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## **How to become an Aurovilian**

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**Step 1: A person who feels ready will contact the Entry Service in order to receive information about the next steps to be taken towards becoming an Aurovilian.**

- 1) The Entry Service will receive all those aspiring to join Auroville and direct them to the Welcome Talk.
- 2) All relevant forms, including visa related information to foreign applicants, will be distributed by the Entry Service.
- 3) A three (3) month Pre-newcomer Period is requested of the applicants wishing to join Auroville. However, this period may be shortened or lengthened by the Entry Service, depending on their previous status in Auroville and/ or contributions to the community.
- 4) During the Pre-newcomer period, the applicant is encouraged to explore Auroville as much as possible through service as well as other interactions.
- 5) After having attended the Welcome Talk, the applicant if ready, can fill in and submit the Application Form in person in an appointment given by the Entry Service
- 6) If a couple wishes to join Auroville with their children, the Entry Service will consider their applications as those of two adults who have joint responsibility for their children and process their applications accordingly.
- 7) In case a single parent wishes to join Auroville together with his/her children, the Entry Service will request a statement from a public authority or from the absent parent or legal guardian certified by a notary public that he/she has no objection to the children residing in Auroville, and that no legal proceedings are pending between the parents involving the children, except in special cases.

## **Step 2: Choosing mentors**

- 8) At the same time, the applicant will be introduced to the Mentor Pool. The applicant will have a minimum of three (3) mentors, of which two (2) will be from the Pool. The applicant may choose one (1) from the community at large. The mentor chosen by the applicant should attend at least one Welcome Talk to become familiar with the Entry Process and agree to be part of the Mentor Pool at least for the duration of this applicant's Newcomer Process.
- 9) The mentors will accompany the applicant till the end of the Newcomer Process. If, however, for some reason, the mentor and/or the newcomer wish to replace a mentor, this can be done by the Entry Service.

Before an applicant is announced as newcomer, or receive the Letter of Recommendation – in the case of foreign applicants – he/she will meet in person with the Entry Service together with the chosen mentors for an informal talk.

### **Step 3: Being announced as newcomer**

- 10) After the informal talk with the Entry Service and mentors, the applicant will be announced as newcomer to the community for feedback by the Entry Service. Foreign applicants will be announced upon return with the Entry Visa.
- 11) Any Constructive feedback will be forwarded to the mentors – of the applicant in question – for processing. The mentors will discuss the feedback with the applicant, determine the validity of it, and see if a solution can be found if necessary
- 12) If the mentors of that applicant, together with the Entry Service, decide that the Constructive feedback from the community is valid and the person should not be admitted to Auroville at this time, the Entry Service will rescind the administrative process. The applicant will be informed in writing as well as in person, with reasons explained.
- 13) At any time during the Newcomer Period, if all the three (3) mentors believe that the applicant is not ready for Auroville, they will inform the Entry Service who will rescind the administrative process.
- 14) If all the three (3) mentors do not agree amongst themselves that the applicant is ready for Auroville, then the topic is discussed among five (5) mentors – selected at random from the larger Mentor Pool by the Entry Service – who will come to a conclusion through consensus or majority. The applicant would then be informed in writing as well as in person, with reasons explained.
- 15) Alternatively, the mentors, together with the Entry Service, can decide that the applicant is better suited for another category to join Auroville and will recommend the same to the applicant. The Entry Service will then guide the applicant through the relevant administrative process.

### **Step 4: Newcomer Period**

- 16) Although the Newcomer Provisional Period is meant to last one (1) year, it can be extended for as long as the newcomer feels is necessary. When the newcomer feels ready, the newcomer would approach the Entry Service, with the support of the newcomer's mentors, to go through the administrative process to become Aurovilian. In some cases, the Newcomer Period can be shorter than one (1) year.
- 17) The Newcomer Period is meant for the Newcomer to discover Auroville by finding an area of work in Auroville and familiarize themselves with the community in all aspects.
- 18) In the case of foreign newcomers, the possible extensions on the Entry Visa will be explained by the Entry Service.
- 19) A newcomer is encouraged to remain in Auroville throughout the full Newcomer Period, in order to experience all aspects of life in Auroville. In case a newcomer leaves Auroville during the Newcomer Period for less than 3 months, the application will be paused and start again upon the newcomer's return. Newcomers

leaving for more than 3 months may be asked to restart their administrative process, to be decided on a case by case basis by the mentors and the Entry Service.

- 20) The mentors who will accompany the newcomer through the Newcomer Period will make sure there is ample interaction between the newcomer and themselves. The newcomers are encouraged to meet with their mentors often, discuss Auroville realities and anything that may come up within the Newcomer Period. The mentors are not meant to judge the newcomer's sincerity but to offer guidance, support, friendship and contact with the community.
- 21) Constructive feedback received during the Newcomer Period will be reviewed by the newcomer's mentors. The mentors, together with the Entry Service, have the responsibility to share all feedback with the newcomer and see if any problem can be solved in order to allow the newcomer to integrate better. In case of conflict, the Conflict Resolution Policy may be used as a guideline.
- 22) The Entry Service will organize as often as feasible, an interactive gathering for newcomers and Aurovilians, along with the Mentor Pool.

### **Step 5: Being announced as Aurovilian**

- 23) At the end of the first year, upon feeling ready and with the unanimous support of his mentors, the newcomer will approach the Entry Service, which will announce the Newcomer to the community as Aurovilian.
- 24) The Entry Service will then recommend to the Secretary of the Auroville Foundation that the newcomer's name be entered into the Register of Residents, via the Working Committee.
- 25) If there is any constructive feedback from the community, the same will be forwarded to the mentors for processing. The mentors will discuss the feedback with the applicant, determine the validity of it, and see if a solution can be found if necessary
- 26) In case of larger issues, involving substance abuse, violence of any kind etc., the mentors and the Entry Service may accept or reject the newcomer as Aurovilian, or may extend the Newcomer Period, which will be communicated to the newcomer by writing as well as in person.
- 27) If the mentors of that newcomer, together with the Entry Service, decide that the feedback from the community is valid and the person should not be admitted to Auroville at this time, the Entry Service will rescind the administrative process. The newcomer will be informed in writing as well as in person, with reasons explained.
- 28) A newcomer who has been asked to leave may re-apply to become newcomer after a period of time that has been agreed upon case by case by the Entry Service and the mentors.
- 29) A newcomer who has not been accepted as Aurovilian can be asked by the mentors to join Auroville in a category better suited to that newcomer, which will then be processed by the Entry Service.

### **Recommendations to the newcomer:**

**(Rather than making things compulsory, we would like to make these recommendations a living reality through the process itself.)**

- 1) A newcomer is encouraged to contribute to Auroville by taking up regular work that is meaningful to the growth and realization of Auroville in accordance with The Mother's guidelines.
- 2) A newcomer is encouraged to become familiar with the spiritual aims and ideals of Auroville and to thus further understand of the vision of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.
- 3) A newcomer is encouraged to become familiar with the different aspects of Auroville, by joining the "Aspiration program" and other such courses, participating in collective activities, open community meetings and other gatherings. The Entry Service will provide the newcomer with all such information in the form of a booklet or online.
- 4) Newcomers should be willing to sustain themselves as well as their family, with dependence on community funds only exceptionally.
- 5) A newcomer being responsible for obtaining housing within Auroville, will discuss the matter with the Housing Service, while keeping the Entry Service informed about the housing situation.
- 6) As English is the common language for collective communication in Auroville and Tamil is the language of Tamil Nadu, a newcomer is encouraged to acquire basic communication skills in English and Tamil.
- 7) Newcomers are encouraged to make an effort to understand and respect the culture and customs of Tamil Nadu and India.
- 8) Children of newcomers are encouraged to attend Auroville schools, for better integration, unless the newcomer feels that the education a particular child needs is not available in Auroville.
- 9) During the Newcomer Period, a newcomer can start an undertaking – be it a service, a commercial unit or an independent project – only with special permission of the FAMC.
- 10) The newcomer will pay the administrative fee as specified in the Financial Policy for Newcomers.
- 11) Foreign nationals will deposit an amount equivalent to the costs of a return ticket to their home country. This money will be refunded either if the applicant wants to leave before the Newcomer Process is completed or on being accepted as Aurovilian.
- 12) Newcomers are encouraged to pay the monthly contributions to the community fund as per the current Auroville Contribution Policy.

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### **How do children of Aurovilians become Aurovilian?**

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- 1) The child/youth of Auroville, upon reaching the age of eighteen (18), contacts the Entry Service to inform, once he/she ready to join as an Aurovilian.

- 2) If the child/youth has lived in Auroville for a minimum of two (2) years and once the Application Form is completed and submitted, the Entry Service will announce the applicant as Aurovilian to the community.
- 3) If there is no Constructive feedback, the young Aurovilian's name will be recommended to the Secretary to be entered in the Register of Residents.
- 4) In case of Constructive feedback, this will be processed by five (5) Mentors chosen at random from the Mentor Pool by the Entry Service.

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### **Re-joining Auroville – Returning Aurovilians**

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- 1) A former Aurovilian, who left Auroville, and who wishes to come back can apply to become Returning Aurovilian. This applies to only those who have stayed outside for a period smaller than period of stay inside Auroville. However, for all others, the Entry Service together with the Mentors, may decide to shorten the Newcomer period.
- 2) A former Auroville Student/child of Aurovilian, who applies to become Aurovilian and who has lived in Auroville for at least five (5) consecutive years at any time prior to the date of leaving Auroville can apply to become Returning Aurovilian.
- 3) The Entry Service will receive all those aspiring to return to Auroville and direct them to the Welcome Talk.
- 4) All relevant forms, including visa related information to foreign applicants, will be given by the Entry Service.
- 5) Once the Application Form is completed and submitted by appointment with the Entry Service, the applicant will be announced as Aurovilian to the community. If there is any constructive feedback, the same will be forwarded to five (5) mentors – chosen at random from the Mentor Pool by the Entry Service – for processing. The mentors will discuss the feedback with the Returning Aurovilian, and see if a solution can be found.
- 6) If the mentors, together with the Entry Service, decide that the feedback from the community is valid and the person should not be re-admitted to Auroville at this time, the Entry Service will stop the administrative process. The applicant will be informed in writing as well as in person, with reasons explained.
- 7) Alternatively, the mentors together with the Entry Service, can decide that the Returning Aurovilian is better suited for another category to join Auroville and will recommend the same to the applicant. The Entry Service will then guide the applicant through the relevant administrative process.