

Mandala Council – Mandate, Responsibilities, Composition, Process & Relationships to Other Councils

Mandala Council Mandate

- The Mandala Council, under the guidance and supervision of the Abbots, Board and Dharma Council, helps ensure the harmonious and effective functioning of the temple by filling and rotating temple jobs.
- The Mandala Council coordinates with the office of Shuso, allowing the Shuso to take on whatever Mandala Council responsibilities s/he is willing or able to.

Mandala Council Responsibilities

- Maintain the Temple Job List
- Work with Leadership Development Team to oversee apprenticeship by having a Mandala Council member on that team
- Be available as a resource for the people functioning in various jobs and roles in the temple with respect to understanding the organizational plan
- Be available to assist Team Leaders in recruiting people for jobs
- Help find appropriate jobs for people who want them
- Each family representative on the Council schedules and facilitates the twice yearly meetings (early fall and midwinter) of the Family Team Leaders

Composition of Mandala Council

- Five members, plus the current Shuso(s).
- The five non-Shuso members of the Mandala Council serve as family representatives: one monitors the needs and status of the White Family and serves as Chair (see Chair description under Process); one each monitors the needs and status of the temple's Red Family, Blue Family, Green Family and Yellow Family.
- Mandala Council members must be Full Members of DRZC and have practiced at DRZC for at least 3 years.
- The Abbot, Kanin and Godo are non-voting (ex officio) members of the Mandala Council, so are invited to all meetings but not expected to attend. Their advice carries weight and is received with gratitude. At times their presence(s) may be requested by the Mandala Council.
- Mandala Council members are asked to serve a minimum of one year.
- New members of the Mandala Council are recruited by the Mandala Council itself and are then subject to review by the Board and the Dharma Council.
- Members of the Mandala Council are replaced as they resign.

- There are no term limits, but the composition of the Mandala Council is subject to annual review by the Board and Dharma Council. A Mandala Council member can be asked to end his/her term.
- If possible within the confines of the eligible pool of candidates, one person would ideally hold no more than one voting membership position in the following three Councils: the Board of Directors, the Dharma Council, and the Mandala Council. Members of any of the five White Family Councils must be recused if a conflict of interest arises during an Escalation Process due to membership on more than one Council.

Mandala Council Process:

- Family representative responsibilities do not involve individual authority over the Family or its Team Leaders.
- A sangha member may approach any member of the Mandala Council with a concern or request; the person approached takes responsibility to make sure the concern or request is brought to the Council and someone gets back to the person who originally stated the concern.
- Role of the Shuso: Responsibilities assigned specifically to the Shuso may include being the only Council member empowered to make minor decisions and take action on them without first consulting with the entire Council, although the Mandala Council and shuso will need to come to a mutual understanding about what constitutes a minor decision; being the “voice” of the Mandala Council to the Sangha, communicating Mandala Council requests or decisions to individuals or groups; being the primary “go-to” person for Sangha members with requests or concerns.
- Role of the Chair: The White Family representative serves as the Chair of the Mandala Council. Chair responsibilities include: making sure the Mandala Council fulfills its mandates and responsibilities; scheduling Mandala Council meetings; setting agendas for and facilitating meetings; suggesting changes to Council function and process when necessary; leading the process of selecting new Council members when necessary; making the process of transition from one shuso to another as smooth as possible.
- The Mandala Council operates by Consensus Process, but in the event that consensus cannot be reached there are two options:
- Standing Aside, where one or more members is recorded as abstaining or as casting a dissenting vote, but accepts the majority decision, or
- One or more members escalate the issue to the Board of Directors and/or Dharma Council.

Relationship of Mandala Council to Other Councils

- Some areas of the temple are overseen by the Dharma Council (such as qualifications and training of workshop leaders) and/or the Board of Directors, so the Mandala Council needs to be aware of this and confer with the Dharma Council and/or Board of Directors about any decisions that are relevant to them. The Mandala Council generally takes the lead in recruiting volunteers even in areas where the Dharma Council and/or Board of Directors maintains oversight.