



Vermont Zen Center Building Use Policy 1.0

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INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of the Vermont Zen Center is to carry out its mission to create a peaceful and inviting environment in support of those who seek wisdom, compassion, joy and equanimity within a Buddhist context. The two-fold practice of the Center is to overcome the causes of suffering within ourselves through spiritual development and to alleviate suffering in the world through outreach activities and the cultivation of a caring attitude to the earth. Our programs and our Sangha (Buddhist community) are the top priority when it comes to the use of our facility. However, the Zen Center is pleased to expand its outreach into the community by offering the use of its facilities when appropriate.

Building use activities fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Directors which manages the use of the facilities. No commitment for building use is finalized until the **Room Use Agreement** has been completed and executed by the Board of Directors or its designee.

The Vermont Zen Center has allowed organizations and individuals to use our facilities for one-time or short-term usage. Availability for ongoing usage is limited, but can be considered. Our first priority is for the program and membership needs of the Zen Center. Lesser use priorities are for nonprofit groups that are supported by the Center, then other nonprofit organizations and finally for-profit organizations.

Approval of the use of the grounds and facilities does not constitute or imply endorsement of any group, its mission, or its positions. Groups approved to use facilities must not advertise the event in such a way as to imply endorsement by the Vermont Zen Center. No activities or advocacy may take place within our buildings or grounds that conflicts with the policies and the practices of the Vermont Zen Center.

Included in this guide are the following:

1. Steps to Facility Use Scheduling
2. Fees for Facility Usage
3. Rules and Regulations of the VZC Board of Directors
4. Room Use Agreement Form
5. Release and Indemnity Agreement Form

STEPS TO FACILITY USE SCHEDULING

1. Fill out the **Room Use Agreement**, which is included in this guide. You may also obtain one from the Center’s office or as a pdf by sending an e-mail to vzcinfo@att.net
2. Attach any additional information you feel might be useful in helping us determine if we can accommodate your group.
3. Return the completed **Room Use Agreement** to the Center Office at least **2 months** in advance of the event. The Board of Directors will then evaluate your request and you will be notified if it is approved or not approved within 2–3 days.

FEES FOR DAILY FACILITY USE

Please note the fee schedule below. In addition, be sure to review the **Impact Fee** schedule following the basic fee table. If you have never been to the Center, we strongly urge a site visit prior to requesting use of our facility. Facility Use Fee is the same regardless of the length of time the Center is used in any 24-hour period. Please see **Starting and Ending Times** on page 6 to see when the Center is available.

Type A Non-profit educational, religious and other activities that we consider an extension of our mission.

Type B Civic and service activities, non-profit organizations, and other organizations whose purpose is for community and personal improvement.

Type C For-profit organizations, receptions, weddings, business firms, private individuals, and other one-time special events.

Room	Type A		Type B		Type C	
Meditation Room (100 people max)	\$200		N/A		\$300	
Dining Room/Social Hall (60 max)	\$150		\$200		\$250	
Kitchen (Special rules apply)	\$200		\$250		\$300	
Living Room (15 people max)	\$20		\$30		\$40	
Basement Common Room (25 people max)	\$25		\$25		\$45	
Single/Double Bedrooms ¹ Type 1	\$45 ²	\$35 ³	\$55 ²	\$45 ³	\$65 ²	\$55 ³
Double/Quad Bedrooms ¹ Type 2	\$35 ³	\$30 ⁴	\$45 ³	\$40 ⁴	\$55 ³	\$50 ⁴

¹ There are 5 “Type 1” upstairs bedrooms, each with one twin bed and the option of a foam mattress on the floor for a second person. There are 5 “Type 2” downstairs bedrooms with one or two sets of bunk beds, some of which can be separated into single beds. Dormitory-style bathrooms only; no rooms with private bathrooms. There are no “couples” rooms at the Center.

² One person in room.

³ Two same sex people in room. Price per person.

⁴ Three to four people in room. Price per person.

A valid credit card number from the responsible party must be included with the **Room Use Agreement**.

The Center is not available for outside use during scheduled meditation periods except by special arrangement. In addition, the Center is periodically closed due to silent retreats and ceremonies. For a complete schedule of upcoming events, sitting times, and retreats, please see the quarterly calendar at the Zen Center website: www.vermontzen.org/schedule.htm

Impact Fees for Meditation Room, Dining Room, and Kitchen			
Set Up	Up to 20 people	21-60 people	60+ people
Minimal	\$25	\$35	\$50
Substantial	\$50	\$65	\$80

Impact fees are charged at the discretion of the Board of Directors taking into account factors such as setup requirements, number of participants, use of any special equipment, food and drink, etc. Based on these factors, impact fees may be in excess of these guideline amounts.

Standard Per Person Meal Rates for VZC Catering			
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks
\$9	\$17	\$14	\$3

Please ask to speak with the Head Cook regarding details of meals and menu options. The “Standard Meal Rates” are based on the tasty, well-prepared, ample dishes that are served buffet-style at Zen Center events. Elaborate fare will be more expensive. Unfortunately we are unable to accommodate special diets, but we will do our best to provide food that everyone can enjoy.

All meals are lacto-ovo vegetarian with vegan options. No meat, fish, poultry, or their by-products (such as gelatin) are served. Meals are a healthy and delicious combination of fresh, often organic, fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and legumes. Desserts are served at lunch and dinner. No alcohol, meat, fish, or poultry is permitted on Center property.

Please note that meals are provided by volunteer staff and may not be available for all events. If we are unable to supply meal service, we will assist you with finding a local caterer who can provide vegetarian meals.

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BREAKAGE

All persons and/or groups using our facilities are expected to exercise reasonable care and judgment in such use in order to prevent defacement, damage, or breakage. The persons signing the **Room Use Agreement** shall be responsible for paying costs incurred by the Center in cleaning, repairing, or replacing any part of the building or its furnishings and equipment which in the judgment of the Board of Directors has been carelessly or irresponsibly subjected to more than normal wear and tear by the persons or group involved.

ROOM SETUPS

All rooms have standard setups. Any requested setup changes are subject to approval by the Board of Directors and are considered in the calculation of **Impact Fees** noted above.

INCENSE AND CANDLES

The Center uses the highest quality Japanese incense. Please do not burn other types of incense at the Center. Both incense and candles can only be used in approved places.

ORGAN USE

Permission to use the organ must be granted by the Board of Directors.

LAUNDRY ROOM USE

Laundry facilities are not available for the use of guests or groups.

SMOKING POLICY

All members of all groups using our facilities shall abide by a "No Smoking" rule on Center property.

NO GAMES OF CHANCE

Center policy prohibits the use of games of chance or gambling on the Center premises.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

This Center has adopted the policy of Safe Sanctuaries for children and youth. All users of the facility are expected to follow the guidelines of this policy including the following:

- No fewer than two adults must be present at all times during any program or event involving children.
- These adults must be 18 or older and must be at least 5 years older than the children with whom they are working.
- At least one of the adults present must be currently certified in First Aid and CPR.
- No child is allowed within the pond enclosure at any time, even if accompanied by an adult. Gates to the pond must be kept locked at all times.

MEDITATION ROOM

Rearrangement of the Meditation Room must be approved by the Board of Directors and will be undertaken by Center members only. Under no circumstances may the altar be moved nor may

pictures be attached to the wall. No food or drink is allowed in the Meditation Room with the exception of water or tea used by a speaker.

MEDITATION ROOM SOUND SYSTEM

The Meditation Room sound amplification system is available upon request. The system may be operated only by VZC technicians at a cost of \$75 per event or by technicians pre-approved by the Board of Directors. Group-provided sound, recording, or video equipment may not be attached to Center systems (including the electrical system) through cables or connectors without prior approval. The Zen Center will not provide recordings of talks.

KITCHEN USE

Zen Center kitchens may only be used by authorized VZC members. If you wish to serve food at your event, prior arrangements must be made with the Board of Directors. If approved, please ask to speak to the Head Cook regarding food service at the Center.

FOOD AND DRINK

All food and drink requires approval in advance as noted in the Room Use Agreement. The Vermont Zen Center is a vegetarian facility. No meat, fish, poultry or their by-products, such as food containing gelatin (e.g. marshmallows) or animal stock, is allowed on the premises including outdoor areas and parking lots at any time for any reason. Violation of this rule is sufficient ground for a Center staff member to withdraw immediately any group's use of the facilities and/or to deny use in the future.

ALCOHOL POLICY

The serving, consumption, or use of alcoholic beverages, marijuana, or other controlled substances shall not be permitted at any time on Center property, including the outdoor areas and parking lots. Violation of this rule is sufficient ground for a Center staff member to withdraw immediately any group's use of the facilities and/or to deny use in the future.

NO SHOES

No shoes are to be worn inside the Center other than in the link building. House slippers are permitted.

DECORATIONS

All decorations require prior approval of the Board of Directors or their designee. Decorations may only be attached to wooden trim and doors with masking tape or other approved means. No decorating may be attached with nails, thumbtacks, or anything causing damage to walls or woodwork. All such decorations must be removed immediately and completely following the event.

STARTING AND ENDING TIMES

- Monday, Wednesday, and Friday—8:30 a.m. through 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday and Thursday—7:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m.
- Saturday—8:30 a.m. through 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday—1:00 p.m. through 6:30 p.m.
- Multiple day events and residential retreats may be subject to different hours.
- Please call the Center to discuss your needs if your event requires earlier or later times.

RECYCLING AND AVOIDING WASTE

Recycling is a policy of our Center. As a part of that policy, no Styrofoam cups, bowls, plates or other Styrofoam articles are to be used by anyone at the Center. Receptacles for recycling glass, metal, aluminum and paper will be available for your use. Every organization is responsible for complying with this policy. Please be mindful of water use—if people are staying at the Center, please remind them not let the tap run when brushing teeth. Also, please do not waste food. Take only what you can eat, and eat all you take.

STORAGE

There is no excess storage available at the Center. As such, all organizations using the facility will be responsible for the storing of their materials offsite.

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, ATV'S AND NO WEAPONS

No sport bicycling, all-terrain-vehicles, or skateboarding is allowed on Center property. No bicycles or skateboards are allowed inside the Center facility. No weapons permitted, ever.

PARKING

Parking in the Center parking areas or designated handicapped parking space is available only during the period of time that a group has contracted to use the facility. Parking is available on a first-come, first-served basis and excludes certain spots that may be specifically reserved at all times for staff of the Center. Any damage to vehicles is at the owner's expense; the Center is not responsible for theft or damage to personal property.

SECURITY

Our Center works to maintain a safe and secure environment within the facility. However, no systems are foolproof. We ask that all users pay close attention to personal property and valuables, not leaving them unattended. The Center is not responsible for theft or damage to personal property.

FINAL DECISIONS

In case of doubt or uncertainty by any outside person or group about the application or interpretation of these regulations, or in our customary practices not specifically mentioned here, the Board of Directors or their delegated representative shall decide the matter and all individuals and groups shall abide by the Board of Directors' directions or forfeit immediately the use of any part of the facility. Arrangements for access into the Center facility will be made upon approval of the **Room Use Agreement**.

PAYMENT, DEPOSIT, AND CANCELLATION POLICY

Payment in cash, check, or money order only. To secure the space, users must deposit half the required fee with the application at least one month before the event. Final payment must be received on or before the date of use and a minimum of 2 weeks before the event if the VZC is supplying food. **CANCELLATION POLICY:** Full refunds will be made up to 3 weeks before the event; 50% refund of building use fee 2 weeks before the event; less than 2 weeks, no refund. Two weeks before the event, there will be no refunds for cancellations of booked meals.

EMERGENCY SCHEDULING CONFLICTS

The Center reserves the right to pre-empt any facility use for its own in cases of emergencies, such as funerals. Notice will be provided as early as possible and full refund will be made.

Vermont Zen Center
480 Thomas Rd. • P.O. Box 880 • Shelburne, VT 05482
Tel: (802) 985-9746 • Fax: (802) 985-2668 • E-Mail: vzcinfo@att.net

Room Use Agreement

Please Complete Both Sides of Form

Name of Organization _____

Name of Responsible Person _____

Non-Profit Status _____ Federal ID No. _____

Address _____ zip _____

Organization Day Phone _____ Cell or Evening Phone _____

E-mail _____ Fax _____

Organization's Purpose _____

Event Name and Description _____

Date of Request _____

Contact Person's Name _____

Date(s) Requested _____ Start Time _____ End Time _____

(Dates may not be scheduled more than nine months in advance except with permission.)

Anticipated total number of participants _____ Will food or drink be consumed? _____

How often will the event occur? (check box)

One time only Monthly Weekly Multiple days Multiple day residential

Which day(s) of the week? (check all that apply)

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

Room(s)/Services Requested:

Meditation Room (100 people max if both chairs and cushions are used)

Dining Room/Social Hall (seating at tables for 60 max)

Kitchen (Special rules apply)

Living Room (15 people max)

Basement Common Room (25 people max)

Sound System

Bedrooms

Residential Accommodations (Please note that we are unable to accommodate couples):

How many "Type 1" rooms are requested? _____ How many "Type 2" rooms are requested? _____

How many men? _____ How many women? _____

Release and Indemnity

This **Release and Indemnity Agreement** is between the above-named organization (“Organization”) and the Vermont Zen Center (“Center”).

RECITALS

- The Center is the owner of the real property and improvements located at 480 Thomas Road, Shelburne, Vermont (“Property”).
- The Organization desires to use the property described above for meetings and/or other activities.

AGREEMENT

NOW THEREFORE in consideration of this Center permitting the Organization to use the Property and improvements described above, the Organization agrees as follows:

1. The Organization hereby releases, discharges, and covenants not to sue the Center or its Directors, administrators, directors, agents, officers, members, volunteers, and employees, from any and all liability, claims, demands, losses, or damages arising out of the Organization’s use of the Property. If any member, guest, invitee, or participant of the Organization makes any claim against the Center or its Directors, administrators, directors, agents, officers, members, volunteers, or employees, in connection with the Organization’s use of the Property, the Organization will indemnify, defend and hold the Center and its administrators, directors, agents, officers, members, volunteers, or employees harmless from any and all litigation expenses, attorney fees, losses, liability, damages, and costs arising out of such claim.
2. The Organization represents that it carries standard general liability insurance coverage with a minimum of \$500,000 per occurrence. Upon request, Organization will provide the Center with proof of liability insurance, and if requested, will add the Center as an additional insured under Organization’s general liability policy.

Acceptance of Responsibility and Payment

I agree to be responsible for the conduct of those coming to, or participating in, the activity for which this application is being made, and for any damage beyond normal wear and tear that may occur as a result of this activity. I will remove all signs and decorations posted by my group immediately after the meeting/event has ended. I further agree that the Center property will be used in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Directors, and I hereby consent to the Release and Indemnity Agreement.

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Title: _____

VISA/MasterCard Number (REQUIRED): _____

Expiration Date: _____

Date: _____

Billing Address: _____ zip _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

ROOM USE CATEGORY: _____

MEALS: _____

Request approved by: _____

Agreed upon fees: \$ _____