



HINDU TEMPLE PRIESTS **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. ROLES

- a. The Hindu Temple of Minnesota reveres and regards with high respect the role and the position of the priests
- b. The priests, with their immense education and training in the Hindu religion are an integral part of the temple
- c. The community depends on their knowledge and guidance to plan, organize and perform the various religious functions and activities.
- d. The temple management, devotees and the community will treat the priests with respect, kindness and consideration.

2. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Provide exceptional religious service to a diverse population of devotees from various parts of India and the world.
- b. Be courteous and respectful towards the devotees, the other priests and visitors to the temple
- c. Co-operate and collaborate with the other priests, the Temple Manager and the Religious Committee Chairperson.
- d. Maintain absolute cleanliness inside the mini-temple Garbha Graha (sanctum sanctorium).
- e. Showcase the Hindu Temple of Minnesota as a peaceful place of worship

3. HEAD PRIEST RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Work closely with religious committee chair and Temple Manager to facilitate communication, make sure that a meeting with the RELCOM and the Temple Manager is conducted at minimum on a bi-weekly basis.
- b. Maintain peace in the temple and treat all devotees equally.
- c. Provide leadership to other priests and the community
- d. Work with regional organizations along with religious committee to plan annual events
- e. Help to find visiting priests for special programs and also help to find additional priests when there is need
- f. Report to RelCom and Temple Manager about the performance of priests
- g. Make sure there is enough staff for day to day service in the temple
- h. Help Temple Manager and Relcom Chair in approving vacations for priests.
- i. Request kitchen to prepare prasadam.
- j. Plan for long term religious programs.
- k. Schedule day-to-day duties of other priests. Assign duties to priests. Maintain punctuality and discipline among priests. Conduct meetings with priests making sure all activities run smoothly.



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- I. Oversee activities of other priests and make sure that their responsibilities, as listed, are carried out in efficient manner and in accordance to the tenets of Hindu traditions, rituals and cultural values.
- m. Coordinate with other Chief Priests of Temples in USA to suggest improvement and/or changes in Hindu Temple of Minnesota
- n. Attend conferences of other priests within USA and represent HSMN Hindu Temple whenever feasible and approved by RELCOM and Temple Management
- o. Make or delegate religious event announcements at the temple on weekends and during major celebrations
- p. Help with making religious programs. Recommend a flow of events/ceremonies for major temple events to the RELCOM and Sponsors. Preside over and coordinate the ceremonies during these events.
- q. Help RELCOM with the creation of the religious calendar each year.
- r. Work with RELCOM to establish a list and continue to solicit major donors for sponsorship of religious events.
- s. Help record, classify and maintain an inventory of religious items/ornaments and/or jewelry donated by the devotees. Work with Treasurer, Temple Manager to make sure that inventory list is maintained and updated regularly.
- t. Help decide sponsorship levels for Pujas, Abhishekams in and outside of the temple. Also decide on sponsorship levels for special events along with RELCOM and Temple Manager.
- u. Work with the HATS arm of HSMN as requested by HATS Administrator.

4. ALL PRIESTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. First and foremost, the Priests have the responsibility to treat each and every devotee with respect and tend to their requests and needs.
- b. The priests have the collective responsibility to open and close the temple each day as per the temple schedule. Also, they are responsible to conduct the Nitya Puja on a daily basis.
- c. Lighting of Diya (Lamps): The priests will ensure that Diya (Lamps) are lit as soon as they open the temple. They will co-operate with each other to determine how this will be done and ensure that the lamps stay lit till they close the temple. They will also take responsibility to extinguish the lamps prior to leaving when they close the temple.
- d. Cleanliness: CLEANLINESS IS GODLINESS.
 - I. The priests need to make sure that the mini-temple garbha grahas and the vicinity are absolutely clean. There will be no clutter and trash in these areas. They need to remain in the temple after the major services (Abhishekam, Archanas, etc.) and clean the remnants of these services so the mini-temples are ready for the next service.
 - II. Besides the garbha graham, the priests are also responsible to keep the priest's room and priest's kitchen clean.
 - III. The priests will work together for cleaning and come up with the volunteer help needed for this task. The Head Priest and the Temple Manager will also solicit this help from the devotee community and put a plan together to provide help to the priests for cleaning all of the above areas.



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- e. Reporting Structure: The priests will be reporting to the Head Priest and will be taking directions in the following areas:
- I. The daily work assignment – at the temple or to support the service request of devotees
 - II. Travel to devotee event/home and other temples to support their religious service needs
 - III. Vacation requests
- f. Schedule – Time at the temple & outside:
- I. A Master Calendar exists on the temple website for Priests schedule.
 - II. Each priest is also required to maintain his own calendar.
 1. They will clearly enter this information in the Master Calendar
 2. The information is accessible by Temple Manager and the Religious Committee Chair.
 - III. To help in planning the activities of the temple and the priests, this calendar is to be filled at a minimum of 2 weeks in advance, for services both inside and outside the temple.
 1. However, the priests will accommodate urgent and special service requests in consultation with the Temple Manager or Religious Committee Chair.
 - IV. The priests will ask the devotees to send their service requests to the Head Priest. The Head Priest will determine the assignment of the priests to satisfy the needs of the diverse community. The priests, then are required to enter this information in the calendar.
 - V. No out of town or out of state requests will be approved without the concurrence of the Head Priest, Temple Manager and the Religious Committee Chair.
 1. If the out of town / state requests are made to the priests, they should direct those requests to the Head Priest and the Temple Manager.
 2. These requests have to be made at least (1) month ahead of the planned event.
 - VI. Any personal time-off and vacation requests will be made in writing to the Temple Manager. Once approved, the priests will enter this information in the calendar.
- g. Planning and conducting services
- I. The Religious committee chair will facilitate meetings in the current year with the priests and the Temple Manager to plan the major events and religious services for the following calendar year.
 - II. The expected outcome from these meetings is an official temple calendar with list of the major events
 - III. **IT IS EXTREMELY CRITICAL THAT THE PRIESTS START AND FINISH THE EVENTS AND SERVICES AT THE DESIGNATED TIMES.**
 1. The priests are required to get organized prior to the start of the event so that punctuality is maintained
- h. Time Card System:



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- I. A time card system is in place This is required by the payroll and auditing organizations. All paid employees, full time or part time will be required to follow the time card reporting process.
 - II. The Temple is responsible to keep the time card system in place and remind Priests to follow and inform them of any changes
 - i. Recording & Fund Collection for Religious Services requests:
 - i. Devotees may contact the Priests and/or Temple Manager for religious services. The Priests will inform the Head Priest in case they are contacted directly. The Head Priest will work with the priests to schedule the devotee requests as needed.
 - ii. Devotee request, once agreed, approved and scheduled must be entered into the master and the priest calendar.
 - iii. Charges for the request will be determined per the Temple service charge document. Devotee shall be informed of the charge. Payment can be made in advance or after the service is completed.
 - iv. After the service is completed, the priest shall collect the charges if not paid in advance.
 - v. Payment for Services
 1. The amount of Dakshina (Sambhavana) to the priest for the service is at the discretion of the devotee.
 - a. There shall be no DEMANDS placed by the priests on the devotees.
 2. Upon returning to the temple, the priest will provide the collected funds to the Temple Manager.
 3. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS BE DONE WEEKLY.
 - II. In the event, devotees make service requests at the temple, the Head Priest and/or Temple Manager or a designee will assign a priest if devotee has no preference.
 1. The priests will perform the services and obtain payment from the devotees as outlined in (iv) above.
 - j. Aarathi collections and Archana Tickets
 - I. Money collected for aarathi will be removed from the plate and put in the respective hundis of the temples.
 - II. A volunteer will be assigned for Sundays and days of major events to pass the aarathi plate. The volunteer will put the collections into the hundi.
 - III. The Temple Manager will make archana tickets and provide them to the front desk be placed in the Archana bags. The priests will collect the Archana tickets from the bags after Archana and give them to the Temple Manager for proper accounting and payment.
 - k. Material donations
 - I. The priests will compile a list of potential items (ornaments etc.) needed for the various mini-temples and provide it to the Temple Manager and the Religious Committee chair to approve and purchase these items
 - II. This list may also be used by RELCOM and Priests to solicit sponsors who will donate and/or fund for these items. If the devotees approach the priests to provide a material donation, the priests should consult with the



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Religious Committee chair and jointly make a decision about keeping and recording the item on the inventory list.

- I. Priests presence at the temple:
 - I. Priests are requested not to use their cell phones to receive or make calls in the Temple Hall.
 - II. The Head Priest and/or the Temple Manager will make sure that adequate number of priests are available at the Temple before allowing out of Temple Requests
 - III. Volunteers can only assist the designated priests and WILL NOT act on behalf of the designated priests.
- m. Communication:
 - I. It is important that the Chief Priest, other priests and the Temple Manager are communicating regularly to make certain
 1. The calendar is maintained and updated regularly. Account for Number of religious services performed & funds collected
 2. Collected funds are handed over and deposited in a timely manner.
 3. Cleanliness is maintained as described in (b) above and any issues are addressed quickly
 4. Lighting of the lamps – done as mentioned in item 3 a.
 5. Take time to bring forth of any issues or problems the priests may have in performing their duties. If they are not resolvable by the Head Priest, the problems should be elevated to the Temple Manager and subsequently to Temple President for guidance and action.
 6. Review and solicit suggestions for improvement from Temple Manager and the priests.
 - II. The Temple Manager or designee will document any items relative to responsibilities, issues, suggestions and actions and send to Religious Committee chair, and the Temple President.