report. Travelers should utilize the lowest cost fuel options available, and if refueling the car, submit those receipts for reimbursement.

f. **Ground Transportation.** Taxicabs are usually the lowest cost and preferred method of ground transportation. Receipts are required for all transportation expenses of \$10 or greater.

### ***4.2 Non-Reimbursable Expenses***

Non-reimbursable expenses are identified throughout this policy. The following items are typically non-reimbursable expenses:

- First class and international travel (unless pre-approved prior to travel by the Executive Committee)

- Upgrades to air travel, car rentals, or hotel rooms
- Purchase of clothing, luggage, toiletries and other miscellaneous personal items
- Fines, traffic or parking tickets, penalties, or associated legal fees
- Personal entertainment or recreational expenses

### ***4.3 Expense Reporting***

a. **Receipt Requirements:** All receipts should be attached to a blank sheet of paper using transparent tape and attached to the back of the expense report. Only original receipts will be accepted.

b. **Timely Submission of Report.** The suggested timeframe for expense report submission is within two weeks of travel. **Travel & Expense Reports filed more than 30 days after expenses are incurred will not be reimbursed without the approval of the Executive Committee.** Please send expense reports to the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation Office at:

**Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation**

**Atten: Nicole Merriam**

**4510 Elm Street**

**Bellaire, Texas 77401**

**5.0 Volunteer Agreement**

This agreement is binding in honor only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future. I have read and agree to the information outlined in this handbook as well as the attached appendices.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
President / Officer (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
President / Officer (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date