

Summer Steward Arrival Information

Dearest Summer Steward,

We are so looking forward to spending some summer with you! This “arrival info” is to help you plan for your time here and also to give you a better picture of how Lama operates. We are offering a lot of information here, which we hope will answer your questions. Each year is an experiment in how much advance information we offer, so your feed-back on this is most welcome.

We’ve arranged this info into the following sections: **Personal Care, What to Bring, Community Life** and **Policies** with many sub-sections in each. Please feel free to contact us with any further questions or concerns by e-mail at summersteward@lamafoundation.org or by phoning 575-586-1269.

Sincerely,

The Lama Foundation Resident Circle

Lama Foundation Vision Statement

The purpose of the Lama Foundation is to be a sustainable spiritual community and educational center dedicated to the awakening of consciousness, service, spiritual practice with respect for all traditions, and stewardship of the land. We are guided by a group vision of the unity of religious ideals and a deep respect for all spiritual paths. We believe in the integration of body, mind and spirit, in an environment of community, contemplative self-awareness, and deep connection with the land. We aspire to carry out the work of the Foundation as selfless service, working together as a circle and striving for consensus in decision-making.

PERSONAL CARE

Health and Climate:

Lama is at 8600 feet with lots of New Mexico sunshine. High altitude can cause shortness of breath, headache and a sense of fatigue. A dilution of liquid chlorophyll, found in most health food stores, helps to oxygenate the blood and alleviate these symptoms. If you are coming from a low elevation area, we strongly suggest that you get liquid chlorophyll and start to drink it with water several times a day, for a week or more before arrival (1 tablespoon per glass of water). This will prevent altitude sickness. Chlorophyll will be available for your use once you arrive at Lama.

High altitude intensifies the effects of the sun. We encourage use of a good sunscreen, sun hat and dark glasses and ample hydration. Daytime temperatures can be in the 90’s; nights, as cool as 40 degrees. Rains may be heavy at times, necessitating clothing that can be layered, warm and dry. (note: Lama has a free clothing exchange called “the Gypsy” where you can bring clothes to donate or find extra clothes for yourself.)

Facilities:

Lama has a number of beautiful tent sites, a few car camping sites (make arrangements if you want one), outhouses, indoor and outdoor showers. The showers in the bath house are not communal. **Please ask if the shower is in use when the curtain is closed before entering.** Community laundry is done once a week. In Lama Central, there is limited access to electricity, phones and computers (see the policies in the “Community Life” section for details). The closest stores are in Questa, about 9 miles to the north. Taos is much larger and is 25 miles to the south.

Wildlife:

Lama Foundation borders Carson National Forrest, and we share the mountain with much wildlife: bear, coyote, bob cat, deer, elk, mountain goats, mice, rats, voles, garden snakes, birds, and insects. Therefore, in order to

respect wildlife, we ask that your sleeping area and your car be free of things like food, incense, and candles which attract wildlife. We cannot over-emphasize this. Further, we cannot accommodate personal pets.

Meals:

We offer 3 meals a day and usually have snacks available. Lama's kitchen is vegetarian with vegan options. Soy-based products, spelt flour, rice and corn pastas are usually available. Any reasonable dietary needs (for example, no sugar, or no wheat) can be met with the "special needs" sign-up in the kitchen. If you are accustomed to using dietary products that might not be available in a large communal kitchen, please bring them with you. There is a large natural foods store in Taos that can meet most special needs. Limited pantry space for personal foods is available on request.

Phone and Fax Use:

Cell phones generally don't work on the mountain. Due to the limitations of our solar power system, personal phone recharging is limited. Please see the "electricity policy" in the "Community Life" section for details. There is much demand for the Lama phones. Personal calls may be received at 505-586-1269. However, most likely you will only receive a message, so please instruct anyone wishing to phone you at Lama to not expect to reach you when they call, but to leave a clear message. For outgoing calls, phones are generally available for personal use after 4:30 P.M. daily. For non-local calls, you must either call collect or use a calling card. (Cards may be purchased at Lama most of the time.) Note that Lama Business has priority at all times.

Faxes may be received at 206-984-0916. Please inform a resident circle member if you are expecting a fax. Faxes come through an e-mail fax service.

Mail:

Mail is picked up from the post office two or three times a week. You may receive mail at: (your name), c/o Lama Foundation, P.O. Box 240, San Cristobal, NM 87564. There is a mail basket in the Dew Drop Office for outgoing mail. Stamps may be purchased from the Business Office. Services like Fed Ex and UPS cannot be sent to this P.O. Box, but require pick-up from Questa and have a \$1/day handling fee. Please contact us if you need the shipping address.

Computers:

Lama has 2 computers for limited summer steward use in the Dew Drop office. Internet service is available on a sign-up basis from 4:30-9:30 P.M. daily for stewards. To conserve resources, printing out is discouraged when possible. Computer use fees are based on the Buddhist concept of "Dana"- the practice of generosity. Rather than requesting a specific fee each time the service is used, we ask that users consider the value of the service and make a contribution that reflects that value. All members of the community are asked to check in with the Computer Guardian before using computers. Also, Taos has internet cafes.

Due to the limitations of our solar power system, recharging of personal electronic devices, such as computers or cameras, is limited. Please see the "electricity policy" in the "Community Life" section for details.

Guests of Summer Stewards:

All guests of summer stewards are considered "visitors" according to Lama Foundation policies, and need to pay the visitor fee of \$15-\$50/night, sliding scale. Requests for visitors of up to 3 days need to be brought to the "Watch" for the period in question. Visits for longer than 3 days need to go the entire resident member circle.

Transportation to Lama:

The nearest major airport is in Albuquerque. There are two shuttles that offer service to Lama or the Taos area: Twin Hearts (1-800-654-9456) and Faust Transportation (1-888-830-3410). The cost is around \$55 one way. Reservations must be made in advance and there is no refund for cancelled return trips. Since the shuttles have limited departure times, it is best to contact the shuttle service before making flight arrangements.

The closest Amtrack station is in Lamy, NM, near Santa Fe. From the train station you can pick up the Lamy Shuttle into Santa Fe. Travelers must make reservations for the shuttle ahead of time. The number for the Lamy Shuttle is (505) 982-8829. From Santa Fe you can take Twin Hearts or Faust (numbers listed above) to Taos or all the way to Lama.

Greyhound offers service to Taos, where you can arrange to be picked up by a Lama resident. Please alert us of your arrival time and arrange for pick-up with us before purchasing a ticket.

Driving maps to Lama are available on the website at:

http://www.lamafoundation.org/driving_to_lama.htm

Please contact us if you would like directions sent to you.

WHAT TO BRING

Sleeping gear (be prepared for thunderstorms):

- a tent with a good quality rain fly
- 2 tarps -- one to cover the inside floor of the tent; the other for underneath
- sleeping bag good to 35-degrees F or colder
- sleeping pad
- pillow
- a battery-powered tent lamp

Clothes (layers for 90-degree F days to 40-degree F nights):

- clothing for variable weather
- sturdy shoes for hiking and rain
- sneakers/sandals
- sun hat
- a warm jacket, hat, gloves
- rain gear

Accessories:

- a flashlight or "head lamp"
- water bottle
- sunscreen
- bio-degradable** toiletries, personal medications (see "packing tips" below)
- lip protection
- sunglasses
- an alarm clock

Personal items (optional):

- day-pack
- journal
- musical instruments
- art materials
- camera
- personal spiritual practice items
- phone card for long distance calls

Packing Tips:

**Please do not bring electrical devices that produce heat, for example hair dryers, curling irons or toasters. Our solar electric system can't handle the electric output required to operate them.

**Dress code is always casual at Lama and because we live so close to the Earth, things tend to get dirty quickly, so bring appropriate clothes. You may also want some clothes for special occasions.

**Because of bears and other wildlife it is very important to pack all toiletries (including lotions, lip balm, camera film, vitamins, perfumes, toothpaste) in a separate bag to be left in the wash-house; do not bring any scented items into your sleeping area or leave these items in your car. You can put yourself or the animal in danger. We cannot over-emphasize this!

**Because the water from the wash-house feeds plants, Lama supplies bio-degradable soap, shampoo and lotion. Please do not bring non-biodegradable toiletries that will go down the sink drains.

****If you have clothes that you are planning to donate to charity, please consider bringing them to Lama's free-clothing room, "the Gypsy". The Gypsy is also there for you if you need an extra sweater, shorts, etc. Also, you might want to check our "donations" section on the website.**

****Women:** we invite you to bring photos of female family members and loved ones for use in women's lodge if you wish.

COMMUNITY LIFE

The Resident Circle:

There are currently 11 members of the resident circle, which consists of "participating" and "caretaking" members. They have each agreed to serve Lama Foundation full-time for one year, renewable each October, and are voted in by a consensus decision-making process. They are responsible for the physical and spiritual upkeep of the Foundation. Various members of the extended Lama family ("continuing members", "free associates", "trustees" and former summer stewards) visit throughout the summer.

Stewards wishing to explore residency are invited to get to know the current residents, read up on the website about how Lama operates, consider taking on "guardianships" or other positions of responsibility during summer stewardship, and ask questions. Very important, you do not need to make up your mind about residency until later in the summer. Meetings to explore residency start in early August, and all perspective residents are asked to be at Lama Foundation no later than August 1st. Winter housing order is determined by arrival date.

The "Watch":

Rotating the responsibilities of Watch at the beginning of every new and full moon cycle disperses leadership within the resident member circle. Through oversight of the community schedule, facilitating practices, meetings and special events, responding to phone messages and greeting guests, the Watch both creates the tone and monitors the heart-beat of the community.

As a steward, questions regarding the community schedule or requests for visitors should be directed to the Watch for the time in question.

Community Expectations:

Summer is a special time at Lama Foundation because we are creating community, one day at a time, and your participation is a big part of creating this community. Over the years, we have found that people are able to balance the time and energies with which they serve Lama together with down-time for themselves. Here are our expectations for your community input as a summer steward. It might read like a lot of demands, but in practice we have found that it is a personally sustainable schedule that allows for relaxation and personal time.

****30 hours of "service", or SEVA, per week.** We intend for each week during your time here to have 5 days in service, and 2 days off. Depending on the retreat schedule, you might not get 2 consecutive days off, and we cannot guarantee the same 2 days off each week. You can also "save" days off, or strategically use ½ days-off to nurture yourself as needed. There is a sign-up system for days-off so that everyone knows who is on the land at any given time. There is also 1 vacation day per month of service. Stewards may become project leaders or assume guardianships if they have the desire to assume the responsibility and the necessary talents.

****Attend the following meetings:**

- (1) Morning "practice" and "tuning" at 8:00 AM each day that you are in service. This gathering is for daily community announcements, personal check-ins, and for starting each day with spiritual practice.
- (2) Steward Circle, which takes place once a week. A chance to get to know fellow stewards and also to explore "community" at Lama Foundation.
- (3) Heart Club, each Wednesday at 7:00 PM. A long-standing community-wide practice, we each explore places of difficulty within ourselves. Each week can be a little different, but the week by week Heart Club experience builds community and offers each member a safe place to go within.

****Sign-up and do the allotted number of "wheel slots"** prescribed by the Seva Guardian each week. These are mainly cooking and cleaning-up after meals. Because each resident circle member already holds numerous guardianships, the required number of "wheel slots" for residents may be less than summer stewards.

Daily Schedule

6:00 am	Wake up
6:30-7:00 am	Sitting Meditation
7:00-8:00 am	Breakfast
8:00-9:00 am	Practice & Tuning
9:00-12:30 am	SEVA
12:30 pm	Lunch
2:00-4:30 pm	SEVA
4:30 pm	Personal Practice
6:00 pm	Dinner
7:00 or 7:30 pm	Evening program

Weekly Schedule (may change slightly during retreat):

Monday 4:30 pm	Resident Meeting (residents only)
Tuesday after dinner	Trip to Neem Karoli Ashram in Taos
Wednesday 7:00 pm	Heart Club
Thursday 9:00 am	Business Meeting
Thursday Afternoon	Women's Lodge
Thursday 7:00 pm	Zikhr (Sufi Divine Remembrance Ceremony)
Friday 4:00 pm	Men's Lodge, Japanese Tea
Friday 6:00 pm	Shabbat Service (dinner open to the public afterwards)

A weekly Summer Steward meeting will also be held. Date and time to be decided.

Note: Stewards may offer community practices or gatherings in open time slots. Please arrange with the Watch if you are interested in offering something.

EXISTING POLICIES

The full body of "existing policies" is available for you to read anytime by request, but in the interest of keeping an already long document as short as we can, we are including only those policies which pertain to summer stewards. Please note that there are "editor's notes" enclosed within <> marks that are added for clarity and are not part of the official policy text. Please think of these as a reference and as a tool to see a little more into the day by day life at Lama.

These and other policies are agreed on and voted on bi-annually by the Resident Circle in the Spring and Fall of each year. They are subject to change.

Tuition/Contribution:

Tuition/Contribution for summer stewards is \$325-650/month sliding scale until a cap of \$2000 is reached. Scholarships may be available upon inquiry. Dorm space (including mattress and pillow), when available, is \$7/night.

Non-resident Guest Tuition/Contribution: Non-resident guests are those who are visiting Lama Foundation non-residents < editor's note: such as summer stewards>. Non-resident guests are expected to pay the Visitors' Fee of \$15-\$50/night sliding scale.

Visitor and Guest Policies:

The Watch may accept visitors for up to three nights at his/her discretion in attunement with the whole circle's needs. Visiting is discouraged during retreats. A visitor is someone who is not a guest of either a resident member or a non-resident.

Maqbara: Murshid Sam's and Murshida Vera's gravesites are open to everyone for day visits at all times.

Shabbat: Friday night ceremony and dinner are open to visitors except when a retreat disallows this.

Guests of Summer Stewards: Requests for up-to-three days visits of non-resident guests need to be brought to the Watch. Requests for longer visits of non-resident guests need to be brought to the resident member circle. All guests of non-residents are expected to pay the Visitors Fee of \$15-50/night (sliding scale) unless other arrangements are made with the resident member circle.

Time Away (summer stewards):

Summer stewards are allotted up to six vacation days. <Editor's note: "six vacation days" applies to those who arrive on Opening Day.> They are expected to pay for retreats, which are considered vacation time. The resident member circle may award some retreat scholarships to Summer Stewards, based on length of stay (at least 2 months prior to the retreat), relationship to Lama, and community needs. Summer stewards who arrive later in the summer will have pro-rated vacation days. Summer stewards taking more than their allotted vacation days will lose their winter housing priority. All summer vacation days must be taken before Closing Day. Special needs may be brought to the resident member circle for discussion.

Taking vacation days during retreats is discouraged, for all stewards, and must have resident member circle approval. Comp days may be awarded to stewards and must be approved by the resident member circle prior to taking time off and must be taken within one month.

Sun and Moon Days

Resident members and stewards who have been in service to the community for at least one month may take one "moon" (female) or one "sun" (male) day per month for personal replenishment and reflection. This time is to be taken on the land. The intention to take a sun or a moon day must be communicated with the Watch, with the SEVA Guardian, and with those with whom the member or steward has been working and must be recorded on the Attendance clipboard in the Mud Room.

Medical Emergencies

Every person who will be on the land for more than three nights is expected to fill out a Medical Information and Consent to Treatment Form, that will be kept in a locked file for the duration of their stay. The Watch, summer steward guardian or retreat liaison, when applicable, and a member of the Emergency Response Team should be notified of a potential medical emergency--accident, injury, sudden swelling, difficulty breathing, irregular heart beat--as soon as possible. An Emergency Response Report must be completed as soon after the occurrence and response as reasonable.

Housing Policy:

Housing order at Lama Foundation is determined and arranged: (1) by residency-- An incumbent resident member has priority over a new resident member. (2) by date of arrival -- Summer Stewards who leave the land for longer than their allotted vacation time lose their housing seniority. Special needs for housing should be brought to the resident member circle upon arrival and will be considered based upon housing availability.

Vehicles:

Only Lama designated and insured drivers may drive Lama vehicles.

Parking:

During the summer, all personal vehicles shall be parked in the lower lots. Special requests may be brought to the resident member circle for discussion.

Electricity:

Electricity is to be used CONSCIOUSLY. The E-Meter in the Community Center should be checked regularly for solar power levels. Only designated people, chosen by the solar electric guardian, can use the generator. Personal Electrical Devices (hereafter known as PED's – laptops, re-chargers, cell phone, etc...) may be re-charged in the Community Center during sunny daylight times or away from the Community Center at all other times.

Pet Policy:

Lama Foundation does not allow pets, primarily because they disturb and attract wildlife. Requests for exceptions must be brought to the resident member circle.

SEVA or service as a spiritual practice:

The community embraces the spiritual practice of SEVA/Karma Yoga – selfless service, as an integral part of our daily life. Actual work hours vary according to Lama’s needs - usually 6 hours 5 days a week during summer months and 5 hours a day 5 days a week during winter months. During times of peak activity a greater commitment may be needed. The SEVA guardian and team coordinators will keep community members informed of individual work responsibilities.

Alcohol and Drugs:

The possession and/or use of any illegal substance is not condoned by the Lama Foundation. Public consumption and/or public intoxication of ANY kind, on Lama land, is grounds for review and consequent dismissal by the resident member circle. For sacramental, ceremonial, and ritual purposes, alcohol may be permitted in public areas pending agreement of the resident member circle. Cigarette smoking is permitted in designated outdoor areas only.

Meat:

According to New Mexico state health codes and in consideration to vegetarians, no meat shall be stored, cooked, or consumed in Lama Central (the area within and around the Dome, Community center, Flag, and the Workshop).

Practice and Tuning:

All resident members and non-residents are expected to attend practice and tuning every day they work. Days off need to be marked on the SEVA wheel prior to tuning. People late for practice are to wait at the door for practice to finish.

Weekly Lama Business Meetings:

Resident members are expected to and non-residents are encouraged to attend these meetings. During the weekly business meetings each current resident member gets one vote. During a non-resident’s first weekly business meeting s/he is requested to observe the meeting in silence, after which s/he may participate in discussion but s/he does not have a vote.

Silence:

Silence before breakfast: It is our intention to observe noble silence until breakfast as a community-wide spiritual practice; to enter each day from a heart space. Noble silence before breakfast helps us cultivate right speech, allows space for internal reflection, gives us a break from small talk, lets us listen to each other in different ways, and notice happenings in the non-human realms.

Silent days: On the designated day, as proclaimed by the Watch, all people on the land observe “noble silence” throughout the day. Please refrain from all speech, from wake-up until the dinner blessing. Work discussions are to be kept to a minimum and (if necessary) undertaken in reserved tones.

Office use:

The phones and computers in the Business Office are for the use of current resident members conducting Lama business. Teachers and facilitators may use phones and computers in the Business Office with resident member consent. Personal phone calls should be made from the Dew Drop outside of Lama business hours--before 9am-of after 4pm.

Computer Use:

All personal use of Lama computers is discouraged during Lama business hours--from 9 am-4 pm. Computers in the Dew Drop are available for non-resident use 4-9pm.

Television and VCR:

The TV and VCR are to be used only on Wednesday nights (to entertain children during Heart Club), weekends, or slow days when weekend usage is unavailable. Videos pertaining to one’s spiritual practice are permitted any time with Watch approval. Request for special exceptions should be brought to the Watch.