

Guidelines for Residential Practice at Blue Heron Zen Community 2018

The commitment to live at the Blue Heron Zen Center is a wonderful opportunity to deepen one's practice and directly experience the relationship between daily life and our original nature.

The regular schedule of practicing, eating, and working together allows us to see our karma appear and disappear. We can see how opinions and habit energies create problems for ourselves and others. When we let go of our opinions and condition, it becomes possible to live with clarity and harmony. As we learn to cooperate, to see clearly, and to accept people and situations as they are, our minds become strong and wide. Then it becomes possible to act for other people with no trace of self-interest.

The expectation of the Blue Heron Zen Community is that each resident will make the most of this rare opportunity by making a clear commitment to participate in group and individual practice, form on-going relationships with our teachers, keep the Zen Center clean and organized, and be a contributing member to the community.

We have purposely not established strict guidelines about how much weekly formal practice is required for residents. We recognize that special situations arise that may affect a resident's ability to attend formal practice sessions (such as travel, illness and work). However it is our expectation that residents will attend a minimum of two formal practice sessions per week. And if a resident is capable, and present at the house, they will attend all practices.

That being said, residents should see themselves as being among the most actively engaged practitioners in our community due to their proximity to all Zen center events and programs and their implied intention to train concertedly through participation in our residential training program. Such participation should include regular attendance at a minimum of at least two or more of our weekly community practice times, participation in work retreats and yard clean up, and attendance at more than half of our retreats through the duration of their training period.

Residential training is an intensive practice opportunity. As such, it is a privilege to be able to live and practice in a functioning Zen center. In many ways, the Zen Center is the spiritual home of the Community. Therefore, how it is maintained, how people are welcomed, how residents train is an example of how the community functions.

Without strict practice rules, it is necessary that each resident demonstrate their intentions through their actions about living at the Zen Center. A review of how a resident is doing will be conducted after the initial 3 month trial period of living at the Zen Center. After that, there will be discussions with Teachers and the Abbot at least every 6 months. The following items will be covered in each review:

- How the resident is doing with their Zen practice?

- What are the issues and obstacles they face both in their commitment to Zen practice and to the house and community?
- What are the actions that are mutually agreed upon to sustain their effort?

Living at the Zen Center comes with responsibilities, and the review is an opportunity to sharpen our effort and determine how to make best use of living at the Zen Center. If, after the review, it is the conclusion of the teachers and Abbot that the spirit and intent of training at the Zen Center has not been met, the resident will be given 30 days notice to leave and create an opening for another trainee.

Residency at the Zen Center is not permanent nor is it strictly for rooming. It is a training process and requires commitment. Borrowing from the model of higher education, we see residency lasting typically for 1-2 years but do not see any resident staying for longer than 3 or 4 years. This allows for enough time to be steeped in the practice, but also guards against becoming dependent on its structures.

Our current training fee is \$550/month, and includes retreat fees. The board may from time to time increase the training fee as necessary to meet expenses. You will be given at least 30 days notice of any potential training fee increases.

Zen Center Responsibilities

The Zen Master Jeong Ji has the overall authority and responsibility for all teaching and practice at the Zen center.

The Ji Do Poep Sa Nims, Jeff Tipp and Eric Nord, have responsibility for teaching and overseeing the practice of each student.

The Abbot Tom Campbell has overall responsibility for Zen center administration and is the person to talk with about residency or serious questions about your relationship to the center, should any arise.

The Head Dharma Teacher Eric Nord, JPDSN organizes daily practice at the Zen center and is the person to go to with questions about practice forms.

Zen centers and monasteries throughout the world are traditionally kept spotlessly clean. Each resident trainee will be responsible for one or more regular house jobs in the public areas, as assigned by the house master or abbot. Other Zen center members will also contribute to caring for the property.

As a resident trainee of Blue Heron Zen, you commit to Zen training for the benefit of all beings. We ask that you agree to the following:

Stay current with all financial commitments to the Blue Heron Zen Community. Adhere to these residential guidelines. Accept the decisions and directions of the Zen Master, teachers and abbot, in keeping with Blue Heron Zen Community rules, to maintain a nurturing and supportive atmosphere for practice and community life.

Provide at least 30 days notice when moving out. The Zen Center does not give financial credit for moving out earlier than 30 days.

Thank you for your interest and support of Zen practice for yourself and for all sentient beings.