

**EAST BAY MEDITATION CENTER**  
**PROGRAM COMMITTEE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
*(Revised at Program Committee meeting on March 4, 2017 and revised based on LSangha comments)*

**June 2017**

**Programming Committee Purpose**

The role of the Program Committee is to cultivate programming, classes, series, daylongs, and other curricula to realize EBMC's mission (see below) and promote safety and inclusion to create the refuge of the Buddha Dharma Sangha. The Programming Committee works with the greater center's Sangha, composed of the Teacher Sangha, many Practice Groups, Deep Refuge groups, LSangha and the Shared Leadership Council. We strive for engagement with the Dharma through a social justice lens that not only guides but holds refuge in Sangha.

*East Bay Meditation Center was founded to provide a welcoming environment for people of color, members of the LGBTQI community, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented communities. EBMC offers refuge to everyone seeking to end suffering and cultivate happiness. Our mission is to foster liberation, personal and interpersonal healing, social action, and inclusive community building. We offer mindfulness practices and teachings on wisdom and compassion from Buddhist and other spiritual traditions. Rooted in our commitment to diversity, we operate with transparent democratic governance, generosity-based economics, and environmental sustainability.*

**Program Committee Composition and Functioning**

- The Program Committee will have 8-9 members. In general, this shall include 2 members of the LSangha (though 1 may be enough if 2 is not feasible), 1 staff person, 3 Practice Groups leaders, and 2 Teachers (some categories may be overlapping), with the rest of the membership composed of sangha members with skills meeting the needs of the committee.
- With the exception of the staff member, which is a permanent role, committee membership terms shall be for 3 years, with a limit of 3 consecutive terms. After 1 year off the committee, a member may reapply. New members are expected to make a minimum 3 year commitment.
- In selecting members, the Program Committee tries to maintain a balance of membership providing necessary skills, community representation, continuity of membership and other factors.
  - 2 LSangha members will be appointed by the LSangha
  - 1 staff person (chosen by the staff, not a rotating member)
  - 3 representatives from Practice Group Coordinating Committees
  - 2 Teachers (representing the Teacher Sangha)
- The Program Committee will periodically, and at least every two years, put out a call for

applications for membership. Applicants will complete the application requesting information and including an essay describing their vision for programming at EBMC and what skills they would bring to the committee. The committee will meet to decide, by Modified Consensus, which members to accept.

- At any time, any member of the Program Committee may nominate a new member for consideration by the committee. New members will be approved with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of the vote.
- New members will join for a 90-day probationary period. During those 90 days the new member is expected to participate as a full member of the committee. During the trial period both the committee & nominated new member continue to maintain open communication and check in together once a month. An established committee member will act as a mentor to help answer questions, guide and offer transitional support to the nominated new member. This guide/mentor role may alternate members each during the 90 days.
- After the trial period, if all parties agree, the nominated new member officially joins the committee. However, if expectations for committee membership aren't being met, the Program Committee may vote to terminate the new member's participation. If for some reason it's felt that there hasn't been enough time to evaluate, the trial period can be extended by an additional 90 days.
- Prior to the end of each member's term, the Program Committee will vote by Modified Consensus as to whether to invite the member to continue for an additional term, up to 3 consecutive terms. If the Program Committee votes not to invite the member to continue for an additional term, then the member's participation will end at the end of their term.
- Membership requirements:
  - Minimum 5 years practice experience (may include movement), including a regular current meditation practice
  - Able and willing to make minimum 3 year commitment
  - Must attend 75% of Program Committee meetings (2/month), except for scheduled leave, family emergency, or similar
  - Able to commit an additional 10 hours per month minimum to committee work (except for LSangha members, see below)
  - Excellent collaboration skills
  - Expertise as needed by the committee
  - Good sense of humor
- Roles
  - The LSangha members' responsibility is to serve as liaison between the Program Committee and the LSangha. Because of the heavy requirements of the LSangha role, this may be their only activity with the Program Committee
  - Roles and responsibilities of other Program Committee members will, to some extent, be fluid, with responsibilities assigned as projects/needs arise. Every effort will be made to clarify beginning role(s) during the onboarding process, but prospective members should expect to be asked to do a variety of activities.
- The Activities of the Program Committee include:

- Approving teachers and classes, curriculum development
  - Staff roles: publicity, dana (program and teacher), evaluations
  - Providing support to new sanghas or projects
  - Practice Group Liaison(s)
  - Organize and execute the quarterly Practice Group Coordinators meetings
  - Teacher Sangha Coordinator(s)
  - Organize and execute the quarterly Teacher Sangha meetings
  - LSangha Liaison(s)
  - Movement Teacher Liaison
  - Deep Refuge Group Liaison
  - Coordinating recruiting new members, and on-boarding
  - Special projects: deaf community accessibility, teen and family sanghas, etc
  - Technology-recording classes, online classes
- Committee members will be asked to leave the committee if they are not able to attend meetings and fulfill their responsibilities. The associated process will be roughly as follows:
    1. Open communication throughout the process to keep everyone abreast updating membership status
    2. Outreach to committee member to understand what barriers to membership might be active and reminding/informing them of attendance requirements and other expectations
    3. Offer a trial period depending on their response to check in again the next month - maximum, case-by-case basis
    4. If the committee decides that said member is not able to contribute according to agreements, an email is sent confirming that the person has been removed from the committee roster.
- Meeting protocol
    - Committee members will alternate roles for each meeting
    - At each meeting there will be a Facilitator who will guide the committee through the agenda and ensure that everyone has a chance to participate/contribute
    - At each meeting there will be a Note Taker who will document action items/decisions and accountability for follow up. If needed to allow the Note Taker to participate in the meeting, there may be a Secondary Note Taker
    - Each meeting will have the option to participate through Zoom or similar remote method
    - Committee members commit to support the smooth functioning of the committee through self-monitoring during meetings to engage in wise speech, avoid interrupting others and to be sure that everyone has a chance to participate. If a member notices that the meeting has become unproductive, they are expected to bring it to the attention of the group so that the group may self-correct
    - All committee decisions will be made by Modified Consensus, meaning that first a consensus will be sought and, if this is not feasible, a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority will decide.

## Procedures: General Programming

- New events (i.e., one daylong or class series) may be proposed by anyone by submitting a Program Proposal Form via the teacher website:  
<https://teacherweb.eastbaymeditation.org/>
- Repeat events that received positive feedback may be proposed by the teacher by contacting the [programs@eastbaymeditation](mailto:programs@eastbaymeditation) or [xiaojing@eastbaymeditation](mailto:xiaojing@eastbaymeditation) to request program dates
- Repeat events that did not receive positive feedback: Program Staff member will discuss evaluation with teacher and consult with Program Committee about class approval; and possible modification to the class.

## Approving Programs and Events

- Every programming proposal needs to be approved by Programming Committee before scheduling
- New programs, repeat programs and new classes will be reviewed by the Program Committee and may be approved, revised or declined. In reviewing new class proposals, the Program Committee will consider:
  - The class's theme, objective & relationship to the EBMC mission
  - The potential impact of the class on the EBMC community
  - The qualifications of the teacher(s)
  - The need for the class as described in the General Program Guidelines (see below)
  - EBMC & possibly the Programming Committee's capacity to facilitate, support and promote said class.
  - The aspiration to offer programs in Spanish, and to begin offering a class on sangha building and deep refuge group development

## New Teachers

- New teachers may be proposed by anyone, including themselves
- New teachers are approved by the Program Committee; they must first complete and submit EBMC's Teacher Questionnaire and sign the Teacher Ethics Agreement, found on the Teacher Website: <https://teacherweb.eastbaymeditation.org/>
- Designation as Core, Community, or Visiting teacher will follow guidelines in the *EBMC Core, Community, and Visiting Teacher—Descriptions, Roles, and Responsibilities* policy document.

## Teacher Scheduling and Frequency

- Generally, prioritization of class scheduling by teachers will follow guidelines in the *EBMC Core, Community, and Visiting Teacher—Descriptions, Roles, and Responsibilities* policy document.
- At the same time, core programming including EBMC Curricular Programs will be scheduled first
- Revenue-generating programs will take priority over Deep Refuge Groups in terms of

scheduling EBMC space

- Except for Core Teachers, and in unusual circumstances, POC will be represented on all daylong and class-series teaching teams (e.g., teaching white privilege awareness)
- The maximum number of classes to be scheduled per month is 8
- The maximum teaching frequency by any individual teacher is 12 classes per year, excluding teaching of practice groups. Co-taught classes count as ½ class.
- Lead time for scheduling
  - The Program Committee will aim to respond to program proposals within 2-4 weeks of receiving either the proposal or the request for dates.
  - Once approved, the lead-time required for scheduling a class is at least 3 months, and up to 6 months.

**Teacher Sangha:** please see the *EBMC Teacher Sangha* document.

### **Coordination with Leadership Sangha**

- The Program Committee will meet with the Leadership Sangha once per year to review the year's programming and plans for the upcoming year.

### **Evaluation and Revision of Programming**

- The Event Coordinator will gather and send feedback on programs to teachers on a monthly basis.
- Class evaluations will be reviewed by the Program Committee on a quarterly basis. The Program Committee will welcome feedback from community members that comes through other avenues
- The Program Committee will revise the programming based on class feedback
- As appropriate, the Program Committee will offer feedback to teachers
- At a meeting of the Leadership Sangha, the Program Committee will present the class feedback and discuss possible revisions to the General Programming Guidelines

**Practice Group Procedures:** please see the *Suggestions, Structures, Guidelines, and Templates for EBMC Practice and Meditation Groups* document.

### **Deep Refuge Groups Procedures:**

- The Program Committee has prepared guidelines for community members wishing to establish Deep Refuge Groups (please see separate [link](#).)
- The Program Committee will provide consultation, logistical support and problem-solving assistance on an as-needed basis for new and ongoing Deep Refuge groups.

**EAST BAY MEDITATION CENTER**  
**GENERAL PROGRAMMING GUIDELINES**  
(revised 3.8.17)

EBMC seeks to foster liberation, personal and interpersonal healing, social action and inclusive community building. EBMC programming will be composed of spiritual teachings from wisdom traditions. All programs and events offered at the center must be rooted in spiritual exploration.

Programming will seek to meet the needs of the EBMC community by:

- Offering the core Buddhist teachings
- Offering programming relevant to as many members of the EBMC community as is practicable with an eye to:
  - Creating safer spaces for practice and pursuit of liberation
  - Translating the core teachings into the practices of everyday life
  - Offering a forum for discussion of the impact of programming on members of our community

Programming will include 3 main components:

- Category One, approximately 1/3 of classes
  - Defined as Core Buddhist Teachings
  - Examples include Introduction to Core Buddhist Teachings Curriculum, Beginner's Classes, the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path
- Category Two, approximately 1/3 of classes
  - Defined as classes that are core to our mission; typically addressing the needs of a particular community
  - Examples include classes for POC, Women, LGBTQI; Social Justice
- Category Three, approximately 1/3 of classes
  - Defined as "all other" classes; some more experimental
  - Examples include Mindfulness For Educators; Drawing For Greater Awareness; Depression And Mindfulness

Programming will be overseen by the Program Committee as described in the *Program Committee Policy and Procedures*.