

ACZC Dating & Romantic Relationship Guidelines

ACZC does not wish to have involvement in members private lives. However, dating and romantic relationships are a particularly tricky circumstance that have the potential to create unnecessary obstacles and distraction to the sangha's ability to focus on Zen practice. In order to minimize this potential impact, and to maintain ACZC as a space who's primary focus is Zen practice, we offer these guidelines:

No Tolerance of Sexual Harassment: Everyone coming to the Center in any capacity has the right to be free from sexual harassment. Continued expression of sexual interest after being informed that such interest is unwelcome is considered sexual harassment.

No Inappropriate Relationships with Minors: No adult should engage in sexual or romantic behavior with anyone who is under the legal age of consent. Full responsibility for avoiding such relationships lies with the adult.

Six Month Rule: In order to maintain Zen practice as the main priority of the community, particular care should be shown toward new attendees. As is standard practice in American Zen Centers, we request that attendees refrain from beginning a relationship with someone who has been coming to the center for less than six months. It is commonly understood that this period is necessary to allow time for someone to establish themselves and their practice in the community independent of a relationship.

Residents & Facilitators: In order for attendees to feel that the focus of the center's activities is on Zen practice it is also important that particular care should be taken if a resident or facilitator is to become involved romantically with an attendee. This is not an establishment of ranks or hierarchy, just an acknowledgement that those who lead discussion groups or live as permanent fixtures at the center inherently help set a tone for what the center is focused on. With these considerations in mind, if a resident or facilitator would like to become involved with an attendee, the six month rule must always be observed. Also, the resident or facilitator should consult with a member of the board before beginning the relationship to discuss any potential issues relating to practice or the sangha that might arise as a byproduct of such a relationship. It will be the responsibility of the board member to determine if there are further concerns that

should be brought to the attention of other board members, or if out reach to the other person involved in the relationship is advisable.

Public Displays of Affection: Again, in the interest of maintaining a space conducive to Zen practice, we ask that attendees refrain from public displays of romantic affection during practice events.