

FAQs for Community Meditation Center fee structure change

What is happening right now with increased fees and teacher dana?

Beginning in May 2016, Spirit Rock is introducing a new fee structure for programs held in the Community Meditation Center, including non-residential retreats, daylong retreats, events and classes. Instead of paying a fee to Spirit Rock *and* separately giving *dana* to the teachers, attendees will be asked to pay a single fee to Spirit Rock. These increased attendance fees will better serve and support teachers. This change was requested by teachers themselves, as financial support in the former Community Meditation Hall was sometimes insufficient and often unequal. It also reflects Spirit Rock's commitment to provide teachers with the support they need in order to offer the Dharma through a variety of programs.

Is dana no longer being practiced at Spirit Rock?

Spirit Rock includes the practice of *dana* in all our programs; this perfection of the heart is related to, but not the same as financial offerings of support. In our Residential Retreat Center, practitioners offer *dana* support to teachers and retreat staff, and the gift of time with their work service on retreat. In our Community Meditation Center starting in May 2016, *dana* now takes a different form with teachers being supported by Spirit Rock's fees and operating fund donations, as well as volunteer service. We are profoundly committed to teaching and manifesting the heartfelt quality of *dana*, beyond payment structures.

What do teachers think about this change?

Teachers who offer shorter programs (non-residential retreats, daylong retreats, events and classes) have asked us for this change in support structure. We are therefore building stable compensation for teachers into our Community Meditation Center program fees. Spirit Rock is committed to supporting our teachers so they are better able to teach the Dharma.

Should I still give dana to teachers when I attend a program in the Community Meditation Center?

No. Spirit Rock is supporting the teachers directly. We are inviting program attendees to consider offering financial support to Spirit Rock's operating fund so that we can better support our teachers, staff, scholarships and our land.

How much do teachers in the Community Meditation Center earn?

Depending on the program, whether it's a sutta class series, daylong, non-residential retreat, etc., teachers will receive a percentage of the registration fee or a guaranteed minimum.

Shouldn't the Dharma be offered freely?

The Dharma is entirely free, but electricity costs money. The Dharma is the truth of the way things are, not a particular way of payment or offering. Anyone with need is able to participate in Spirit Rock's programs through our sliding scale fees, work exchange or scholarships for a reduced fee, and no one is turned away from our core programs due to lack of funds.