

ROCHESTER ZEN CENTER
GUIDELINES FOR AFFILIATE LEADERS

August 20, 2015

The following guidelines have been prepared in order to assist Affiliate Leaders in carrying out their responsibilities as the spiritual leaders of their respective affiliate groups. Deviation from these guidelines requires the express permission of the Abbot of the Rochester Zen Center [RZC].

General responsibilities

As the spiritual leader of an affiliate group and the Abbot's personal representative to the group, the Affiliate Leader is responsible for ensuring that all training and practice activities of the group are conducted in a manner consistent with the usages, style, and spirit of practice at the Rochester Zen Center. Accordingly, the Affiliate Leader shall have sole responsibility for the training and practice activities of the affiliate group.

Public talks

An Affiliate Leader may give a talk on Zen Buddhism at a school, church, club, or the like, but shall make clear in the talk that he or she is not a fully sanctioned Zen teacher, but is speaking only from personal experience. A newly appointed Affiliate Leader should consult the Abbot of the RZC before giving such a talk for the first time. An Affiliate Leader shall arrange that any fee or honorarium given for the talk be paid to the affiliate group.

Protocol

An Affiliate Leader is not to wear any attire, or to use any implement, such as a hossu, reserved for the use of a fully sanctioned Zen teacher. Nor is an Affiliate Leader to be addressed as "Roshi," "Sensei," "Teacher," or the like. Those receiving advice, as well as those receiving group or private instruction (if the Affiliate Leader has been authorized to give group or private instruction), do not strike a bell before entering the room, nor do they make prostrations before the Affiliate Leader; advising, group instruction, and private instruction are to be clearly distinguished from dokusan, which is given only by a fully sanctioned Zen teacher.

Ceremonies

An Affiliate Leader may conduct and officiate at the following ceremonies: repentance ceremony; memorial service; ceremony of aid (e.g., famine relief); Thanksgiving; Buddha's birthday, enlightenment, and parinirvana; Bodhidharma Day; and Kannon Day. Descriptions of these ceremonies may be obtained from the Head of the Zendo at the RZC; memorial services are also discussed in Roshi Kapleau's *The Zen of Living and Dying*. An Affiliate Leader may not conduct or officiate at funeral services, marriages, or the taking of the precepts (Jukai), unless the Affiliate Leader has been ordained (or been invested as a member of the Three Jewels

Order). However, if no ordained or invested person is available, an Affiliate Leader may give the precepts upon the request of a dying person.

Teaching responsibilities

During formal sittings, the Affiliate Leader (or designated monitor) sits facing out and checks the postures of the other sitters. An Affiliate Leader may give general instruction relating to posture and may provide guidance for those working on a breath practice or an initial koan. However, an Affiliate Leader is not to assign a koan, test or pass a student on a koan, or work with a student on koans subsequent to the initial koan; this restriction applies even if the Affiliate Leader has been authorized to give private instruction. An Affiliate Leader may give encouragement and other talks in the zendo, but in doing so should not sit facing the altar in the manner of a formal teisho given by a sanctioned Zen teacher. An Affiliate Leader may assume the following teaching responsibilities only if given permission to do so by the Abbot of the Rochester Zen Center: (1) using the kyosaku; (2) training another member of the affiliate group in the use of the kyosaku; (3) giving group instruction; (4) giving private instruction; and (5) conducting sesshin. Permission to assume any teaching responsibilities either prohibited or not expressly authorized under these guidelines (e.g., assigning a koan; giving Dharma talks in place of taped teisho) must come directly from the Abbot of the Rochester Zen Center.

An Affiliate Leader may not authorize any material departure from the Rochester Zen Center's zendo procedures without the Abbot's permission. If the Affiliate Leader is unsure whether a contemplated departure would be "material," the Leader should consult the Head of the Zendo at the Rochester Center.

The Affiliate Leader may, in his or her discretion, lend to members of the affiliate group recordings of teisho given by the Center's Abbot or by Roshi Kapleau.

Group Instruction

If the Affiliate Leader has been authorized to give group instruction, such instruction should be given during formal sittings in a room designated for group instruction. Those receiving group instruction sit in chairs in a semi-circle facing the Affiliate Leader or, if chairs are not available, on the floor with cushions provided. Any variation on this set-up should be discussed with and approved by the RZC Abbot. Participants ask questions and receive answers one at a time; group instruction is not a group discussion period. The only circumstance under which group instruction may be given to a single individual is if group instruction is announced and only one person wishes to attend.

Private Instruction (daisan)

If the Affiliate Leader has been authorized to give private instruction, such instruction should be given during formal sittings in a designated room. The person receiving private instruction and the Affiliate Leader sit on chairs. If the Affiliate Leader has been authorized to give private instruction, both matters relating directly to practice and personal matters for which advising is appropriate may be taken up during private instruction.

Confidentiality

An Affiliate Leader shall respect the confidentiality of matters brought up in private instruction or advising, unless required to do otherwise by law. An Affiliate Leader shall not disclose to members of the affiliate group, the public, or the press any information of a confidential nature provided to the Affiliate Leader by the Rochester Zen Center or by a director, trustee, or officer of the affiliate group.

Sexual Conduct

An Affiliate Leader may not form a sexual relationship with any member of his or her group unless approval is obtained. The leader must consult with and obtain approval of both the Abbot and the affiliate group's Board of Trustees.