

SDRC Safety Information and Release Form for Volunteers

Southern Dharma Retreat Center is located in one of the more remote and rugged areas of Western North Carolina. While providing an ideal setting for silent retreat, this environment also has several hazards.

Poison Ivy is abundant. If you don't know the notorious "leaves of three", ask a staff person to show them to you. If you should come in contact with poison ivy, wash with *Tecnu* – located in each bathroom – carefully following the directions on the bottle. The oil of poison ivy can stay on your shoes and clothes, so be careful about them as well.

The paths around Southern Dharma are strewn with rocks, roots, and other natural stumbling blocks. Steps – whether rock or wood – are sometimes unstable or slippery. Please move about carefully at all times. **Rocks and the wooden steps are particularly slippery when wet, as are bridges and ramps.**

The mountains are home to many creatures. **Yellow jacket nests** can be just about anywhere. Look before you step; watch where you put your hands. Yellow jacket nests are sometimes located in holes in the grassy areas.

Ticks are common in summer. Check your clothing and exposed skin after being in the woods.

Very occasionally, **copperhead snakes or rattlesnakes** are seen. Be especially careful if you are moving rocks or piles of lumber or reaching into places. Sometimes snakes are seen on the paths and driveways, or in and around stone walls. Always watch where you are stepping, and use a flashlight at night. Move slowly away from any snakes you see, not toward them.

The **first-aid kit** is located on the 2nd floor of the Lodge, in the volunteer area.

The primary source of heat at Southern Dharma is wood. Please **DO NOT** add wood to the fires in the woodstoves, or adjust the settings, or build fires. Ask staff if you feel the fire in one of the wood stoves needs tending.

In general, **candles, incense, or use of matches** is prohibited except by teachers. Consult with staff for any exceptions.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the premises, either indoors or outside. Please respect this policy.

In case of fire, please familiarize yourself with exits from all floors and the location of fire extinguishers. Extinguishers are located in hallways, on each floor of the lodge, in the kitchen, and near the wood stoves in the Lodge and Meditation Hall.

Work assignments are part of all volunteer stays. If you have any concerns about your ability to complete any work assignment safely or about the safety of the work itself, please speak to a staff person who will gladly reassign you.

Medical and Psychological Professionals are not employed by SDRC. If you would like to provide us with the contact information for your physician or mental health professional we will attempt to assist you in contacting them should such a need arise.

We seek above all that you have a meaningful and worthwhile volunteer experience. Do not hesitate to confer with the Director about any concerns or issues that arise.

In consideration of the benefits offered by Southern Dharma Retreat Center, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the identification of potential hazards at Southern Dharma Retreat Center as described above. I acknowledge the voluntary nature of all activities at the center. I acknowledge that I am at least eighteen years old and legally responsible for my own safety. I acknowledge the possibility of harm or injury arising from the terrain, wildlife, and plant life. I do hereby specifically waive any and all claims for liability against Southern Dharma Retreat Center; The Practice Community at Southern Dharma, LCC; Elizabeth Kent (surrounding property owner); or the staff of the center, and release and hold them harmless for any injury sustained by me while at the center.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Person to contact in an emergency:

Relationship to you: _____ Email: _____

Contact's Phone: Day: _____ Night: _____

Please describe any medical condition of which you want SDRC staff to be aware:

