

ISKCON LAWBOOK

Contents

Detailed Contents	i
Preface	xvii
1 International Society for Krishna Consciousness	1
2 Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON	3
3 Governing Body Commission	7
4 ISKCON Ministries	29
5 ISKCON Spiritual Leadership	41
6 ISKCON Spiritual Masters (Dīkṣā & Śikṣa-Gurus)	59
7 Discipleship in ISKCON	71
8 ISKCON Members	79
9 Āśramas (Spiritual Orders) in ISKCON	95
10 ISKCON Temples and Affiliates	101
11 ISKCON Immovable Properties	109
12 Temple Worship and Deity Worship	119
13 Education	125
14 Saṅkīrtana – Book Distribution	127
15 Congregational Development	131
16 Prasādam Distribution	137
17 Justice	139
18 Fund Development and Life Patron Membership	141
19 Devotee Health and Welfare	143
20 Farm Communities	147
21 International Projects	149
22 Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Gaura-pūṇimā Festival	155
23 ISKCON Related Organizations	159
Appendices	163

Detailed Contents

Preface	i
1 International Society for Krishna Consciousness	1
1.1 Definition	1
1.2 Principles: The Seven Purposes of ISKCON.....	1
2 Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON	3

2.1	Definition	3
2.2	Principles	3
2.2.1	The Significance of Śrīla Prabhupāda to ISKCON.....	3
2.2.2	Recognition of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Position as the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON.....	4
2.3	Regulations	4
2.3.1	Use of Title	4
2.3.2	Shrines and Memorials	4
2.3.2.1	Samādhi Mandirs at Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma and Śrī Māyāpur-dhāma.....	5
2.3.3	Plaques	5
3	Governing Body Commission	7
3.1	GBC Body	7
3.1.1.	Definition	7
3.1.2	Principles.....	7
3.1.3	Powers	7
3.1.4	Duties	8
3.1.4.1	Appointment of Ministers	8
3.1.4.2	Establishing Standards of Conduct	8
3.1.4.3	GBC Annual Donations and Pledges	8
3.1.4.4	Trademarks	8
3.1.4.5	GBC Press.....	8
3.1.4.6	Other Regulations.....	9
3.1.5	ISKCON Mission Statements	10
3.1.5.1.	Delineation and Publishing of Statements of Mission.....	10
3.1.5.1.1.	Statement of Mission (ISKCON Statement of Aim).....	10
3.1.5.1.2.	Supporting Objective.....	10
3.1.5.1.3.	Progressive Goals.....	10
3.1.5.1.4	Vital Tasks.....	10
3.1.5.2	Zonal Secretary and Statements of Mission	11
3.1.5.2.1	Regional Secretary and Statements of Mission	11
3.1.5.2.2	Temple President and Statements of Mission.....	11
3.2	Executive Committee of the GBC Body.....	11
3.2.1	Definitions	11
3.2.2.	Duties.....	12
3.2.2.1.	Executive Committee.....	12
3.2.2.2.	Executive Committee Continental Representatives.....	12
3.2.2.3	GBC Chairman	13
3.3	GBC Standing Committees	14
3.3.1	Definition	14
3.3.2	Powers	14
3.3.3	Duties	15
3.3.4	Individual Standing Committees.....	15
3.3.4.1	Kṣetra Committees	15
3.3.4.1.1	Definition	15
3.3.4.1.2	Regulations	17
3.3.4.2.	Other Standing Committees	17
3.3.4.2.1	The Philosophical Committee	17
3.3.4.2.2	Bhaktivedanta Memorial Committee	18
3.3.4.2.3	Executors Committee.....	18
3.3.4.2.4	Sannyāsa Committee.....	18
3.3.4.2.5	Interfaith Commission	18
3.3.4.2.6.	Others	19
3.4	GBC Geographic Area Committees	19
3.4.1	GBC Continental Committees	19
3.4.1.1	Definition.....	19
3.4.1.2	Duties	19
3.4.1.3	Regulations.....	19
3.4.2	GBC Divisional Councils	20
3.4.2.1	Definitions.....	20
3.4.2.2	Regulations.....	20

3.5	GBC Members.....	20
3.5.1	Definition	20
3.5.2	Principles.....	20
3.5.3	Standards.....	21
3.5.3.1	Standard for Sādhana and Spiritual Practices.....	21
3.5.3.2	Standard of Personal Behavior and Character.....	21
3.5.3.3	Disqualifications.....	21
3.5.4	General Duties	21
3.5.4.1	In Relation to the GBC Body	22
3.5.4.2	In Relation to International Projects.....	22
3.5.4.3	In Relation to Other GBC Zonal Secretaries	22
3.5.5	Categories of GBC Members.....	22
3.5.5.1	GBC Zonal Secretaries.....	22
3.5.5.1.1	Definition	22
3.5.5.1.2	Powers.....	23
3.5.5.1.3	Duties.....	23
3.5.5.1.3.1	Sādhana and Temple Programs	23
3.5.5.1.3.2	Book Distribution and Preaching	23
3.5.5.1.3.3	Congregational Preaching	23
3.5.5.1.3.4	Recovering “Blooped” Devotees.....	24
3.5.5.1.3.5	Oath of Loyalty by Temple Presidents.....	24
3.5.5.1.3.6	Cooperation with the Local Leader in Preaching.....	24
3.5.5.1.3.7	In Relation to Temple Presidents	24
3.5.5.1.3.8	In Relation to Initiating Gurus	24
3.5.5.1.3.9	Child Protection Concerns.....	25
3.5.5.1.4	Guidelines for Evaluating GBC Zonal Secretary	25
3.5.5.2	Candidates for GBC	25
3.5.5.2.1	Definition	25
3.5.5.2.2	Regulations	25
3.5.5.2.2.1	Appointment	25
3.5.5.2.3	Duties.....	26
3.5.5.2.4	Powers.....	26
3.5.5.3	Emeritus GBC.....	26
3.5.5.3.1	Definition	26
3.5.5.3.2	Role.....	27
3.5.5.4	GBC Deputies.....	27
3.5.5.4.1	Definition	27
3.5.5.4.2	Duties.....	27
3.5.5.4.3	Functions.....	27
4	ISKCON Ministries	29
4.1	Definition	29
4.2	General Duties	29
4.3	Guidelines	30
4.3.1	Preaching Vision and Goals for ISKCON in Relation to ISKCON Ministries	30
4.3.1.1	Goal and Strategy for Qualified Teachers	30
4.3.1.2	Goal and Strategy for Education Oriented Ministries	30
4.3.1.3	Goal and Strategy for Sevā-Oriented Iṣṭa-goṣṭhi.....	31
4.3.1.4	Goal and Strategy for Training All Committed Devotees.....	31
4.3.1.5	Goal and Strategy for Bhakti-śāstrī Implementation.....	31
4.3.1.6	Goal and Strategy for ISKCON Temples as Centers of Learning	32
4.4	Individual ISKCON Ministries	33
4.4.1	Ministry of Emergencies.....	33
4.4.2	Ministry of Justice.....	33
4.4.2.1	Definition.....	33
4.4.2.2	Duties of the Minister of Justice.....	33
4.4.2.3	Procedures for Resolution of Disputes	33
4.4.2.3.1	Investigation of Complaints	33
4.4.2.3.2	Mediation Services.....	33
4.4.2.3.3	Arbitration Services.....	34

4.4.2.4	Prevention of Development of Complaints and Disputes	34
4.4.2.4.1	Complaint Registry Services	34
4.4.2.4.2	Prevention Registry	34
4.4.2.4.3	Publishing Services	34
4.4.2.4.4	Other Provisions	34
4.4.3	Ministry of Communications	35
4.4.4	Ministry of Finance and Management	35
4.4.4.1	Duties	35
4.4.4.2	ISKCON Resource Manual	36
4.4.4.3	ISKCON Central Secretariat	36
4.4.4.3.1	Definition	36
4.4.4.3.2	Duties	36
4.4.4.4	ISKCON Foundation Training Centers	37
4.4.5	Ministry of Fund Development and Life Patron Membership	37
4.4.5.1	Duties and Purposes	37
4.4.6	Ministry of Health and Welfare	38
4.4.6.1	Duties	38
4.4.7	ISKCON Youth Ministry	38
4.4.7.1	Duties	38
4.4.7.2	Powers	38
4.4.7.3	Youth Members	38
4.4.8	Women's Ministry	39
4.4.8.1	Duties	39
4.4.9	Other Ministries	39
5	ISKCON Spiritual Leadership	41
5.1	Definition	41
5.2	Standards of Behavior	41
5.2.1	Spiritual Practices	41
5.2.2	Active Assistance to the GBC Body	41
5.2.3	Leadership Positions	41
5.2.4	Financial Dealings	42
5.2.5	Disqualifications	42
5.3	Duties	42
5.3.1	Regarding Preaching	42
5.3.2	Correcting Spiritual Deficiencies in Temples	42
5.4	Regulations	43
5.4.1	Legal Affairs	43
5.4.2	Oath of Loyalty	43
5.4.2.1	Statement of Oath	43
5.4.2.2	Procedure for Taking Oaths	43
5.4.2.3	Oath Required for Leadership Eligibility	44
5.5	Discipline and Conduct of ISKCON Leaders	44
5.5.1	Leave of Absence	44
5.5.2	Resignation	44
5.5.3	Censure	45
5.5.3.1	Transgressions Leading to Censure	45
5.5.3.1.1	Misconduct and Indiscipline	45
5.5.3.2	Improper Discharge and Neglect of Duty,	45
5.5.3.2.2	Misuse of Funds and Gross Mismanagement	45
5.5.3.2.3	Spiritual Discrepancy	45
5.5.3.3	Procedure	45
5.5.4	Probation	46
5.5.4.1	Rectification Program	46
5.5.4.2	Period of Probation	46
5.5.5	Suspension	46
5.5.5.1	Procedure	46
5.5.5.2	Terms of Suspension	46
5.5.5.3	Rectification Program	47
5.5.5.4	Period of Suspension	47
5.5.6	Removal	47
5.6	Standards and Duties of Spiritual Leaders	47

5.6.1	Regional Secretaries.....	47
5.6.1.1	Definition.....	47
5.6.1.2	Regional Secretary's Duties	48
5.6.1.2.1	In relation to Zonal Secretary.....	48
5.6.1.2.2	In relation to Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival.....	48
5.6.2	Presidents of Temples and Preaching Centers.....	48
5.6.2.1	Appointment of Temple President	48
5.6.2.2	Standards of Personal Behavior.....	48
5.6.2.2.1	Spiritual Standards.....	48
5.6.2.2.2	Standards of Service.....	49
5.6.2.3	Principles	49
5.6.2.3.1	Desirable Qualities of an Ideal Temple President	49
5.6.2.4	Powers.....	49
5.6.2.5	Duties to	50
5.6.2.5.1	The Temple Deities, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the GBC Body and the Initiating Spiritual Masters	50
5.6.2.5.2	The GBC Body.....	50
5.6.2.5.3	Administrative Bodies under the GBC.....	50
5.6.2.5.4	The Local GBC Member	50
5.6.2.5.5	Initiating Spiritual Masters.....	51
5.6.2.5.6	Temple Resident Devotees.....	51
5.6.2.5.6.1	Sadhana and Temple Programs	51
5.6.2.5.6.2	Engagement.....	51
5.6.2.5.6.3	Care	51
5.6.2.5.6.4	Guru-Disciple Relationships	52
5.6.2.5.6.5	Evaluation of all Initiated Devotees	52
5.6.2.5.6.6	Following Local Laws	52
5.6.2.5.6.7	Discipline and Conduct of Temple Devotees.....	52
5.6.2.5.6.8	Removal of a Devotee from a Temple.....	53
5.6.2.5.7	Congregational Devotees.....	53
5.6.2.5.7.1	Facilitating the Preaching of the Congregational Devotees.....	53
5.6.2.5.7.2	Suspension of Congregational Members	53
5.6.2.5.8	Guests and Life Patron Members	54
5.6.2.5.9	The Opposite Gender	54
5.6.2.5.10	Dealings With His Own Family Affairs (If Grihastha).....	54
5.6.2.5.11	The Local Community	55
5.6.2.5.12	"Blooped" Devotees	55
5.6.2.5.13	Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival	55
5.6.2.6	Regulations.....	55
5.6.2.6.1	Financial Management.....	55
5.6.2.6.1.1	Receiving Restricted Donations	56
5.6.2.6.1.1.1	Acceptable Conditions	57
5.6.2.6.1.1.2	Unacceptable Conditions	57
5.6.2.6.2	Management and Administration	57
5.6.2.6.3	Book Distribution.....	57
6	ISKCON Spiritual Masters (Dīkṣā & Śikṣa-Gurus)	59
6.1	Principles.....	59
6.1.1	Śrīla Prabhupāda's Desire for Continuing the Disciplic Succession.....	59
6.2	Qualifications of Gurus in ISKCON	59
6.2.1	Mandatory Qualifications.....	59
6.2.2	Discretionary Qualifications.....	60
6.3	Eligibility of Devotee to Be Guru in ISKCON	60
6.3.1	All Devotee's Initiations From ISKCON Gurus	60
6.3.2	No One Can Give Dīkṣā While Guru is Present.....	60
6.3.3	Requirement for Consent of Mantra Guru.....	61
6.4	Regulations	61
6.4.1	Procedure for Authorizing Dīkṣā and Śikṣa-Gurus	61
6.4.1.1	Endorsement by an Area Council.....	61
6.4.1.1.1	Composition of Council	61

6.4.1.1.2	Principles of Evaluation.....	61
6.4.1.1.3	Council Integrity Maintained.....	61
6.4.1.2	Provision for “No Objection” Letters.....	61
6.4.1.3	Names Sent to All GBC Members.....	62
6.4.1.3.1	Letter of Nomination to GBC Corresponding Secretary.....	62
6.4.1.3.2	Corresponding Secretary Verifies and Distributes.....	62
6.4.1.4	Three GBC Objections Veto Candidate.....	62
6.4.1.5	Completion of Authorizing Procedure.....	62
6.4.1.5.1	Absence of Three Letters of Non-approval.....	62
6.4.1.5.2	Presence of Three Letters of Non-approval.....	62
6.4.1.5.3	Corresponding Secretary Monitors and Informs.....	63
6.4.2	Vows of Guru.....	63
6.4.3	Standards of Conduct for Gurus in ISKCON.....	63
6.4.3.1	General Standards.....	63
6.4.3.2	Standards in Relation to the GBC Body.....	64
6.4.3.3	Standards in Relation to GBC Zonal Secretaries.....	64
6.4.3.4	Standards in Relation to ISKCON Spiritual Authorities.....	64
6.4.3.5	Standards in Relation to a Temple.....	65
6.4.4	Monitoring of Gurus by the GBC.....	65
6.4.4.1	Annual Reports.....	65
6.4.4.2	Emergency Reports.....	65
6.4.5	Sanctioning of Gurus by the GBC.....	66
6.4.5.1	Warning (or Censure).....	66
6.4.5.2	Probation.....	66
6.4.5.3	Suspension.....	66
6.4.5.4	Removal.....	66
6.4.6	Renunciation of Guru Responsibilities.....	66
6.4.7	Specifically Outlawed Doctrines and Practices.....	67
6.4.7.1	“Zonal-Ācārya” System.....	67
6.4.7.2	“Posthumous Ṛtvik” Doctrine.....	67
6.4.8	Worship and Etiquette.....	67
6.4.8.1	Ceremonies.....	67
6.4.8.1.1	Guru-pūjā.....	67
6.4.8.1.2	Vyāsa-pūjā.....	67
6.4.8.2	Restricted Titles.....	67
6.4.8.3	Photograph on Altar.....	67
6.4.8.4	Seat in Temple Room.....	68
6.4.8.5	Guru Under Suspension.....	68
6.4.8.5.1	No Public Worship.....	68
6.4.8.5.2	Disciples Offering Āratī.....	68
6.4.8.5.3	Disciples Offering Bhoga.....	68
6.4.8.5.4	Disciples Offering Obeisances.....	68
6.4.8.6	Mūrtis of Gurus Inside the Temple Room.....	68
6.5	Guidelines.....	68
6.5.1	Rejection of a Fallen “Guru”.....	68
6.5.1.1	When a Fallen Guru May Be Rejected.....	68
6.5.1.2	When a Fallen Guru Must Be Rejected.....	69
6.5.1.2.1	Hopelessly Entangled in Sense Gratification.....	69
6.5.1.2.2	Takes on Demoniic Qualities.....	69
6.5.1.3	When Not to Reject a Fallen Guru.....	69
6.5.1.4	When a Suspended Guru May Be Rejected.....	69
6.5.1.5	“Guru Āśraya” for Guidance.....	69
6.6	The Śikṣa-Guru.....	69
6.6.1	Definition.....	69
6.6.2	Procedure to be Followed to be Recognized as a Formal Śikṣa-Guru.....	70
7	Discipleship in ISKCON	71
7.1	Right of Devotees to Choose their Guru.....	71
7.1.1	Rights of ISKCON Members to Worship their Gurus.....	71
7.1.2	Right to Accept Instruction and Initiation.....	71
7.1.3	Right to Take Association from Any Approved Guru.....	71
7.1.4	Right to Become an “Aspirant for Shelter and Initiation”.....	71

7.2	Responsibility of Candidate for Initiation	72
7.2.1	First (Harināma) Initiation	72
7.2.1.1	Qualifications for First Initiation.....	72
7.2.1.1.1	One Year Preparatory Period	72
7.2.1.1.2	First Six-month Period	72
7.2.1.1.3	Second Six-month Period	72
7.2.1.1.4	Devotees Residing Within Temple Communities	73
7.2.1.1.5	Devotees Residing Outside of Temple Communities.....	73
7.2.1.1.6	Pass Examination	73
7.2.1.2	Change of Prospective Guru	73
7.2.1.3	Procedure of Formal Recommendation.....	74
7.2.1.3.1	Guru Receives Recommendation in Writing	74
7.2.1.3.2	Contents of Recommendation.....	74
7.2.1.3.3	Recommender Contacts Previous Authorities	74
7.2.1.3.4	Devotees Residing In Temple Communities	74
7.2.1.3.5	Devotees Residing Away from Temple Communities	75
7.2.1.4	Vows of Disciple	75
7.2.2	Second, or Brahminical, Initiation.....	75
7.2.2.1	Qualification for Second Initiation	75
7.2.2.1.1	One-year Wait Between First and Second Initiation	75
7.2.2.1.2	Two-year Wait for Those Who Fall Severely.....	75
7.2.2.1.3	Examination Option of Initiating Guru	75
7.2.2.2	Procedure for Formal Recommendation	76
7.2.2.2.1	Guru Receives Recommendation in Writing	76
7.2.2.2.2	Contents of Letter of Recommendation	76
7.2.2.2.3	Recommender Contacts Previous Authorities	76
7.2.2.3	Restoration of Brahminical Status	76
7.2.4	Initiation Only from Approved Gurus.....	77
7.2.4.1	Violators.....	77
7.2.4.1.1	First Initiation Outside	77
7.2.4.1.2	Other Initiations Outside.....	77
7.2.4.2	Prior Initiation by Non-Bona Fide Gurus.....	77
7.2.5	Śrīla Prabhupāda's Disciple by First Initiation	77
7.2.6	Reinitiation	77
7.3	Guidelines	78
7.3.1	Unauthorized "Initiation" Ceremonies.....	78
8	ISKCON Members	79
8.1	Principles.....	79
8.1.1	Faith in ISKCON's GBC Body	79
8.1.2	Regarding Local Laws.....	79
8.1.3	Preaching Krishna Consciousness As It Is.....	79
8.1.4	Standing of Members.....	79
8.1.4.1	Standards for Devotees In Good Standing.....	79
8.1.4.2	Principles for Determining Who Is "In Good Standing"	79
8.2	Duties	80
8.2.1	Loyalty to ISKCON and Śrīla Prabhupāda	80
8.2.1.1	Seeking Instruction Outside ISKCON Improperly	80
8.2.1.2	Prohibition to Lead Anyone Away from ISKCON.....	80
8.2.1.3	Initiation Regulation	80
8.2.1.4	Initiated ISKCON Members Taking Further Initiation Outside of iskcon	80
8.2.1.5	Resident Devotees Normally Initiated in ISKCON	81
8.2.1.6	Reasonable Warnings of a Spiritual Authority's Deviation.....	81
8.2.1.7	Association with Non-ISKCON Vaiṣṇavas and Sādhus	81
8.2.1.8	Avoiding Rasika Literature.....	82
8.2.2	Support and Adjust to GBC Decisions	82
8.3	Categories of ISKCON Members	82
8.3.1	Temple-dependent Resident Members.....	82
8.3.1.1	Definition.....	82
8.3.1.2	Duties	83
8.3.1.3	Regulations.....	83

8.3.1.3.1	Standards of Service.....	83
8.3.1.3.2	Change of Temples for Temple Resident Devotees	83
8.3.1.3.2.1	Both Temple Presidents Should Agree	83
8.3.1.3.2.2	Permission is Necessary To Serve in India	84
8.3.1.3.2.3	Devotees should not be encouraged to Abandon Prescribed Temple Duties.....	84
8.3.1.3.3	Child Protection Concerns	84
8.3.1.3.4	Written Agreement Between the Temple and the Resident ..	84
8.3.1.4	Facilities.....	84
8.3.1.4.1	For All Members.....	84
8.3.1.4.2	For Married Families, Additionally.....	85
8.3.1.5	Financial Standards	85
8.3.2	Non-dependent Temple Resident Members	85
8.4	Disciplinary Remedial Measures	86
8.4.1	Censure.....	86
8.4.1.1	Definition.....	86
8.4.1.2	Procedure.....	86
8.4.1.3	Reasons for Censuring.....	86
8.4.1.3.1	Misconduct and Indiscipline	86
8.4.1.3.2	Improper Discharge and Neglect of Duty, and Misuse of Funds.....	86
8.4.1.3.3	Spiritual Discrepancy	87
8.4.2	Probation.....	87
8.4.2.1	Procedure and Conditions.....	87
8.4.2.2	Rectification Programs	87
8.4.3	Divestiture or Disqualification	88
8.4.3.1	Definition.....	88
8.4.3.2	Divesting Authority.....	88
8.4.4	Dissociation	88
8.4.5	Expulsion (Excommunication).....	88
8.4.6	Principles of Clemency and Repentance	89
8.4.7	Reinstatement of Apostates	89
8.4.7.1	Conditions of Reinstatement	89
8.4.7.2	Procedure of Reinstatement.....	89
8.4.8	Additional Codes for Determining Spiritual Offenses	90
8.4.8.1	Offenses Against Founder-Ācārya and Guru-paramparā.....	90
8.4.8.2	Offenses Against Unity of ISKCON and Guru-paramparā.....	90
8.4.8.3	Offense of Accepting Re-initiation and Renouncing Once Bona Fide Guru	90
8.4.8.4	Offense of Collaborating in Guru-paramparā Offenses	91
8.4.8.5	Offenses to Sacred Objects.....	91
8.4.8.6	Culpable Falsehood before the GBC.....	91
8.4.8.7	Envious Acts Against ISKCON	91
8.4.8.8	Offenses Against Spiritual Authorities	91
8.4.8.8.1	Violent Offenses Against Spiritual Authorities	91
8.4.8.8.2	Teaching Unauthorized Doctrines.....	92
8.4.8.8.3	Stirring Up Hostilities against Spiritual Authorities	92
8.4.8.9	Misuse of Spiritual Authority and Unauthorized Assumption	92
8.4.8.9.1	To Give or Receive Initiation Without Sanction	92
8.4.8.9.2	To Transgress ISKCON Law Regarding Guru-Disciple Dealings, Sannyasa Initiation Without Permission	92
8.4.8.9.3	To Make Illegitimate Profit from Devotional Service	92
8.4.8.9.4	To Unjustly Remove Another from Spiritual Authority	93
8.4.8.9.5	Culpable Negligence	93
8.4.8.10	Offenses Against Kṛṣṇa Conscious Obligations	93
8.4.8.10.1	Violation of Obligations Imposed by a Remedial Measure	93
8.4.8.10.2	Spiritual Authority Not Maintaining a Regulative Principle	93
8.4.8.11	Other Offenses	93
8.4.9	Grievances Regarding Management	93
8.5	General Guidelines.....	94
8.5.1	Prohibition of Chocolate	94

Including to Give

8.5.2	AIDS Test.....	94
8.5.3	Holding ISKCON Assets In One's Private Name	94
9	Āśramas (Spiritual Orders) in ISKCON	95
9.1	Sannyāsa-Āśrama.....	95
9.1.1	Principles.....	95
9.1.2	Regulations	95
9.1.2.1	Application for Sannyāsa Initiation.....	95
9.1.2.2	Sannyāsa Recommendations.....	96
9.1.2.3	Reinstatement Procedures for a Devotee Who Has Fallen From His Sannyāsa Vows.....	96
9.1.3	Duties.....	97
9.1.4	Guidelines	97
9.1.4.1	Sannyāsa Reinitiation.....	97
9.2	Vanaprastha-Āśrama	97
9.2.1	Eligibility	97
9.3	Gṛhastha-Āśrama(Householder)	98
9.3.1	Giving Fifty Percent(50%) of One's Income to ISKCON	98
9.3.1.1	Definition.....	98
9.3.2	Polygamy	98
9.3.3	Gṛhastha Coordinator.....	98
9.3.3.1	Duties	98
9.4	Brahmacārī-Āśrama	99
9.5	Āśrama Considerations For Vaiṣṇavis	99
10	ISKCON Temples and Affiliates	101
10.1	Standards for ISKCON Temples	101
10.2	Regulations for ISKCON Temples.....	101
10.2.1	Unrelated Businesses	101
10.2.2	Priority in Preaching	101
10.2.3	Financial Contract Parameters.....	102
10.2.4	Bank Account Signers.....	102
10.2.5	Temple Residents' Cultivation of Parents	102
10.2.6	Sastra Degrees	102
10.2.7	Firearms.....	102
10.2.8	Debts to the BBT.....	102
10.2.9	Calendar.....	102
10.3	Guidelines for ISKCON Temples.....	103
10.3.1	Foreign Visa Sponsorship	103
10.3.1.1	Explanation.....	103
10.3.1.2	General Guidelines.....	103
10.3.1.3	Guideline in Relation to Going to the USA	103
10.3.2	Orienting Income-Generating Activities towards Preaching.....	103
10.4	Affiliates of ISKCON.....	104
10.4.1	Definition	104
10.4.2	Purpose.....	104
10.4.3	Recommendations for Opening ISKCON Affiliated Centers	104
10.4.3.1	ISKCON Affiliate Using Property as Public Place of Worship Regulation	104
10.4.4	Procedure and System of Affiliation	105
10.4.4.1	Empowerment for Creating Affiliation Agreement	105
10.4.4.2	Criteria for Affiliation	105
10.4.4.3	Qualifications of Affiliate Officers	105
10.4.4.4	Affiliate Conditions Regarding Real Property and Assets.....	105
10.4.4.5	Affiliate Conditions Regarding Religious Doctrine	105
10.4.4.6	GBC Body Reserves Rights in Regard to Affiliates	106
10.4.4.7	Affiliate Standards Regarding Reports and Records.....	106
10.4.4.8	Legal Obligations for Affiliates	106
10.4.4.9	Affiliate Receives License to Use the Name of ISKCON under Conditions.....	106
10.4.4.10	Corrective Measures	107

10.4.4.11 Limit of GBC Control.....	107
10.4.4.12 Property Rules Compliance for ISKCON Affiliation	107
11 ISKCON Immovable Properties	109
11.1 General Provisions	109
11.1.1 Definition of an ISKCON Property.....	109
11.1.2 Definition of an ISKCON Property with Deities.....	109
11.1.3 Property Trustees Definition.....	109
11.1.4 Executors Committee Definition	109
11.1.5 Definition of “Property Trustee Principle”	109
11.2. Regulations	110
11.2.1 Registering Real Properties	110
11.2.2 Encumbering or Alienating ISKCON Properties.....	110
11.2.3 Mortgaging Properties with Installed Deities	110
11.2.4 Regulations for Alienating Properties with Deities.....	110
11.2.5 Regulations for Maintaining Records of Real Properties.....	111
11.2.6 Non-Adherence to Property Registration Regulations	112
11.2.7 Registering Properties in a Non-ISKCON Affiliate’s Name	112
11.2.8 Exemptions and Additions to ISKCON Property Law.....	112
11.3 Property Trustees.....	114
11.3.1 Duties.....	114
11.3.2 Powers	115
11.3.3 Procedures of Appointment.....	115
11.3.4 Regulations	116
11.4 The Executors Committee	116
11.4.1 Duties	116
11.4.2 Powers	116
11.4.3 Agenda of Annual Meeting of the Executors Committee	117
11.5 Guidelines	117
11.5.1 Debts.....	117
12 Temple Worship and Deity Worship	119
12.1 deity Worship and Altar Regulations	119
12.1.1 Standards of Deity Worship	119
12.1.2 Protection of Deities	119
12.1.3 Pictures of the Spiritual Master and Parampara Acaryas’	119
12.1.4 Vaisnava Marriage Ceremonies Before the Deities	120
12.1.5 Prema-dhvani Prayers	120
12.1.6 Regulations for Worship of Śrīla Prabhupāda	120
12.2 Guidelines	120
12.2.1 Worship of Demigods as Vaiṣṇavas	120
12.2.2 Renting Space for other Groups’ Religious Functions	121
12.2.3 Sponsoring Professional Bhāgavata-kathā Reciters.....	121
12.2.4 Sthāpaka-śāstra	122
12.2.5 Regulations Regarding Vaiṣṇava Calendar	122
13 Education	125
13.1 Board Of Education	125
13.1.1 Definition	125
13.1.2 Powers	125
13.1.3 Duties.....	125
13.1.4 Regulations	126
13.1.4.1 Membership.....	126
13.1.4.2 Duties of the Chairman of the Board	126
13.1.4.3 Gurukula Education	126
13.1.4.4 Children’s Books.....	126
14 Saṅkīrtana – Book Distribution	127
14.1 Significance	127
14.2 Regulations	127
14.2.1 Regarding Awards and Recognition.....	128
14.2.2 Regarding Book Distribution Techniques	128
14.2.3 Regarding Traveling Saṅkīrtana	129

14.2.4	Regarding Śrīla Prabhupāda Marathon	129
14.2.5	Seminars Conducted by the Ministry for Book Distribution	129
14.3	Guidelines	129
15	Congregational Development	131
15.1	Significance	131
15.2	Guidelines	131
15.2.1	Encouraging the Congregation: The Sikṣa Ceremony	131
15.2.1.1	Accepting the Sacred Order of Lord Caitanya (Sat-saṅgī, or Śrāddhāvān)	132
15.2.1.2	Kṛṣṇa (or Gaurāṅga) Sevaka	132
15.2.1.3	Kṛṣṇa (or Gaurāṅga) Sādhaka	132
15.2.1.4	Śrīla Prabhupāda Āśraya	132
15.2.1.5	Śrī Guru Caraṇa Āśraya	132
15.2.2	Annual Doubling of the Congregation	132
15.3	ISKCON Leaders' Duties In Regard to Congregational Preaching	133
15.3.1	GBC Zonal Secretary	133
15.3.2	Responsibility of ISKCON Leaders to Conduct Congregational Preaching	133
15.4	Regulations	134
15.4.1	Initiation of Congregational Devotees	134
15.4.2	The Congregational Preaching Directorate	134
15.4.2.1	Duties of a Congregational Preaching Branch Director	134
15.4.2.2	Location	134
15.4.2.3	Cooperation with the Temple President	135
16	Prasādam Distribution	137
16.1	Hare Kṛṣṇa Food For Life	137
16.1.1	GBC Recognition of Hare Kṛṣṇa Food For Life Program	137
16.1.2	Duties	137
16.1.3	Regulations	137
17	Justice	139
17.1	Appealing a Decision	139
17.1.1	The Principle	139
17.1.2	Procedure	139
18	Fund Development and Life Patron Membership	141
18.1	General Regulations	141
18.2	General Guidelines	141
19	Devotee Health and Welfare	143
19.1	The Principle of Welfare of Each ISKCON Member	143
19.2	Protection of Women	143
19.2.1	Principles	143
19.2.2	Sannyāsa Widows	143
19.3	Child Protection	144
20	Farm Communities	147
20.1	Regulations	147
21	International Projects	149
21.1	Regulations	149
21.1.1	Board of Directors	149
21.2	Obligation of GBC Members In Relation to International Projects	149
21.3	Special Projects in India	149
21.3.1	Śrī Māyāpur Project	150
21.3.1.1	Construction of the Temple of Vedic Planetarium	150
21.3.1.1.1	Significance	150
21.3.1.1.2	Guidelines	150
21.3.1.2	Śrī Māyāpur Project Development Committee	150
21.3.1.2.1	Definition	150
21.3.1.2.2	Duties	150

21.3.1.2.3 Powers	151
21.3.1.2.4 Regulations	152
21.3.1.2.5 Māyāpur Project Fund Raising Committee	152
21.3.1.2.5.1 Definition.....	152
21.3.1.2.5.2 Duties	152
21.3.1.2.6 Research institute	152
21.3.2 Vṛndāvana International Project.....	153
21.3.2.1 Focus of the Vṛndāvana Project	153
21.3.2.2 Save Vṛndāvana Campaign.....	153
21.3.3 Jagannātha Purī Bhaktivedanta Āśrama.....	153
22 Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Gaura-pūrṇimā Festival	155
22.1 Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee	155
22.1.1 Definition	155
22.1.2 Membership of the Festival Committee.....	155
22.1.3 Duties	155
22.1.3.1 General Duties.....	155
22.1.3.2 Regarding Finances	156
22.1.3.3 Regarding Management.....	156
22.1.4 Guidelines	156
22.2 General Regulations.....	157
22.3 General Guidelines.....	157
23 ISKCON Related Organizations	159
23.1 General Regulations	159
23.2 The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust	159
23.2.1 General Regulations	159
23.2.2 Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vyāsa-pūjā Book	160
23.2.3 Back to Godhead Magazine.....	161
23.3 Bhaktivedanta Institute	161
23.4 Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Trust (MVT).....	161
23.5 ISKCON Television, Inc.....	161
Appendices	163
1 Miscellaneous.....	163
2 Position Papers	163
2.1 "On My Order" Understood	163
2.1.1 Notes	165
2.2 Devotees Initiating Before Their Guru's Physical Departure	172
2.2.1 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's View	172
2.2.1.1 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's Instructions	172
2.2.2 Vedic View.....	173
2.2.3 Śrīla Prabhupāda's Views	174
2.2.4 Notes	176
2.3 ISKCON's Position Statement on the Environment	176
2.4 Official Position Statement on ISKCON's Relationship with Hinduism	177
3 Sample Recommendation Forms for Initiations.....	178
3.1 First Initiation	178
3.2 Second Initiation.....	179
4 Sample Letter of Censure	180

Preface

This volume marks the revival of a resolution that directs the GBC to publish an annual up-to-date corpus of the Society's laws. It is also a significant step on the way to the drafting of a constitution for ISKCON, which Śrīla Prabhupāda asked the GBC to put together in the early seventies. Finally, this volume will serve the GBC, ISKCON Leaders and all devotees as a useful source book of information in the practical affairs of executing devotional service within our institution. It is the hope of the GBC Body that the Vaisnavas in Śrīla Prabhupāda's great movement will be satisfied with this compilation of ISKCON Law.

There may be laws that are obsolete, redundant, contradictory or poorly composed. And there are undoubtedly areas that our laws do not cover sufficiently. But in general, these laws are well thought out, each one representing many hours of deliberation on the part of many of the most experienced devotees in ISKCON. To get us from this corpus to a constitution, the help of all interested devotees throughout the movement is welcome.

—H.H. Suhotra Swami (GBC 2nd Vice Chairman 1997-98)

Readers may put their comments, suggestions and questions to the 1997-98 Chair of the GBC, His Grace Madhusevita Das, at his address:

His Grace Madhusevita Das
Villaggio Hare Kṛṣṇa
Da Medolago Strada Per Terno D'Isola
Chignolo D'Isola
Bergamo
ITALY

Fax: [39](35)4940705, 490945

E-mail: madhu.sevita.acbsp@com.bbt.se

or to the editor of this volume,

H.H. Jayapatākā Swami
P.O. Box 16108
Circus Avenue
Calcutta 700017
INDIA

Fax: +91-3472-45238

E-mail: Jayapataka.swami@com.bbt.se

1

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

1.1 Definition

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is the spiritual institution founded by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda in July 1966 as a continuation of the *Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya sampradāya*. ISKCON was personally directed by its Founder-Ācārya Śrīla Prabhupāda until his departure on November 14, 1977. According to Śrīla Prabhupāda's will, ISKCON continued thereafter under the ultimate managing authority of the Governing Body Commission (GBC).

Accordingly, ISKCON is that institution founded by Śrīla Prabhupāda and originally directed by him, which continues to be directed after his departure by the GBC.

1.2 Principles: The Seven Purposes of ISKCON

1. To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life, and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.
2. To propagate consciousness of Kṛṣṇa as it is revealed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
3. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity, and thus develop the idea within the members and humanity at large that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Kṛṣṇa).
4. To teach and encourage the *sāṅkīrtana* movement of congregational chanting of the holy name of God as revealed in the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
5. To erect for the members, and for society at large, a holy place of transcendental pastimes, dedicated to the Personality of Kṛṣṇa.
6. To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler and more natural way of life.
7. With a view towards achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, magazines, books, and other writings.

2

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON

2.1 Definition

To fulfill the previous ācārya's desire for a united worldwide preaching organization to expand Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness as a distinct branch of the *Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava-sampradāya*. Therefore he is the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON.

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON. This means that he is ISKCON's link with the *Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya sampradāya*, that his writings, oral teachings, and exemplary actions remain the permanent and irreplaceable basis for all subsequent teachings and activities of ISKCON. He is and will remain always the instructing spiritual master of all devotees in ISKCON. (Law Revision committee 9.6.90)

2.2 Principles

2.2.1 The Significance of Śrīla Prabhupāda to ISKCON

1. Śrīla Prabhupāda is the foundational *śikṣa-guru* for all ISKCON devotees because he has realized and presented the teachings of the previous ācāryas of the *Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya-sampradāya* appropriately for the modern age.
2. Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions are the essential teachings for every ISKCON devotee.
3. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are the embodiment of his teachings and should be accepted as the standard by all future generations of ISKCON.
4. Śrīla Prabhupāda should be worshipped daily by every ISKCON member.
5. Every ISKCON spiritual master is responsible to guide his disciples to follow Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions.

6. As Founder-Ācārya, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave directions for management, principles of cooperation, and other practical guidelines which form the basis and inspiration for ISKCON's policies.
7. Śrīla Prabhupāda established the Governing Body Commission to execute his will, following the order of the previous ācāryas.(94)

2.2.2 Recognition of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Position as the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON

The position of Śrīla Prabhupāda as Founder-Ācārya shall be recognized in ISKCON through the use of the titles "Founder-Ācārya," "Founder," and "Prabhupāda," and through the establishment of shrines in places of Śrīla Prabhupāda's pastimes, memorials and plaques to his memory.

2.3 Regulations

2.3.1 Use of Title

1. The titles "Founder-Ācārya," "Founder," and "Prabhupāda" can be used only in reference to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda's full name shall be displayed along with his titles "Founder-Ācārya" and "Prabhupāda" on all printed materials, signs, letterheads, and in connection with all ISKCON projects.(83)
2. The title "Prabhupāda" should be included on all printed materials, signs, etc. and only be used for Śrīla Prabhupāda.(83)
3. All ISKCON publications such as books, magazines, newsletters, leaflets, fliers, invitations, etc., should clearly display the full name and titles of Śrīla Prabhupāda including Founder-Ācārya, Prabhupāda, and His Divine Grace, for example:

"His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness".(96)

2.3.2 Shrines and Memorials

1. Places of Śrīla Prabhupāda's pastimes shall be maintained as permanent shrines, and his paraphernalia shall be collected and preserved in memorials to him.
2. The responsibility for maintaining the worship of Śrīla Prabhupāda shall be borne by ISKCON as a whole and distributed among the temples and initiated devotees of the Society.
3. There shall be a committee named "The Bhaktivedanta Swami Memorial Committee" whose members are appointed by the GBC. It will determine where and how Śrīla Prabhupāda's rooms and paraphernalia shall be preserved.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's rooms in the following places shall be maintained as permanent shrines in remembrance of his pastimes:

1. Vṛndāvana-dhāma
2. Māyāpur-dhāma
3. Bombay
4. Los Angeles
5. Honolulu
6. Atlanta
7. Detroit

Śrīla Prabhupāda's original grass hut (*Bhajana Kuṭira*) at Śrī Māyāpur shall be a Bhaktivedanta Swami memorial shrine.(81)

The *Sannyāsa* Ministry and the Vṛndāvana Temple Management shall take joint responsibility for maintaining the worship in Śrīla Prabhupāda's rooms at Rādhā-Dāmodara temple.(90)

2.3.2.1 Samādhi Mandirs at Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma and Śrī Māyāpur-dhāma

ISKCON shall establish and perpetually maintain worship of Śrīla Prabhupāda in his Samādhi Mandir at Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma and his Puṣpa-Samādhi Mandir at Śrī Māyāpur-dhāma.

Temples or zones shall pledge to maintain the worship of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Samādhi in Vṛndāvana according to the established system.

2.3.3 Plaques

1. All ISKCON temples and prominent buildings which do not already have Śrīla Prabhupāda's name inscribed upon them, shall install plaques stating Śrīla Prabhupāda's full name and his position as the Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
2. This shall also apply to prominent buildings of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, Bhaktivedanta Institute and any other society founded by Śrīla Prabhupāda or affiliated to ISKCON.
3. The Ministry of Communications shall give a standard format and wording for these plaques upon request.(95)

3

Governing Body Commission

3.1 GBC Body

3.1.1. Definition

1. The Governing Body Commission (GBC) is the ultimate managing authority of the entire International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
2. The GBC has been established by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to represent him in carrying out the responsibility of managing the International Society for Krishna Consciousness ISKCON of which he is the Founder-Ācārya and supreme authority.

3.1.2 Principles

The GBC accepts as its life and soul, the divine instructions of His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda and recognizes that it is completely dependent on his mercy in all respects. The GBC has no other function or purpose other than to execute the instructions so kindly given by His Divine Grace and to preserve and spread his teachings to the world in their pure form.

3.1.3 Powers

1. The GBC, as a collective body has been authorized by His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda to make all necessary arrangements for carrying out the responsibilities of management, including but not limited to delegating authority, managing resources, setting objectives, making plans, calling for reports, evaluating results, training others, maintaining spiritual standards and defining the sphere of influence and responsibilities of the various GBC members as well as other devotees.(75)
2. The GBC may, either directly or through a deputed representative, request a report from any ISKCON member, who shall be duty-bound to cooperate with this request.(81)
3. The GBC Body may authorize one of its Commissioners to go to any GBC member to get a report from him on his activities. The GBC member must then co-operate and provide the GBC Body with his report. If a GBC member whose behavior is in question does not co-operate, the GBC Body must immediately be informed.(75)

3.1.4 Duties

3.1.4.1 Appointment of Ministers

A Minister is appointed by the GBC Body for each Statement of Mission. His prime duties are to become expert in his field and to act as a professor by establishing the curriculum of his discipline and disseminating this knowledge throughout ISKCON.

3.1.4.2 Establishing Standards of Conduct

The GBC Body is responsible for establishing the proper standards of conduct for its members and others to whom it delegates authority. If an individual to whom the GBC Body has delegated authority fails to perform his mandated duties or acts in a manner contrary to ISKCON Law or principle, then the GBC Body is responsible to correct or remove the deviant.

If it is demonstrated that the GBC Body did not function in a timely manner to rectify one of its representatives, and as a result, an individual ISKCON temple or project suffers inordinately, then the GBC Body is to consider how to help the local temple or project overcome its difficulties, but the GBC Body cannot be held liable in any way.(93)

3.1.4.3 GBC Annual Donations and Pledges

For the efficient functioning of the GBC Executive Committee and GBC Communications Office, the GBC shall assess what donation amount is proportionally appropriate to meet the annual expenses of the GBC. It is necessary that contributions are promptly given. Those temples which give delayed contributions create an additional burden which they should compensate for, by giving an additional donation equivalent to the rate between 10 to 20 percent per annum for temples that do not contribute within the 30th June due date. In addition, the GBC Body reaffirms its previous resolution that if any pledged amounts remain unpaid by the beginning of the subsequent year's GBC meeting, the responsible GBC member shall be subject to censure by the GBC Body at that meeting.

3.1.4.4 Trademarks

1. The GBC Body is the ultimate authority all over the world for controlling the use of the names "ISKCON", "International Society For Krishna Consciousness", "Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement" and other names related to the ISKCON Movement. It shall obtain legal authority to withdraw the right to use such names, under appropriate circumstances.(82)
2. The GBC Body is the full and final authority to rescind the right to use or operate the above mentioned names, and anyone using ISKCON names without permission shall be legally stopped from doing so.(82)

3.1.4.5 GBC Press

A publishing house shall be created under the auspices of the ISKCON GBC Body to print books produced by the ISKCON Monitors which are of interest to the management and functioning of ISKCON. This publishing house shall be called ISKCON GBC Press. Its main work will be to print books produced by the GBC Monitors, Ministers, individual GBC members, and special committees, books which are accepted by the GBC Body as useful information for the Society thereby distributing and expanding the knowledge of their various fields. The ISKCON GBC Press will be situated in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, and will be managed under the GBC Body.

The emphasis will be on producing the titles inexpensively to make them accessible to the temples and devotees.

All books published by the GBC Press shall contain front matter clearly setting forth the authority the work holds for ISKCON, including standards and practices normative for all devotees or temples, philosophical positions answering pertinent questions for ISKCON members, useful guidelines, Ministerial and other practical training material and other categories of authority and obligations for implementation.

The Executive Committee of the GBC Body shall assign each proposed work to a Kṣetra Committee or other GBC subcommittee to establish a system of conducting a final review, editing and approval of the proposed works. This committee shall also write the required front matter mentioned above.(92)

3.1.4.6 Other regulations

1. Committees may be formed from time to time by the GBC Body as needed for certain purposes and may be disbanded by the GBC Body.(75)
2. At its annual meeting, the GBC Body shall approve goals and objectives for its Zonal Secretaries and Ministers to be accomplished during the upcoming year.(86)
3. The GBC Body shall divide the world into geographic zones, each being assigned to one or more "Zonal Secretaries" such territory, regardless of whether there is an ISKCON center there, falls into a zone.
4. Before changing a GBC Member's zone, the GBC Body must first consult with the local leaders in the zone concerned.(86) The procedures given in the GBC Rules of Order are to be followed for changing a GBC member's zone.
5. The GBC Body shall publish philosophical position papers on important topics which require clarification and direction from the GBC Body.(84)
6. A central file shall be kept on all of Śrīla Prabhupāda's initiated devotees for purposes of public relations and for reclaiming devotees who have fallen into *māyā* and for engaging devotees in Śrīla Prabhupāda's devotional service. Other disciple records shall be centrally maintained on a zonal basis.
7. Any ISKCON Ministry, organization, individual, or project (including those legally independent of ISKCON) receiving funding from ISKCON or the BBT, including mandatory assessments, taxes, and so forth, from temples and/or zones, is required to provide financial reports clearly delineating assets, liabilities, expenditures, and income. Such reports are to be submitted to the GBC Body through its Corresponding Secretary at least forty-five days prior to the beginning of the Annual Meeting, and shall be distributed to all GBC members and made available to other concerned ISKCON officials upon request. The Corresponding Secretary shall compile a list of ISKCON Ministries, organizations, individuals, or projects to whom this Law applies, and annually notify them of their report deadline at least 60 days in advance. Anyone submitting a request to the GBC Body or ISKCON for funding should, along with their appeal, include their budget and previous financial reports for information. (90)

3.1.5 ISKCON Mission Statements

3.1.5.1. Delineation and publishing of Statements of Mission

The GBC shall delineate and publish ISKCON's Statements of Mission (Statements of Aims), supporting objectives, progressive goals and vital tasks as defined below:

3.1.5.1.1. Statement of Mission (ISKCON Statement of Aim)

A Statement of Mission is the ultimate goal or long-range mission of ISKCON for a specific primary area of devotional service. Statements of Mission are established and modified by the GBC Body. All members of ISKCON and leaders shall cooperate together and work to systematically achieve ISKCON's Statements of Mission.

3.1.5.1.2. Supporting Objective

In order to realize the broad Statement of Mission there are essential, integral and supporting objectives that must first be achieved. These are called the "Supporting Objectives". They are by definition more specific and detailed than the Statement of Mission. They deal with a sub-topic within a Statement of Mission. Supporting Objectives for ISKCON worldwide are established and modified by the GBC Body and by lower levels of administration for their respective areas of responsibility following the worldwide supporting objectives, but not limited to them.

3.1.5.1.3. Progressive Goals

In order to work towards progressively realizing ISKCON's Statements of Mission and Supporting Objectives, each zone (or temple) will adopt intermediary stages or goals called Progressive Goals. Unlike both Mission Statements and Supporting Objectives, Progressive Goals are time-bound, quantitative, specific, and localized. The respective authorities for each level of administration within a zone should establish and update their own Progressive Goals based on their areas of responsibility. As a general principle, one-year and five-year goals shall be set. The GBC Body for the world, and a Continental Committee for a continent, may also adopt Progressive Goals if practical.(92)

3.1.5.1.4. Vital Tasks

In order to achieve a Progressive Goal, there may be many lesser tasks that need to be achieved. These are very specific and limited in nature and are the lowest definable stage towards achieving the Statement of Mission. The respective administrative authorities shall assign tasks for the areas and leaders.

3.1.5.2. Zonal Secretary and Statements of Mission

A Zonal Secretary's duties in relation to Statements of Mission are to motivate and organize his zone's progress in each Statement of Mission area. He is also to present that progress in an Annual Report for each Statement of Mission. He is to identify one-year and five-year Progressive Goals for his zone and temples in consultation and cooperation with his Zonal Council, Regional Secretaries, and Temple Presidents, and submit the same to the respective Ministers.

3.1.5.2.1. Regional Secretary and Statements of Mission

A Regional Secretary's duties in relation to Statements of Mission shall be to assist the Zonal Secretary to motivate and organize the region's progress in each Statement of Mission area.

3.1.5.2.2. Temple President and Statements of Mission

A Temple President's duties in relation to Statements of Mission shall be to be directly responsible to realize the Statement of Mission and Progressive Goals in his temple. He is to motivate the devotees and organize his temple's progress in each Statement of Mission area. He is also to present the progress in an Annual Report for each Statement of Mission for his temple to his Zonal Secretary.

Temple Presidents shall submit annual reports to the Global Secretariat and to each GBC Member (Zonal Secretary and/or Minister) with the following information:

1. The details requested for each temple.
2. Summary of the zonal progress in relation to the specific Statement of Mission.
3. Proposals related to the Statement of Mission.
4. New or revised continental, zonal or local Progressive Goals for the Statement of Mission; including information on the progress achieved for each Statement of Mission/Aim.
5. The Corresponding Secretary, in conjunction with the concerned Minister, shall standardize the report forms or information so as to facilitate data entry and data reporting of annual progress of the entire ISKCON Movement. The Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible to see that informative progress reports from available data are generated by computer as far as practical.

3.2 Executive Committee of the GBC Body**3.2.1 Definitions**

The GBC Executive Committee consists of the annually elected officers: Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen, and Secretary.

3.2.2. Duties**3.2.2.1. Executive Committee**

1. With the Chairman of the GBC and the other Executive Committee members relieved of overseeing any specific area of the world, they can concentrate on global issues.
2. Every year, to meet in Māyāpur and, reviewing previous reports, divide the practical workload amongst themselves for a more even distribution. This could include: correspondence, forwarding matters to appropriate persons, personally going to resolve problems which could not be resolved otherwise, follow-up, overseeing the implementation of resolutions, functioning of GBC Office, etc.
3. At the end of the year, to make a review of the previous year's workload and make suggestions for handling the work better, propose new amendments to the system, etc.

4. The yearly index of GBC resolutions and suggestions be published in proper booklet form and distributed yearly to the Society as soon as possible by the annual Secretary.(79)
5. A booklet of the ISKCON Constitution and the “Laws of ISKCON” shall be printed, with amendments added, yearly, at Śrī Māyāpur BBT, under the GBC Parliamentarians’ supervision, and that funds shall be allotted for this. Each GBC and Temple President shall get one copy, extras for a fee.(80)
6. If an ISKCON member hears rumors of fall downs of a senior devotee like a GBC or sannyāsī, rather than spread it further, he is to write to the GBC Chairman who, as one of his duties shall provide information.(77)
7. The Executive Committee shall mediate between GBC ministers and zonal secretaries if there is any conflict of interest in executing GBC directions.(86)
8. The Executive Committee is responsible to make sure that the resolutions passed by the GBC Body are carried out by ISKCON members during the year.
9. In addition the Chairman of the Executive Committee shall keep a written log or record of the actions the Executive Committee and its agents take during its year of office. This shall be handed over to the new Executive Committee at an explanatory briefing session so the new officers are up to date with their immediate service requirements.(96)

3.2.2.2. Executive Committee Continental Representatives

Øb_”ùb_øCEù_ç_Àsù_ç_ÿÿÿ\Øb_RJ→_ç_____iG_jsJ_pÜb_pØb_ãŠC_Üb_ñØb_à@_h
 Øb_”ùb_øCEù_ç_Àsù_ç_ÿÿÿ\Øb_RJ→_ç_____iG_jsJ_pÜb_pØb_ãŠC_Üb_ñØb_à@_h

ntative” for the year, commencing from Gaura-pūrṇimā. For areas that do not have Continental Committees, the GBC Members from the area will meet at Māyāpur and select a Continental Representative for the year.

These Representatives will be chosen for

1. North America
2. South America
3. Europe-CIS-North Africa-West Africa
4. India-Middle East-East Africa-South Africa, and
5. The Pacific Rim.

In addition, a *sannyāsī* will be assigned to each area to assist.

1. To directly receive notifications of all problems referred to the Executive Committee from within his continent.
2. To send to the Chairman of the GBC a regular report every three months on all significant issues which were brought to his attention from within his area.
3. To ensure that the normal procedures for resolving a problem have been attempted (going through the Temple President, Zonal Secretary, etc.) or are not applicable.
4. To consult with the GBC Chairman and/or Executive Committee if any issue occurs that he feels he cannot or should not deal with by himself.
5. To serve as a voting member of the Executive Committee on any issues concerning only his area, and to be consulted before any decision affecting his area is taken.
6. To engage the assigned *sannyāsī* and/or Candidates for GBC assigned to his continent for the year in assisting him in resolving emergencies as required.

Issues that can be passed on by the Executive Committee Continental Representative are:

- a. Those that have global consequences or consequences reaching beyond his continent;
- b. Is an emergencies on the level that he cannot comfortably deal with;
- c. Issues that intimately deal with a GBC member or ISKCON *Guru*;
- d. Issues that deal with the workings of the GBC Body.

3.2.2.3 GBC Chairman

The Chairman should himself not directly oversee any area of the world, other than his designated area of GBC responsibilities. He should work with his Executive Committee and the Executive Committee Continental Representative in the following ways:

1. Delegate appropriate issues arising from a continent to the concerned Continental Representative. Delegate issues related to a Ministry to the appropriate Minister to reply.

2. Receive, coordinate, and correspond about the regular reports sent to him by his Executive Officers and Continental Representatives, and other correspondence to the GBC Chairman.
3. Consult with a Continental Representative on any issue concerning the continent or as the Continental Representative feels necessary, and to take their vote and input on issues concerning their continent which are being considered by the Executive Committee.
4. Accept and deal with all issues passed up to him from the Continental Chairmen.
5. Follow up, after the initial notification by the past GBC Chairman, on all previously passed GBC resolutions.
6. Directly deal with issues of global consequence, or delegate to another member of the Executive Committee.
7. To discuss with other members of the Executive Committee on major issues of greater consequence, and get their help and input for resolving the problem.
8. Establish practical procedures to ensure that before matters are brought up to the Executive Committee the applicants have gone through the normal avenues for redressing the problems, to forward improperly submitted matters to appropriate persons, and to propose legislation in this regard as necessary.
9. To directly deal with emergencies requiring immediate attention due to their urgency. These shall be discussed with the Executive Committee as appropriate.
10. From time to time see that the other elected members of the Executive Committee are updated about the global issues which have surfaced and important continental issues.
11. To delegate an elected member of the Executive Committee (Vice-Chairman or Secretary) to deal with a problem which cannot be resolved by a Continental Chairman or *sannyāsī* and cannot wait until the annual GBC meeting.
12. To coordinate *sannyāsīs* to resolve problems as required.(93)

3.3 GBC Standing Committees

3.3.1 Definition

A Standing Committee is a Sub-committee created by the GBC Body which continues to exist until absolved. A Standing Committee can function as part of the GBC meetings as well as outside of GBC meetings during the year. Some Standing Committees are called Kṣetra Committees (see Kṣetra Committee Section for details), while other Standing Committees have delegated authority in a specific assigned area.

3.3.2 Powers

Standing committees have specific powers and responsibilities assigned by the GBC. These include the power:

1. to make decisions and recommendations on matters referred to it in a prescribed manner or directly by the GBC.
2. to act on behalf of the GBC in some area(s).

3.3.3 Duties

1. To submit a written report to the GBC before the annual GBC meeting at Māyāpur.(79)
2. To fulfill the Duties as prescribed for a Standing Committee under the GBC Rules of Order (See GBC Rules of Order for further information).

3.3.4 Individual Standing Committees

3.3.4.1 Kṣetra Committees

3.3.4.1.1. Definition

1. The GBC has Standing Committees, known as Kṣetra Committees which are comprised of the Ministers of the committee's topics, assigned GBC Members, and any other qualified devotees as the GBC deems necessary. The committees shall have a permanent chairman and permanent members.
2. The following Statements of Mission / ISKCON Statements of Aims are accepted (91-95):

Kṣetra Committee 1: Essential Preaching**1. Book Publication and Distribution**

To publish and distribute the books and periodicals of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his followers in all languages and distribute them in ever-increasing numbers and with ever-increasing effectiveness, so that an ever-growing collection of Kṛṣṇa conscious literature is enshrined in every household in the world.

2. Public Chanting and Festivals

To celebrate the congregational chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa by regularly organizing public chanting and joyous festivals in every city, town and village of the world.

3. Congregational Development

To bring to all homes in the world the continuing association of devotees and the regular practice of devotional activities.

4. Restaurants

To establish Kṛṣṇa-prasādam restaurants in every city and town and make them famous all over the world so that millions eat in them every day.

5. Food for Life

To establish massive free prasādam distribution programs all over the world so that all human beings are adequately fed and nourished with Kṛṣṇa-prasādam, reducing hunger as far as possible.

6. Prasādam Distribution**Kṣetra Committee 2: Specialized Preaching****1. Vedic Science**

To convince all people of the world of the errors of materialistic science and philosophies and to research, elucidate and teach God-centered science, based on bona fide Vedic knowledge.

2. Padayātrā

To bring the congregational chanting of the Holy Name to every town and village of the world through organized Padayātrā festivals.

3. Cultural Programs

To reveal Vedic culture as the universal and essential culture of all the world's peoples, and to supplant all mundane productions of literature, drama, music, and art with Kṛṣṇa conscious alternatives.

4. Youth Preaching**5. College Preaching****Kṣetra Committee 3: Education and Spiritual Development****1. Gurukula**

To provide children with a life-long devotional foundation and to progressively train them according to their natural propensities in occupational duties of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

2. Spiritual Standards

To establish and maintain in ISKCON and its members the high standards of Kṛṣṇa conscious understanding and practices taught by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

3. Adult Education

To convince receptive people all over the world to commit themselves to rendering devotional service, as taught by Śrīla Prabhupāda, under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master.

4. Training New Recruits

To teach new devotees, through proper Vaiṣṇava association and instruction, the philosophy and basic devotional practices of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Kṣetra Committee 4: Essential ISKCON Infrastructure for Preaching**1. Finance and Accounting**

To ensure that every ISKCON organization and program meets standards of excellence in handling fiscal matters.

2. Fund Raising

To establish systems and programs of fund-raising throughout the world to provide ISKCON with adequate funds to realize its goals.

3. Management and Administration

To ensure that the leadership of ISKCON is characterized by devotion to guru and Kṛṣṇa, spiritual purity, compassion, integrity, commitment, consistency, competency, accountability, and to ensure that the devotees and assets of ISKCON are appropriately engaged, protected and increased.

4. Communications

To win respect for and trust in the ISKCON in all nations and among all people of the world.

Kṣetra Committee 5: Holy Places and Communities

1. Deity Worship

To attract all peoples of the world to the personal service of the Lord, to engage them as devotees in that service, and train them in the principles and techniques of that service.

2. Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana

To develop and maintain, for devotees and society, Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana and other such holy places dedicated to the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

3. Spiritual Communities

4. Daiva-varṇāśrama Development

5. Cow-Protection

6. Self-sufficiency

To reform the economic and social structure of all communities in the world by demonstrating the God-centered culture that depends on the land and the cows.

7. Temples as places of pilgrimage [tīrthas]

Kṣetra Committee 6: International ISKCON

1. Justice Systems

2. Legal Affairs

3. Unity of ISKCON

4. Zonal Affairs

5. Constitutional Issues

3.3.4.1.2. Regulations

1. To submit a written report to the GBC before the annual GBC meeting at Māyāpur.(79)
2. To fulfill the duties as prescribed for a Standing Committee under the GBC Rules of Order (See GBC Rules of Order for further information).

3.3.4.2. Other Standing Committees

3.3.4.2.1. The Philosophical Committee

1. The Philosophical Committee is a resource available to ISKCON members.
2. Individual devotees and ISKCON entities (e.g., the GBC Body, Continental Committees, or International Temple Presidents) may approach the Philosophical Committee for the settlement of disputes on philosophical matters that arise within ISKCON. The Philosophical Committee will examine the issues and their implications, clarify what the areas of conflict are, and determine what is at stake. The Committee may then propose resolutions to the GBC Body. However, if the Philosophical Committee finds that a dispute simply concerns questions of correct practical application of philosophy, it will refer the matter to the local GBC secretary. ISKCON leaders may also request the Philosophical Committee to review publications which are perceived to be questionable.(96)
3. In addition (to its appointed members), the International GBC Chairman shall be an ex-officio member of the committee and serve as its Chairman.

3.3.4.2.2. Bhaktivedanta Memorial Committee

A Bhaktivedanta Memorial Committee shall determine where and how Prabhupāda's rooms and paraphernalia shall be preserved.(78)

3.3.4.2.3. Executors Committee

Executors Committee shall see that Śrīla Prabhupāda's will is being carried out.(78)

3.3.4.2.4. Sannyāsa Committee

A standing GBC sub-committee established to deal with sannyāsa matters.(96)

3.3.4.2.5. Interfaith Commission

An officially GBC-appointed Interfaith Commission with the specific purpose to present officially authorized ISKCON representatives for interreligious dialogue. These official representatives are authorized to speak on behalf of the ultimate managing authority, the GBC. This commission encourages the devotees in their taking initiative to speak on behalf of ISKCON in less official capacities.

This commission will be empowered to act as ISKCON's official voice and representation to the heads of all world religions and is empowered to engage other devotees in this service. Before publishing or issuing any major position statements, the commission will obtain the approval of the GBC Executive Officers.

The Commission will have different functions. It will act as a consultant for those who meet heads of religions; its members and their representatives will meet heads of religions; its members will appoint, assign and authorize official ISKCON representatives. Before a ISKCON representative is made official, the committee must to vote and approve him or her by majority vote. After each meeting with a major faith or its representative, the ISKCON representative will send a report to each member of the commission. These reports will be kept carefully by the commission. At the end of the year, the commission will make an official report to the GBC Body of its activity throughout the year. Among themselves, the committee members will decide how they will administrate their various functions throughout the year. If they are in doubt at any point about their decision-making, they will consult with the GBC Executive Committee officers for guidance.

The specific purpose of this commission is to present officially authorized ISKCON members to speak on behalf of the entire organization. This is our internal system for that.

3.3.4.2.6. Others

Other Standing Committees are:

1. ISKCON Board of Examinations (see Adult Education)
2. ISKCON Board of Education (see Primary and Secondary Education)
3. Sri Māyāpur Vṛndāvana Festival Committee (see International Projects)
4. Sri Māyāpur Project Development Committee (see Sri Māyāpur Project)
5. Justice Committee
6. Facilitators Committee
7. Child Protection Guidelines Committee
8. Funding Committee
9. Nominations Committee

3.4 GBC Geographic Area Committees

3.4.1 GBC Continental Committees

3.4.1.1. Definition

A GBC Continental Committee is a Committee comprised of all GBC Zonal Secretaries, ISKCON Leaders, and other senior devotees (that they decide can attend) who are assigned to or are having regular devotional service in that Continent.

3.4.1.2. Duties

GBC Continental Committees shall give their advice regarding a proposed zonal change in North America to the members of the North American GBC Committee at least two weeks in advance of that meeting, to assure careful consideration of such changes.(83)

3.4.1.3. Regulations

The scope of the GBC Continental Committee is to resolve issues of importance to the region on a cooperative or advisory basis, to make Vision and Strategies for advancing the objectives of Kṛṣṇa

Consciousness and to make recommendations and proposals to the GBC Body. Decisions of the Continental Committees should be followed in a cooperative spirit. However, for the Continental Committee's resolutions to be obligatory they must either be ratified by the annual GBC meeting at Māyāpur or have been specifically previously empowered in that regard by the GBC or if the Continental is considered a Divisional Council, in which case Divisional Council rules would also apply.(79)

3.4.2 GBC Divisional Councils

3.4.2.1. Definitions

1. GBC Divisional Councils form a distinct level of spiritual management of ISKCON. A GBC Divisional Council is assigned for a particular geographic area and shall be constituted of all Temple Presidents and Regional Secretaries and the GBC Zonal Secretary (if he wants to attend) within the region as well as resident *sannyāsīs* or other leading devotees as the council desires or as the local GBC recommends.
2. The GBC Divisional Council represents the interests of ISKCON, the GBC Zonal Secretary and the temples in a particular geographical area. Such councils may be continental, multi-national, national, or within a country, as is practical or existing. The councils should be within an area that enables them to meet frequently together. There may be more than one GBC Divisional Council in a Continental Committee's area.

3.4.2.2. Regulations

1. GBC Zonal Secretaries who have areas which have functioning GBC Divisional Councils shall declare them as so for the purpose of this ISKCON Law.
2. The purpose of the GBC Divisional Councils is to maximize the management in their regions, to relieve the GBC Zonal Secretaries from excessive management, and to assist the GBC Executive Committee and the GBC Emergency Task Force in resolving their problems.

3.5 GBC Members

3.5.1 Definition

The following shall be considered to be GBC Members: GBC Zonal Secretaries, GBC Ministers, Assistant GBC Members, Candidates for GBC, GBC Deputies and GBC Emeritii.

3.5.2. Principles

1. A GBC Member shall practically accept as one's life and soul the mission, purpose, special projects, and will of Śrīla Prabhupāda and accept the GBC, which is Śrīla Prabhupāda's representative.(81)
2. The individual members of the GBC Body do not have any inherent authority but rather derive their authority from the Governing Body Commission itself and ultimately from His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda. Their authority may be over a particular geographic area or over a particular function. Whichever area of responsibility be given to the various members, their primary responsibility is to the Society as a whole. Therefore a GBC member should not consider himself as the whole GBC, but as a member or commissioner, commissioned by the whole Governing Board.(75)
3. A GBC Member shall represent the GBC by performing the assignments allotted in accordance with GBC policy.(81)

3.5.3 Standards

3.5.3.1. Standard for Sādhana and Spiritual Practices

That a GBC Member must be an exemplary practicing devotee who follows daily *sādhana* and full morning program, demonstrably chants sixteen rounds, follows strictly the four regulative principles, regularly gives classes, and participates in temple festivals and *harināma* parties.(92)

A GBC Member must live in or near a Kṛṣṇa conscious temple community so as to regularly, on a daily basis, participate in devotional activities and associate with devotees.(92)

3.5.3.2. Standard of Personal Behavior and Character

A GBC should be exemplary in all respects in his behavior and character.(92)

1. A GBC member be an “*ācārya*” by teaching by personal example the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in its purity.(81)
2. No GBC can knowingly or unknowingly permit his men or himself to engage in illicit, illegal activities.(78)
3. GBC members should not speak in a derogatory way of other GBC members in public.(86)

3.5.3.3. Disqualifications

No devotee who has remarried after having divorced a devotee-spouse shall serve as a member of the GBC.

Exempt from this law are devotees who become divorced against their desire by the action of their spouses, or as a consequence of their spouses’ becoming committed non-devotees.

Provisionally exempt are devotees who became divorced prior to the effective date of this resolution, March 2, 1990.

3.5.4 General Duties

1. A GBC member must accept and carry out diligently and responsibly all GBC duties, including those specifically assigned.
2. No GBC member shall engage in illegal activities or allow those under his direction to do so, except under conditions where Kṛṣṇa consciousness itself is locally considered an illegal activity.(78)

3.5.4.1. In Relation to the GBC Body

1. To participate in the annual GBC meeting at Śrīdhāma Māyāpur before Gaura-pūrṇimā.(81)
2. To maintain at all times the confidentiality, integrity, and sanctity of the GBC proceedings and policy.(81)
3. To serve as an officer of the GBC and as a member of the GBC Committees and to participate in GBC *iṣṭa-goṣṭhis*, special meetings, etc., when duly called upon.(81)
4. To offer one’s realized viewpoint to the assembly of the GBC.(81)
5. Every GBC member should support the decisions of the GBC Body. He is free to express his opinion after first clearly presenting the will of GBC Body.(86)
6. GBC member shouldn’t indulge with non-GBC men in criticizing the GBC Body.

Every GBC member shall be required to submit annual reports in time to the GBC Body. A report shall be submitted in accordance with the format prescribed by the Corresponding Secretary and the Executive Committee. A member failing to submit an annual report in a timely manner shall be subject to censure by the GBC Body. Members should insure that their annual reports are submitted in time, even though they may possess an excused absence or tardiness for the annual meeting.(90)

3.5.4.2. In Relation to International Projects

If an aspect of the Śrī Māyāpur Development Project or any other International Project be assigned the individual GBC representative, he shall adopt those particular assignments as his personal responsibilities, no less than if they were an extension of his Zone or Ministry.

The constitution of the GBC includes, in defining the duties of the GBC members, their obligation to support Śrīla Prabhupāda’s International Priority Projects such as Śrīdhāma Māyāpur etc.(80)

3.5.4.3. In Relation to Other GBC Zonal Secretaries

No GBC member should enter into the zone of another GBC member on the plea of protecting or helping someone within that zone, without the approval of local GBC.(86)

3.5.5 Categories of GBC Members

3.5.5.1 GBC Zonal Secretaries

3.5.5.1.1. Definition

A Zonal Secretary is a member of the GBC Body appointed by the GBC Body to oversee ISKCON Temples and other ISKCON projects in a specific geographical area designated as a “zone”. He is overall responsible for the management and administration of a zone and is ultimately fully accountable to the GBC Body.(86)

3.5.5.1.2. Powers

1. The GBC Zonal Secretary, whether initiating or not, is the ultimate managerial authority within his zone, as the official representative of the GBC Body.
2. A GBC member can go to a center in his zone and inspect the accounts and if any unauthorized expenditures are being made he may take appropriate action to correct it.(75)
3. The GBC recognizes that as per Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions, GBC men may have even “thousands of secretaries”; individual GBC men may see the need for appointing assistants who will have greater responsibility than Temple Presidents, and who may be known as Regional Secretaries, etc.(79)

3.5.5.1.3. Duties

3.5.5.1.3.1 *Sādhana and Temple Programs*

All GBC Zonal Secretaries are responsible to see that all devotees in their zones attend the morning and evening programs, except when they have an alternative bona fide preaching engagement in the evening.(77)

3.5.5.1.3.2 *Book Distribution and Preaching*

1. GBC Zonal Secretaries and all Temple Presidents shall ensure that their respective zones and temples will distribute books on *saṅkīrtana* on a regular basis, making a sincere attempt to implement Śrīla Prabhupāda’s formula that fifty percent (50%) of our income be used for book distribution and fifty percent (50%) be used for the temple expenses. The Temple Presidents should give a minimum of twenty five percent (25 %) of income for book distribution.
2. To inspire the leaders and help to organize college preaching programs and other forms of congregational preaching and to involve the Temple Presidents and devotees in that preaching work.
3. To go out in the preaching field in each of his temples to insure proper preaching techniques are being utilized.(77)

3.5.5.1.3.3 *Congregational Preaching*

1. Each GBC Zonal Secretary shall allocate the responsibility for preaching to the congregation in the different geographic areas of his zone to temples or Congregational Preaching Directorates to insure maximum effectiveness in congregational preaching and development.
2. If a *nāma-haṭṭa* center upgrades to become an ISKCON temple or otherwise a temple is established in a Congregational Preaching Directorate area, then naturally the Zonal Secretary will make new arrangements to re-allocate the respective geographic responsibilities for preaching to the congregation in the affected areas.(93)

For those geographic areas which fall beyond the capacity or desire of ISKCON temples to supervise, promote, and expand the congregational preaching, the local GBC Zonal Secretary(s) and the Zonal Council (if any) can appoint a responsible devotee in good standing to be a “Director” of a “Congregational Preaching Directorate” or “Branch” of ISKCON who can lead a team of preachers to systematically cultivate, preach to, and expand the congregational preaching in a specified area.

3. To oversee that every temple maintains a program of sending a monthly letter from a devotee to his parents, if his parents are at least approachable.(77)

3.5.5.1.3.4 *Recovering “Blooped” Devotees*

1. Each GBC member is responsible to try to recover the devotees living in his zone who are not fully active in devotional service.(94)
2. Each GBC member shall maintain a master record of the devotees in his zone.

3.5.5.1.3.5 Oath of Loyalty by Temple Presidents

To administer and insure that their Temple Presidents sign and take the oaths as requested by Śrīla Prabhupāda.(77)

3.5.5.1.3.6. Cooperation with the Local Leader in Preaching

To take permission from the local GBC Zonal Secretary or Temple President of another zone before sending a traveling party into their area.(77)

3.5.5.1.3.7 In Relation to Temple Presidents

To collect from each Temple President in his zone, if any, their monthly report, and verify that it contains an itemized account of income and expenditure, the preaching highlights including the number of books sold, and inventory of books.(75)

3.5.5.1.3.8 In Relation to Initiating Gurus

To submit a form annually to the Executive Committee indicating briefly the status of all approved ISKCON gurus normally residing, regularly preaching, or initiating in his zone. (The Executive Committee will assign each *guru* to a GBC member(s) for monitoring.) If any approved *guru* has: (a) taken reinitiation/shelter of a non-ISKCON *guru* or institution, (b) rejected ISKCON or Śrīla Prabhupāda; or, (c) undergone a change of service, of *āśrama*, or of living situation, which the local GBC member feels threatens to hamper the approved *guru's* ability to give guidance to or set a proper standard of conduct for disciples, then the GBC member's report shall, if possible, include a written statement from the approved *Guru* as to his intentions in regard to his disciples and his devotional service. If not possible, then it shall at least include a description of the approved *Guru's* intentions as best they can be discerned through the investigation of the GBC member. The report shall also contain any other information which would be of value to the GBC Body in determining the *guru's* status, as well as the recommendations of the local Temple Presidents, zonal councils, etc. The Executive Committee shall review the reports and take any necessary action.

3.5.5.1.3.9 Child Protection Concerns

Persons, who after an ISKCON investigation, are confirmed to be guilty of child abuse must report their status to the local Temple President upon their arrival in an ISKCON community. Also, it is the obligation of a Temple President to determine for every member joining his community, if the newcomer is a confirmed child abuser. The Temple President is then obliged to notify the local householders and GBC of the offender's presence.

The local GBC should be advised if a Temple President knowingly arranges for a confirmed child abuser to be supported by a temple, or live on temple property without first notifying the householder community as per ISKCON laws. The local GBC is to supervise the situation to be sure the Temple President follows the following GBC guidelines:

1. "In no case should a confirmed perpetrator remain in the local community unless the local ISKCON authorities obtain the written authorization of no less than three-quarter of the parents of children at the project or in the community.
2. The local government authorities and/or the ISKCON Board of Education will make the final determination of the appropriate degree of segregation. (1990-119.4)"
3. Every GBC make sure the temples presidents in his zone are made aware of this resolution and GBC guidelines.

3.5.5.1.4. Guidelines for evaluating GBC Zonal Secretary

That if a Temple President or local Temple Council thinks that an assigned GBC Zonal Secretary is not fulfilling the responsibilities of that position, he should communicate with the GBC Executive Committee.

3.5.5.2 Candidates for GBC

3.5.5.2.1 Definition

A Candidate for GBC is an official status which is preliminary to Assistant GBC. A candidate for GBC is given the opportunity to demonstrate that he does well in his assigned area for a specified length of time, in which case the GBC would consider him as Assistant GBC for that area.(92)

3.5.5.2.2 Regulations

3.5.5.2.2.1 Appointment

1. The Governing Body Commission may, at its discretion, appoint a senior ISKCON member in good standing to be a "Candidate for GBC" to fulfill a need for additional GBC presence for a specified geographical area or Ministry. Upon successful completion of the terms of appointment, the Candidate for GBC shall be considered at the plenary GBC meeting for the post of Assistant GBC.
2. Official Candidates for GBC shall be appointed by the Governing Body Commission by a simple majority vote.
3. It shall be required that a Candidate for GBC be under the supervision of a GBC member, group of members, or committee. They shall assist the Candidate for GBC as needed, and make reports on his progress and activities to the GBC Body or a committee assigned for this purpose.

3.5.5.2.3 Duties

There shall be specific duties given to the Candidate along with the appointment, which will vary according to individual circumstances, such as the following:

1. To establish permanent ISKCON centers or develop an undeveloped or underdeveloped part of the world as an active Kṛṣṇa conscious missionary.
2. To reside or remain in a particular area for a minimum total period of time or time per year.
3. To dedicate himself to preaching in a particular area or field.
4. To demonstrate his abilities and capacities successfully for a specified minimum period of time.
5. To provide an annual report to the GBC in approved format.
6. To improve deficiencies in some aspects of the person's character, attitude, knowledge, abilities, skills or behavior.

3.5.5.2.4 Powers

A Candidate for GBC is empowered by the GBC Body as deemed necessary to enable him to fulfill his duties. These powers may include:

1. Acting as an official representative of the GBC Body for the assigned area.
2. Having any or all of the general powers of a Zonal Secretary or Minister, as qualified under the "Supervision" section below.
3. Other special powers for fulfilling some special assignment or service as the GBC Body may deem appropriate.
4. Attendance at GBC plenary or committee meetings.

3.5.5.2.5 GBC Supervision

It shall be required that a Candidate for GBC be under the supervision of a GBC member, group of members, or committee. They shall assist the Candidate for GBC as needed, and make reports on his progress and activities to the GBC body or a committee assigned for this purpose.

3.5.5.3 Emeritus GBC

3.5.5.3.1 Definition

The GBC Body may award the title "Emeritus GBC" to retired GBC Members who have rendered distinguished service.

3.5.5.3.2 Role

The role of an Emeritus GBC is to:

- a. make himself available to all GBC members as a storehouse of knowledge and experience,
- b. be respected in ISKCON society as were the great sages in Vedic society,
- c. when requested, act in a non-managerial role by giving advice to the GBC member or members or GBC Deputies who have taken over his GBC responsibilities,
- d. participate in GBC meetings as a non-voting member if he should so choose,
- e. as a participant in GBC meetings, be afforded all privileges offered to an ordinary GBC Member.

3.5.5.4 GBC Deputies

3.5.5.4.1. Definition

In order to recruit some of the best non-GBC ISKCON members into the GBC decision making process that will help make the GBC more relevant to the needs of the Society while creating valuable training opportunities for these members, there shall be "GBC Deputies" appointed from ISKCON Leaders (Temple Presidents, Regional Secretaries, etc.) to assist the GBC Body in its global management of ISKCON in addition to their normal duties.

3.5.5.4.2. Duties

1. To attend the annual GBC meetings in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur,
2. To be appointed for a term of 3 years, reappointment is permitted,
3. To be assigned to the Kṣetra Committees, standing or other committees and to serve as regular voting members of the same,
4. To stay in communication during the year and continue to serve as committee members,
5. To do other things as requested by the GBC Body,
6. To review the previous year's GBC meeting minutes and report to the GBC Body on what has been achieved and is still requiring action,
7. To preview and refine proposals and cast a preliminary vote to expedite GBC voting and
8. to assist the collection of data for evaluating ISKCON performance.(97-404.1)

3.5.5.4.3. Functions

The GBC Rules of Order give details on GBC Deputy functioning.

4

ISKCON Ministries

4.1 Definition

A Minister is appointed by the GBC Body for each Statement of Mission. He is an expert in the educational, regulatory, developmental, and planning aspects of his field. He acts as a professor and establishes the curriculum of his discipline and disseminates this knowledge throughout ISKCON. A Ministry is usually headed by a Minister.

A Minister shall be appointed by the GBC Body for each Statement of Mission.

4.2 General Duties

1. To oversee a Statement of Mission or specific area as assigned by the GBC Body.

2. To educate Zonal Secretaries and ISKCON Leaders how to take practical steps towards achieving the Statement of Mission and Progressive Goals.
3. To advise, assist, and promote the realization of the Statement of Mission or coordinate others to do so.
4. To monitor ISKCON's progress in relation to his Ministerial area including the progress towards the stated Mission, its Supporting Objectives, and the Progressive Goals for the world.
5. To work through the regular ISKCON administrators, and to try to further motivate them to achieve the Statement of Mission.
6. To make annual and other progress reports as necessary on the respective Statement of Mission.
7. To make observations on each Zonal Secretary's progress reports, and otherwise make special progress reports or studies in regard to a zone or other area, as required.
8. To appoint staff members, assistants, and advisers (who are experts in the field), as needed.
9. To liaise in the appointment of Continental or National coordinators with the local bodies.
10. To become expert in his field, and to act as a professor.
11. To establish the curriculum of his discipline and disseminate this knowledge throughout ISKCON.
12. To provide the GBC Body with reports on their assigned activities which shall include financial details such as assets, liabilities, expenditures, and income. Such reports are to be submitted to the GBC Corresponding Secretary at least forty-five days prior to the beginning of the annual meeting, and shall be distributed to all GBC members and made available to other concerned ISKCON officials upon request.

4.3 Guidelines

4.3.1 Preaching Vision and Goals for ISKCON in Relation to ISKCON Ministries

The following is accepted by the GBC Body as the preaching vision and goals for ISKCON.

4.3.1.1 Goal and Strategy for Qualified Teachers

1. Background

In order to maintain our devotees in the preaching spirit, they need to continually be utilizing their brain to its capacity and providing them with a challenging and meaningful learning experience within Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

2. Goal

All ISKCON personnel who are teaching other devotees on any subject should obtain the ability and technique required to educate the students effectively.

3. Strategy

All ISKCON personnel who are teaching or intend to teach others on any subject should attend and pass the Teachers Training Course as soon as possible.

4. Action to be taken by

- a. All desirous of teaching.
- b. Teachers Training course organizers.

4.3.1.2 Goal and Strategy for Education Oriented Ministries

1. Background

The Book Distribution Minister reported great gains from his Book Distribution courses and trainers courses. It became evident that this should be the standard for all or most Ministries in ISKCON and that some more curriculums were urgently needed.

2. Goal

That every Ministry will have nicely developed curriculum and courses for imparting knowledge in their area of activity.

3. Strategy

Every Ministry shall submit the topics for which they need training courses to the Adult Education Minister who shall utilize his resources and work cooperatively to insure that high quality training manuals and courses are prepared for each Ministry. The Congregational Preaching Ministry is a top priority.

4. Action to be taken by each Minister, Kṣetra Committee, Adult Education Minister and VTE.

4.3.1.3 Goal and Strategy for Sevā-Oriented Iṣṭa-goṣṭhi

1. Background

Devotees need to discuss their services amongst others doing the same or similar services in order to share their experiences and realizations. This has proved very effective in book distribution and congregational preaching.

2. Goal

To enliven devotees and provide them positive inputs about how to improve their services and to improve the spiritual bonding amongst them with Lord Kṛṣṇa and devotional service in the center.

3. Strategy

The devotees engaged in the same activity in all fields should meet together and discuss their common service on a weekly basis (if not possible fortnightly or monthly). They should share their experiences, realizations, challenges and get input from others on how to overcome the difficulties. They encounter in this way, and they should improve their quality of service.

4. Action to be taken by GBC Zonal Secretaries, Temple Presidents, Department Heads, and general devotees.

4.3.1.4 Goal and Strategy for Training All Committed Devotees

1. Background

Many courses are and will increasingly be available in ISKCON.

To improve the quality, life and ability of the Temple Devotees and initiated or committed congregational devotees, training courses have proven to be highly successful.

2. Goal

That every committed devotee shall participate annually in some formal training program and obtain diplomas or certificates based on their performance.

3. Strategy

That every committed devotee should go through at least one course per year on a scheduled systematic basis.

4. Action to be taken by Temple Presidents, Congregational Preaching Directors and general devotees.

4.3.1.5 Goal and Strategy for Bhakti-śāstrī Implementation

1. Background

Utilizing the courses that Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us would enliven devotees and improve their self-esteem and ability to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness. These courses should be administered from all temples, but somehow they are not easily available.

2. Goal

That temple devotees, initiated congregations, and other congregational members who desire, should become *bhakti-śāstrī* degree holders.

3. Strategy

To have the Education Ministry (or appropriate body) make available to all temples and GBC's, the standard materials necessary to administer *bhakti-śāstrī* courses and exams.

4. Action to be taken by Education Ministry and Temple Presidents.

4.3.1.6 Goal and Strategy for ISKCON Temples as Centers of Learning

1. Background

Now that the gradual orientation of the temples is changing, it is important to maintain the relevance of the temple through educating its adherents.

2. Goal

Every ISKCON temple will become a center of transcendental learning for both the residents, congregational devotees and members of the public. The temples shall provide training, degrees or diplomas, and titles for each major department of applied Kṛṣṇa conscious activity.

3. Strategy # 1

The various Ministries shall identify the areas for training (as mentioned earlier) to include all applied and practical areas of training and with the Adult Education Ministry, develop course materials.

4. Strategy # 2

In addition, the great wealth of already trained personnel within ISKCON, or ISKCON alumni's who are available as resources, shall be identified. The Ministry of Education shall create a massive database of all skilled devotees in the world and identify who can become teachers in the following areas:

- a. Deity worship
- b. Cooking
- c. Congregational preaching
- d. Cow Protection
- e. Book distribution
- f. Preaching
- g. *āśramas*
- h. Farming
- i. *Sāstric* knowledge
- j. Fund development
- k. Temple management

5. Strategy # 3

"Baby step" courses should be established to make it more interesting and accessible for children and new congregational members.

6. Action to be taken by ISKCON temples, all Ministries and centers of learning. (97-105)

4.4 Individual ISKCON Ministries

4.4.1 Ministry of Emergencies

The Ministry of Emergencies is created to assist the Executive Committee to handle emergencies throughout the year which require personal resolution. (see GBC Rules of Order give details)

4.4.2 Ministry of Justice

4.4.2.1 Definition

The Ministry of Justice is recognized as fully authorized by the GBC to carry out the mandate described herein, given assurance of the participatory support of each GBC member which will be necessary to successfully execute the mandate described herein, and given sufficient resources to efficiently and effectively deal with grievances and complaints which arise within ISKCON.

4.4.2.2 Duties of the Minister of Justice

The Minister of Justice shall oversee the development, implementation and ongoing operation of complaint and dispute resolution mechanisms for the ISKCON community. The Minister of Justice shall be responsible for the creation of procedures and guidelines for resolution of disputes and the investigation of complaints.

4.4.2.3 Procedures for Resolution of Disputes

4.4.2.3.1 Investigation of Complaints

Devotee ombudspersons will be engaged to receive and investigate complaints. The ombudsperson will then work to achieve a satisfactory resolution of complaints through neutral analysis of the complaint presented; analysis of relevant instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the *sāstras*, research of existing GBC resolutions, comparisons with procedures in other traditions (religious and secular), and the recommendation of changes in ISKCON procedures.

4.4.2.3.2 Mediation Services

Mediation involves an independent (neutral) third party who acts as a facilitator, hears both sides of the problem and helps devotees achieve a satisfactory resolution about the issues at hand. The mediator's primary function is to provide a forum where disputants can construct their own mutual agreement. Mediators work directly and in-depth with the parties in dispute and encourage discussion. No decisions are

imposed by mediators but mediators do help devotees make their own decisions about what solutions will work for them.

4.4.2.3.3 Arbitration Services

Arbitration is more formal than mediation. In arbitration, the parties to a dispute select one or more neutral persons to serve as arbitrators for the dispute. As part of the arbitration, the parties usually agree in advance to accept the decision of the arbitrators as binding, although the decision may be merely a recommendation. Parties to the dispute present their case to the arbitrators in a common meeting. The arbitration proceeding may be informal or almost as formal as a legal trial, depending on the agreement of the parties.

4.4.2.4 Prevention of Development of Complaints and Disputes

4.4.2.4.1 Complaint Registry Services

The Ministry of Justice shall maintain a registry of complaints against devotees, quasi-devotees, and devotee organizations which either refuse to participate in the dispute resolution mechanisms above or who fail to abide by agreements reached. Thus the ISKCON community will have one place it can go to find out information of previous complaints against individuals or organizations. Essentially this shall serve like a Better Business Bureau.

4.4.2.4.2 Prevention Registry

Another aspect of this service shall be to maintain a registry of questionable characters who travel the ISKCON world. Such individuals may be listed with the Complaint Registry and information would be available upon request. As this service has the potential of being misused, listing and reporting will be subject to the discretion of the Minister of Justice.

4.4.2.4.3 Publishing Services

1. The Ministry of Justice will compile and disseminate information conducive to the education of the ISKCON community in respect to the above services.
2. In all instances the GBC Body will remain the ultimate authority for resolution of complaints and disputes in ISKCON, and as such shall, at its discretion, accept appeals from the processes described above.

4.4.2.4.4 Other provisions

1. The Ministry will develop Continental Committees.
2. The above replaces the current Justice Committee in the GBC resolutions. As sections of the Ministry and procedures are developed, they shall be subject to revision by the GBC Body.
3. The Minister of Justice is to be fully acquainted with all the provisions in the Society's Memorandum of Association, Regulations and Rules of Order. He is to check all resolutions passed as being in line with these documents before they are made final. There should be legal review of all ISKCON resolutions before they are published.

4.4.3 Ministry of Communications

The ISKCON Ministry of Communications will be governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the GBC Body as its final authority.

1. Wherever the name "ISKCON Ministry of Public Affairs" exists in ISKCON legislation it shall be changed to "ISKCON Ministry of Communications" which is the current official name. The Minister of Public Affairs shall now be referred to as the Minister of Communications
2. The purposes and goals of the Ministry shall be as per the document "ISKCON Communications Charter", dated February 13, 1991 and filed with the Corresponding Secretary, or as they may be modified by the Board of Directors in the future and reported in writing to the GBC Body. (91)
3. The Board of Directors of the Ministry of Communications will meet annually in Māyāpur, and additionally as necessary, to review and set policies and goals for the Ministry. (91)

4.4.4 Ministry of Finance and Management

4.4.4.1 Duties

1. To provide the Society with a description of the Ministry's present available services
2. To recruit staff for the office of the Ministry to help in:
 - a. Correspondence
 - b. Data collection and consolidation
 - c. Investigation
 - d. Treasurer function
3. To recruit assistance to provide the following services for the society at large:
 - a. Business consultancy
 - b. Real estate advisory
 - c. Investment advisory
 - d. Advit and investigation advisory
 - e. Fund raising advisory
 - f. Financial systems and EDP advisory
 - g. Research department and manual development
4. To correspond with all BBT directors as well as all other international projects to ensure proper systems, propriety with objectives and policies, efficiency, reporting to all donors and directors, and audit if necessary.
5. To collect annual financial statements from each of the zones and consolidate the same for the GBC annual meeting.(86)

4.4.4.2 ISKCON Resource Manual

That the Minister of Management and Finance shall provide a manual, annually updated, detailing all resources at the disposal of ISKCON Leaders during the year and during their annual meetings.

It shall contain lists detailing

1. GBCs
2. Ministers
3. Standing Committees
4. GBC Deputies
5. Divisional Councils
6. The ISKCON Law Book
7. ISKCON Management Guidelines
8. An ISKCON Directory containing all addresses, e-mail addresses, phone and fax numbers of ISKCON Centers.

4.4.4.3 ISKCON Central Secretariat

4.4.4.3.1 Definition

The ISKCON central secretariat shall facilitate the management of ISKCON. The ICS (ISKCON Central Secretariat) is organized and managed by the Finance and Management Minister.

4.4.4.3.2 Duties

1. Create and maintain a database of information of all temples in the World and Minister's areas of responsibility.
2. Develop and implement a practical system of reporting by consulting Ministers, GBC's and Temple Presidents as to what they require, desire and are capable of providing. As far as possible, implementation shall be done through "regional" Committees (Regional, National, Zonal or Continental as the case may be).
3. Develop a database that may contain statistical information of:
 - a. Temple Finances (assets & liabilities, Annual income & expenses)
 - b. Temples/Managers Contacts (addresses, phone/fax, etc.)
 - c. Details of owned properties
 - d. Complete data on all transactions with Temple buildings.
 - e. Progress towards fulfilling mission statements.

- f. Annual reports for all Ministries.
- g. Devotee bio-data.
- h. And any other information deemed useful

4. Present reports shall in a format useful for the individual Ministers, GBC Zonal Secretaries, Committees, and ISKCON Leaders.

5. Provide global status reports on ISKCON international projects. Areas which are declared as a security risk for reporting purposes may not have to report. This arrangement can be made between the local GBC and the Secretariat.(96)

4.4.4.4 ISKCON Foundation Training Centers

The ISKCON Foundation is blessed and encouraged to establish ISKCON Training Centers in different continents and shall be responsible for their direction and proper management under the guidance of the Management and Finance Ministry. They shall also arrange the required operating expenses by setting up ISKCON Foundation chapters in the local areas and engaging interested congregational members, who will be nominated by the local Temple Presidents and Zonal GBCs and will serve under their direction.

They shall work in close continuous cooperation with the respective local temples to assist the GBC Ministers and GBC Zonal Secretaries in their work of training ISKCON temple and congregational devotees by:

- 1. organizing seminars and courses in all Ministry areas
- 2. providing materials and resources for training
- 3. providing ongoing consultation and advice
- 4. employing/engaging full/part-time or volunteer staff trained by GBC Ministers and Zonal Secretaries to do the above
- 5. gather data and information and communicate such with the appropriate entities.

4.4.5 Ministry of Fund Development and Life Patron Membership

4.4.5.1 Duties and Purposes

- 1. To develop a worldwide congregation of devotees from the Indian community.
- 2. To inspire those devotees to regularly engage their body, mind, and wealth in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.
- 3. To educate the leaders and other devotees of ISKCON to see the Indian community as our best ally and to develop training programs in how the community should be cultivated.
- 4. To create facilities for Indian community members to take on major responsibilities within ISKCON.
- 5. To provide programs to inspire the youth of the Indian community to become Kṛṣṇa Conscious.
- 6. To encourage within ISKCON the development of purely vaisnava cultural presentations which will attract non-resident Indians by filling the cultural vacuum they experience.
- 7. To inspire those born in India to take up the order of Lord Caitanya to preach the message of Lord Kṛṣṇa all over the world.
- 8. To establish and supervise administrative offices all over the world for the coordination of services for ISKCON Life Members.
- 9. To establish and implement international standards for ISKCON Life Membership.
- 10. To re-establish the International Life Membership Newsletter. (91)

4.4.6 Ministry of Health and Welfare

4.4.6.1 Duties

The Health and Welfare Ministry should produce a booklet about what AIDS is, how it is communicated, how to prevent it. This booklet should be practical and not alarmist.

4.4.7 ISKCON Youth Ministry

4.4.7.1 Duties

1. To establish and maintain a Youth Ministry Office.
2. To develop a world-wide database of second generation devotee youth.
3. To develop a world-wide database of training and occupational opportunities for the second generation youth.
4. To facilitate the connection of devotees from the above two subsets.
5. To produce a bimonthly newsletter describing this ongoing training and placement.
6. To attend the Māyāpur GBC meetings, and that he/she may elect one other second generation young adult to attend the meetings with him/her in his/her place with the approval of the GBC Executive Committee.(96)

4.4.7.2 Powers

The Youth Ministry can internationally

- a. access ISKCON mailing lists and audiences.
- b. establish reps. in various parts of the world [North European rep., etc.]

A period of 15-30 minutes be designated annually at a GBC Plenary Session for a report from the Youth Minister.

4.4.7.3 Youth Members

1. *Gurukula* graduates and youth who have been raised in our ISKCON family are to receive a special ISKCON Youth Membership status offering them free *prasādam* and accommodation at any ISKCON temple for one week per year per temple (provided they are respectful and follow temple rules.) Membership certificates shall be issued by the ISKCON Youth Ministry on renewable five year terms to individuals in good standing.
2. All ISKCON departments, projects, businesses, and other enterprises controlled by ISKCON members are strongly encouraged to seek out, train and employ ISKCON *Gurukula* graduates and other youth raised in ISKCON. Wherever feasible, such youth shall be given priority over others.
3. ISKCON temple *āśramas* have an obligation to provide room and board to *Gurukula* graduates and other youth raised in ISKCON while they are pursuing further education and training at colleges, universities, or from our own skilled devotees. Such youth living in ISKCON *āśramas* must be of good character and are expected to be respectful, follow the temple rules, and attend the morning program. Whenever possible (for example, when there is an income from parents, financial aid, etc.), they should make regular donations to the temple. ISKCON Temple Presidents shall do everything feasible to fulfill this obligation to any youth certified and approved by ISKCON Youth Ministry.(97-302)

4.4.8 Women's Ministry

4.4.8.1 Duties

The Ministry is to address the following concerns in a clear, mature, and deliberate manner:

1. Appreciating the contribution of ISKCON's female devotees.
2. Increasing understanding of the serious concerns of women in ISKCON.
3. Providing facility, communication and support for all female members of ISKCON.
4. Addressing issues of abuse and sexual impropriety in ISKCON.
5. Defining the different female devotee situations (e.g. *grhastha* women, older, renounced women, and *brahmacariṇīs*).
6. Working with temple authorities and GBCs to identify role models and encourage them to inspire and train junior Vaiṣṇavīs. (96)

4.4.9 Other Ministries

Ministry of Education: See Chapter 13 "Education" (page. 125)

Ministry of Records

Ministry of Congregational Development:

See Chapter 15 “Congregational Development” (page. 131)

Ministry of *Sannyāsa* Services: See section on *Sannyāsa*

Ministry of Vaiṣṇava Cultural History

Ministry of Book Distribution: See Chapter 14 “Saṅkīrtana — Book Distribution” (page. 127)

5

ISKCON Spiritual Leadership

5.1 Definition

The following shall be considered to be ISKCON Leaders: All members of the GBC, initiating gurus, Ministers, *Sannyāsīs*, Regional Secretaries, Temple Presidents, Temple Vice-presidents, Members of a Temple’s Board of Directors, Project Leaders (for Projects such as ISCOWP, BI, etc.), and other ISKCON Leaders.

5.2 Standards of Behavior

5.2.1 Spiritual Practices

All ISKCON Leaders must visibly chant sixteen rounds a day, follow the four regulative principles, and religiously attend the daily morning program in the temple, as prescribed by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

5.2.2 Active Assistance to the GBC Body

ISKCON Leaders, and other senior members of the Society, shall be responsible to actively assist the GBC in maintaining and enhancing the spiritual standard of ISKCON, expanding the dynamic preaching of ISKCON, and preserving Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mood and instructions.(82)

5.2.3 Leadership Positions

1. If a devotee occupying an important position in ISKCON leaves the Society, returns, leaves again, etc., he is always welcome to return, but he cannot immediately take up the same position (such as *sannyāsa*). (78)
2. All leaders in ISKCON should clearly present the letter and spirit of the Society’s rules and policies to those under their authority, and must clearly qualify any differing viewpoint as their own personal opinion.

5.2.4 Financial Dealings

That ISKCON has a moral obligation to Śrīla Prabhupāda, as well as a legal right to pursue deviant managers who encumber ISKCON entities with liabilities stemming from unauthorized acts. If ISKCON representatives cannot convince deviant managers to accept personal liability through reason and argument, or through the ISKCON Judicial System, they have the right to pursue them through the competent courts.

5.2.5 Disqualifications

No devotee who has remarried after having divorced a devotee-spouse shall serve as a member of the Governing Body Commission or as a Temple President.

Exempt from this law are devotees who become divorced against their desire by the action of their spouses, or as a consequence of their spouses’ becoming committed non-devotees. Provisionally exempt are devotees who divorced prior to March 2, 1990.(92)

5.3 Duties

5.3.1 Regarding Preaching

1. Wherever we have powerful leaders—whether GBC members, *gurus*, *sannyāsīs*, or Temple Presidents—they ought to impress upon their followers that book distribution and making new devotees to go out on book distribution are ISKCON's main work. (See p. 147 for more information.)
2. That the leaders of ISKCON, as followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda, ought to see and promote book distribution as our most effective means of preaching. (See p. 147 for more information.)
3. That the leaders of ISKCON, as followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda, ought to see the duty of training and facilitating congregational members as their primary function, in order to fulfill the order of Lord Caitanya: "Therefore I order every man within this universe to accept this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and distribute it everywhere."(96) (See p. 151 for more information.)
4. Wherever we have powerful leaders—whether GBC members, *gurus*, *sannyāsīs*, or Temple Presidents—they ought to impress upon their followers that everyone must be brought into the congregation and empowered to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness purely.(96) (See p. 151 for more information.)

5.3.2 Correcting Spiritual Deficiencies in Temples

It is the responsibility of the President, Regional Secretary, or GBC to correct any spiritual deficiencies in the temple program. Any alleged deficiency in a temple's program is not in itself sufficient grounds to justify or order a devotee to abandon one's prescribed duty.

5.4 Regulations

5.4.1 Legal Affairs

The GBC directs the officers and managers of all ISKCON corporations to make all necessary and prudent arrangements to defend the corporations and their properties from legal liabilities. Failure to make such arrangements shall be sufficient ground for removal of the officers, Regional Secretaries or GBC Zonal Secretaries.

5.4.2 Oath of Loyalty

An annual oath of allegiance shall be made and signed by each ISKCON Leader in the prescribed manner.(75)

5.4.2.1 Statement of Oath

The oath shall be as follows:

1. To accept His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda as the Founder-Ācārya and Supreme Authority of ISKCON. To follow his teachings, instructions and directions.
2. To accept the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON as the ultimate managing authority of ISKCON as directed in Śrīla Prabhupāda's last will and testament.
3. To abide by the Society's spiritual rules, namely no illicit sex, no intoxication, no gambling, no meat-eating and chant a minimum of sixteen rounds of *mahā-mantra japa* every day. To follow the principles set forth in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.
4. To accept that all ISKCON's funds, assets and properties under my control or direction, including anything ISKCON may have acquired under my direction, is the sole property of ISKCON and in the event of my death, resignation or other relinquishment of all ISKCON responsibilities, all these shall accrue solely to ISKCON and at all times I shall have no claim on them whatsoever.
5. To be guided by the spiritual directions of ISKCON's management, to cooperate with the local GBC representative, and to fulfill my duties in a serving spirit never intentionally acting against ISKCON's interests.
6. I will maintain the spiritual programs, standards, and teachings established by Śrīla Prabhupāda in the projects and with the devotees placed in my care. I further agree not to involve the Society or those devotees placed under my care in any activities contrary to the above mentioned principles.(96)

5.4.2.2 Procedure for Taking Oaths

All ISKCON Leaders shall complete the approved ISKCON Oath of Loyalty in the following manner:

1. A signed oath certified by the appropriate legal authority prescribed for giving testimony of a declaration (Notary Public, Judicial Magistrate, Commissioner of Oaths, etc.) in the location shall be deposited with the GBC Society Secretary. This written oath shall be renewed once in five years or whenever there is a change in their position of responsibilities.
2. The GBC's shall make the above oath orally, in a group, before the Deities in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur during the course of their annual meetings.
3. Every Temple President, Regional Secretary, Temple Officer, etc. shall take the oath orally before the Deities of the Temple every year. The oath shall be administered by a local GBC Zonal Secretary. (Optionally the oath may be taken at ISKCON Śrīdhāma Māyāpur during the Gaura-pūrṇimā Festival period).
4. Other leaders not covered above shall also make an annual oral declaration of the oath before an ISKCON Deity administered by the GBC authority or liaison assigned.

This resolution shall override and replace all previous legislation on oaths for ISKCON leaders. This doesn't replace the additional oath that ISKCON gurus must also take.(95)

5.4.2.3 Oath Required for Leadership Eligibility

1. No member of the GBC or any Regional Secretary or Temple President shall be eligible to vote in the GBC meeting or Temple President's meeting respectively unless their oath of allegiance to ISKCON has been duly submitted to the proper GBC authority. Once done, this needs to be renewed as provided for above.(81)
2. The archive and record of all oaths submitted to the GBC shall be maintained by the GBC Society Secretary who shall also annually provide a list to the Executive Committee of ISKCON Leaders for whom Oaths of Loyalty have been received and the list of delinquent Leaders for enforcement.(80)

5.5 Discipline and Conduct of ISKCON Leaders

5.5.1 Leave of Absence

An ISKCON Leader may be granted a leave of absence only at his own request for any of the following reasons.

1. acute and unremitting health problem(s).
2. compelling personal reasons.

The member seeking a leave of absence shall clearly explain in writing to his GBC Zonal Secretary specific reasons for his request. If granted, the leave of absence shall not exceed a period of one year at a time.

5.5.2 Resignation

An ISKCON Leader may tender his resignation to his GBC Zonal Secretary at any time. A resignation should be submitted in writing.

5.5.3 Censure

Censure is to be understood as a reprimand aimed at reformation of the member and prevention of further offending acts. It is the warning voice of suspension or removal.

5.5.3.1 Transgressions Leading to Censure

An ISKCON Leader (Temple President, Regional Secretaries, Project Leaders) may be censured for any of the following transgressions during his tenure of office:

5.5.3.1.1 Misconduct and Indiscipline

1. Willful violation of GBC resolutions.
2. Vilification of ISKCON or the GBC Body.
3. Misconduct in office (physical assault except in self-defense, improper relationships with opposite sex, improper sexual behavior, abusive behavior to devotees, improper dealings with external society, and so on.)

4. Habitually or knowingly making false charges and accusations or other consistent *vaiṣṇava-aparādhās*.
5. Serious interference in the *guru* and disciple relationship.
6. Duplicitous or untruthful dealings (giving false promises to devotees, lying to spiritual authorities, and other serious prevarication).

5.5.3.2 Improper Discharge and Neglect of Duty,

5.5.3.2.2 Misuse of Funds and Gross Mismanagement.

1. Consistent unexcused absences at Divisional Council meetings.
2. Consistent failure to submit prescribed monthly reports.
3. Consistent interference in the guru-disciple relationship or consistent disregard of the devotees requirement to accept a spiritual master and serve him.
4. Consistent or serious economic mismanagement of such a nature that it endangers the temple or preaching mission.
5. Serious degradation of temple standards (deity worship, cleanliness and kitchen standards, devotee morale, preaching, temple economy, etc.)

5.5.3.2.3 Spiritual Discrepancy

1. Failure to follow strictly the rules and regulations in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.
2. Philosophical deviation.
3. Consistently irregular attendance at the temple morning program without bona fide cause.
4. Failure to follow any of the four regulative principles or to regularly chant sixteen rounds of *japa*.

5.5.3.3 Procedure

A Divisional Council by two thirds(2/3) majority vote shall have the power to censure an ISKCON Leader serving within its region. In addition, the local GBC Zonal Secretary along with two consenting GBC's, or an authorized ISKCON Judicial Committee, or the GBC Body, shall also have the power to censure an ISKCON Leader.

If the motion to censure is adopted, it shall be entered into the Divisional Council Minute Book or the censuring body's minutes.

(See 'Appendices' for a standard Censure Form. (page.180))

A member who has been censured three times shall be placed on probation. If, during a period of three years, no motion to censure is adopted against a member, then his slate of censures is wiped clean.

5.5.4 Probation

An ISKCON Leader censured three times shall be placed on probation.

5.5.4.1 Rectification Program

The censuring body shall also assign the offending member a specific program of rectification for the period of his probation. They may determine to what degree he may continue his service.

5.5.4.2 Period of Probation

The period of probation shall normally be for one year or until the problem is deemed rectified by the censuring body or the Divisional Council.

5.5.5 Suspension

5.5.5.1 Procedure

If he has been on probation for at least one year and the situation has not been rectified, the Divisional Council, by two thirds (2/3) majority vote can recommend to suspend an ISKCON Leader. If approved by the local GBC(s) concerned and other GBC's (totaling a minimum of three GBCs, preferably from the same region), he may be suspended from his present position until either his suspension is revoked or he is removed.

In addition, the ISKCON Leader's local GBC Zonal Secretary along with two consenting GBC's, or an authorized ISKCON Judicial Committee, or the GBC Body, shall also have the power to suspend an ISKCON Leader. In emergencies the GBC Executive Committee can suspend an ISKCON Leader.

5.5.5.2 Terms of Suspension

The terms applying to a suspended ISKCON Leader for the duration of his period of suspension shall be as follows:

1. He may not exercise any authority of his previously held position.
2. He may not vote as an ISKCON Leader.
3. He must be assigned a specific program of rectification.

5.5.5.3 Rectification Program

The rectification and proper engagement of a suspended ISKCON Leader shall be a primary concern. As a result, the suspending body shall assign the offending ISKCON Leader a specific program of rectification for the duration of the period of suspension. The assigned program of rectification shall be understood as an opportunity for the suspended ISKCON Leader to redress himself and to regain his status as an ISKCON Leader in good standing. The suspending body shall personally, or through a delegated council/committee, carefully monitor the progress of the ISKCON Leader throughout his period of suspension. This committee shall submit quarterly progress reports to the suspending body.

5.5.5.4 Period of Suspension

The period of suspension shall not exceed one year at which time the GBC Body, at its annual meeting, shall carefully consider the case of the suspended ISKCON Leader and either reinstate, or remove, or relocate and give whatever directions or conditions deemed appropriate.

5.5.6 Removal

Under normal circumstances, an ISKCON Leader will be removed from his position only after being suspended and unable to rectify his situation. Such cases should be resolved by the GBC Body.

There should ideally be no change of Presidents or ISKCON Leaders. If there are any difficulties they should be resolved by careful mediation. However, in an urgent situation the Executive Committee, in conjunction with the local GBC Zonal Secretary (if he is in good standing, and if not they may do it on their own) shall be empowered to remove an ISKCON Leader. An urgent situation shall be defined as:

1. Any violation which endangers ISKCON's stability and security locally, nationally or internationally which cannot wait for the usual process of suspension and removal.
2. Severe spiritual, philosophical or moral deviation.
3. Rebellion against the authority of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the GBC Body.

5.6 Standards and Duties of Spiritual Leaders

5.6.1 Regional Secretaries

5.6.1.1 Definition

The GBC recognizes that as per Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions, GBC members may have even "thousands of secretaries"; individual GBC members may see the need for appointing assistants who will have greater responsibility than Temple Presidents, and who may be known as Regional Secretaries. (79)

5.6.1.2 Regional Secretary's Duties

5.6.1.2.1 In relation to Zonal Secretary

A Regional Secretary's duties in relation to Statements of Mission shall be to assist the Zonal Secretary to motivate and organize the region's progress in each Statement of Mission area.

5.6.1.2.2 In relation to Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival

That all Regional Secretaries and Temple Presidents will be responsible for setting up their zonal exhibition booths at the annual Māyāpur festival. This will be followed up by the Secretary of the Sri Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee.(82)

5.6.2 Presidents of Temples and Preaching Centers

5.6.2.1 Appointment of Temple President

The GBC Zonal Secretary/s shall be the authority to appoint or approve a new Temple President to fill in a vacancy of the post in an existing temple or in a newly established temple. If the candidate is holding such a position for the first time then he shall be appointed only as an acting Temple President for a trial period of one year. A preaching center shall not have the post of a President but shall have the post of a Manager. In all such appointments the Zonal Secretary shall give due considerations to the recommendations of the Divisional Council.

5.6.2.2 Standards of Personal Behavior

5.6.2.2.1 Spiritual Standards

1. A Temple President must be an initiated devotee who follows daily sādhana and full morning program, demonstrably chants sixteen rounds, follows strictly the four regulative principles, studies Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, regularly gives classes, and participates in temple festivals and harināma parties.
2. A Temple President must live in or near enough to a Kṛṣṇa conscious temple community to regularly, on a daily basis, participate in devotional activities and associate with devotees.
3. A Temple President should be exemplary in all respects in his behavior and character.
4. A Temple President must accept the authority of the GBC Body and the GBC Zonal Secretary and maintain the proper service attitude to senior devotees especially GBC members, initiating spiritual masters and sannyāsīs.
5. The Temple President should avoid intimate dealings with the opposite sex.

5.6.2.2.2 Standards of Service

A Temple President must fit into one of the following categories:

1. *Sannyāsīs*, *brahmacārī(ṇi)s*, *vanaprasthas*, and brahminical *grhasthas* (living in facilities provided by ISKCON) who are fully maintained by ISKCON who are to be fully engaged in devotional service with all their time and energy.
2. *Grhasthas* who dedicate the major part of their time and energies to their ISKCON duties. They need, however, to earn a minimum amount of income for family obligations that are not defrayed by ISKCON. They are exempted from the fifty percent(50%) donation rule.
3. *Grhasthas* who choose to engage in full-time occupation outside of ISKCON must follow the fifty percent(50%) donation rule, and all of their non-occupational time should also be engaged in devotional service, sacrificing a major portion given in voluntary service to ISKCON.

There is nothing wrong with a householder managing a temple so long as he does not utilize the facilities of the temple for his own personal sense gratification. Certainly the president may get his basic requirements for living and eating fulfilled through the temple, and he may also have his own place to live outside. However, he should not exploit the temple for his own sense gratification. A Temple President must be careful not to take more than what would be allotted to any other householder who is working full time for the temple. For example, he should not have specially prepared opulent meals when the temple devotees are eating austere. In fact, he should eat with the devotees.

5.6.2.3 Principles

5.6.2.3.1 Desirable Qualities of an Ideal Temple President

1. Must be a competent and committed manager who is honest, and trustworthy. Can manage, organize, and conduct meetings.
2. Has a service attitude, respects all devotees and is able to work with others.

3. Can communicate well and is able to motivate and inspire people.
4. Cares for people.
5. Must be expert in his or her area of service or possess a willingness to learn.

A Temple President must be diligent in assuring spiritual standards are maintained within the Temple and its *āśramas*.

5.6.2.4 Powers

In the case of some disagreement regarding practical policy or practical philosophy, a traveling party leader, *sannyāsī* or non-local GBC member must respect the integrity of the president's authority over his temple. He must defer to the president's position and can initiate change only via the local GBC member.

5.6.2.5 Duties to

5.6.2.5.1 The Temple Deities, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the GBC Body and the Initiating Spiritual Masters

1. Ensure that nobody preaches a philosophy contradictory to the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda.
2. Maintain the worship of the temple Deities.
3. Conduct an active and effective missionary campaign to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the temple's geographical jurisdiction.
4. Oversee and supervise spiritual standards for practicing members and temple programs.

5.6.2.5.2 The GBC Body

1. Implement policies and directions set by Divisional Council and the GBC Body.
2. The Temple President is duty bound to follow all ISKCON Laws and directives without exception.
3. The Temple President's responsibility is to see that the spiritual and administrative standards of ISKCON are maintained.
4. A Temple President's duties in relation to Statements of Mission shall be to be directly responsible to realize the Statement of Mission and Progressive Goals in his temple. He is to motivate the devotees and organize his temple's progress in each Statement of Mission area. He is also to present the progress in an Annual Report for each Statement of Mission for his temple to his Zonal Secretary.

5.6.2.5.3 Administrative Bodies under the GBC

1. Consult with the GBC representative or Divisional Council for all significant matters.
2. Attend all Divisional Council meetings.
3. Attend continental training seminars and Continental Committee meetings.
4. Attend annual International Managers' Meeting in Māyāpur. If they desire to do so, Temple Presidents may come early to the annual Māyāpur meeting, for their own meetings and association.(77)
5. Establish a communication link with the appropriate GBC Ministries.
6. Temple Presidents shall submit annual reports to the Global Secretariat.

5.6.2.5.4 The Local GBC Member

1. The Temple President should cooperate with the GBC representative(s) assigned to his Temple, consult them on important issues and consider their advice. The GBC representatives are not meant to involve themselves in the day to day management of a temple. However they are responsible for seeing that the ISKCON standards are maintained within all aspects of the Society's activities. When the President is given advice or instructions as to how to maintain or improve these standards, then such instructions are to be followed by the Temple Presidents.
2. The Temple President shall provide monthly financial report and other prescribed reports to the GBC representative and other ISKCON bodies as required. The financial report should contain an itemized account of income and expenditure, the number of books sold, and an inventory of books. A GBC member can go to the center and see and correct any unbonafide expenditure. (75)
3. That if an individual GBC member acts blatantly against the policy of the GBC, the Chairman and Secretary of the GBC Body must be informed immediately of the discrepancy by a temple officer.(81)

5.6.2.5.5 Initiating Spiritual Masters

The Temple President shall take into account any specific suggestions offered by the spiritual masters in regard to guiding their disciples and assigning services. The Temple President shall make the final decision on the services of the devotees based on considerations of effective management of the community.

5.6.2.5.6 Temple Resident Devotees

5.6.2.5.6.1 *Sadhana and Temple Programs*

Presidents of temples and preaching centers shall see that all devotees in their zones attend the morning and evening programs, except when they have an alternative bona fide preaching engagement in the evening.(77)

5.6.2.5.6.2 *Engagement*

1. The Temple President shall engage devotees according to their qualifications, propensities and capabilities with a goal to provide a satisfying service which encourages a loving sacrifice to Kṛṣṇa.
2. Assign each devotee with satisfactory and well-planned service.
3. Provide opportunities for devotees to expand responsibilities, initiate activities, attend to personal matters, and voice suggestions or grievances.
4. The Temple President and Department Heads shall provide adequate training for each devotee assigned to a temple service and strive to maximize the devotee's potential through further training and personal development. They shall maintain an open and supportive climate among the temple staff, inviting suggestions and explaining grievance channels.

5.6.2.5.6.3 *Care*

1. He should inspire, nurture and guide the devotees of the community in their devotional service.
2. The Temple President shall give due consideration to the potentials, strengths and weaknesses (both material and spiritual) and overall maturity of the devotees. His mood is as servant of the community members.
3. The Temple President shall meet with each resident member when they join the temple and at least quarterly to ensure they are effectively engaged in their service and are progressing in their spiritual life. Thus the personal and spiritual career needs of the devotee can be monitored.
4. Provide all residents space and facilities to rest, to store and secure belongings, to maintain the body, and to study. They shall also provide sufficient quantity of good quality prasādam.
5. To ensure all dependent devotees are provided with adequate health care and health insurance except in those countries where health insurance is provided by state authorities.

5.6.2.5.6.4 *Guru-Disciple Relationships*

1. Must encourage all devotees to establish a relationship with an ISKCON guru.
2. Must not canvas for a particular guru.
3. Must not undermine or interfere with the relationship of any bona fide ISKCON guru and his disciple.
4. Must preach to temple devotees who are disciples of various gurus to cooperate together in Śrīla Prabhupāda's family.
5. If conflicts arise with a particular guru then the GBC Zonal Secretary(s) should be immediately informed so that he may rectify the situation on his level.
6. Since in ISKCON it is not always possible for the gurus to directly manage and engage their disciples in devotional service, the Temple President engages all the disciples of all spiritual masters in their day to day devotional service to guru and K

'8dṣṇa by allocating appropriate services to the devotees for the pleasure of their respective spiritual masters and Śrīla Prabhupāda.

5.6.2.5.6.5 *Evaluation of all Initiated Devotees*

It is recommended the Temple President and Department Heads perform a quarterly appraisal of all initiated devotees in their community which can then be used to measure performance and build strategies for improvement. This document can then be shared with the spiritual masters who can also offer their guidance and insights.

5.6.2.5.6.6 Following Local Laws

The Temple President should ensure that all local, state and national laws are abided by all temple and community members. He should also ensure that the devotees are following ISKCON diligently.

5.6.2.5.6.7 Discipline and Conduct of Temple Devotees

Transgressions requiring discipline are deviations from basic standards of Vaiṣṇava etiquette and so the proper standards should be encouraged and enforced through appropriate counselling and encouragement. In such situations, it is best to talk with a devotee in private rather than humiliate them before others or to demonstrate one's own superiority. In all cases it should be first determined that the person has actually been engaged in the alleged activity.

Disciplining a temple devotee may be done for the above and following reasons:

1. Breaking of service agreements.
2. Fighting or verbal disagreements.
3. Inappropriate gender relationships.
4. Impersonal or nasty behavior.

5.6.2.5.6.8 Removal of a Devotee from a Temple

The Temple President shall observe the following procedures as per ISKCON Laws and may order censure, probation, dissociation, divestiture or request the GBC to remove or disassociate a member from the temple, in consultation with the Temple Board, but should always be mindful of Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions, "First try to rectify, and if the man cannot be rectified then you may remove."

Removal can be effected for any of the following transgressions:

1. Consistent and habitual violation of any of the four regulative principles. Persistent neglect to complete 16 rounds of *japa* daily.
2. Openly inimical or defying Śrīla Prabhupāda or ISKCON's policies, or ISKCON spiritual and managerial authorities.
3. Flagrant and repeated misrepresentation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings.
4. Being overly attached to sense gratification in a serious, prolonged or hopeless way.
5. Violation of national, state or local government laws.
6. Acting against the interests of the Society.

If a devotee is found to be engaged in any of the above activities the Temple President has a responsibility to rectify the situation. Circumstances giving rise to the need for disciplining a devotee are an opportunity to encourage the devotee to engage in positive activities conducive for spiritual advancement.

5.6.2.5.7 Congregational Devotees

5.6.2.5.7.1 Facilitating the Preaching of the Congregational Devotees

Temple Presidents and ISKCON Leaders shall encourage and facilitate the important preaching role of non-resident devotees as they introduce Kṛṣṇa consciousness to their neighbors and business or work associates. The non-resident devotees should get respectful treatment, encouragement and *prasādam*.

5.6.2.5.7.2 Suspension of Congregational Members

Temple Presidents, in consultation with the Temple Board, may suspend the privileges of congregational members for:

1. Openly inimical or defying Śrīla Prabhupāda or ISKCON's policies, or ISKCON spiritual and managerial authorities.
2. Flagrant and repeated misrepresentation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings.

3. Any violation of the government laws which places ISKCON in jeopardy.
4. Acting against the interests of the Society.

The Temple President shall give the suspended devotee a clear written explanation of why he or she has been suspended.

5.6.2.5.8 Guests and Life Patron Members

ISKCON Leaders shall provide approved guests with adequate room and *prasādam* arrangements as well as attentive training in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Registered ISKCON Life Patron Members and their immediate family members may stay for up to three days in ISKCON *āśramas* free of charge. Life Patron Members must show a current ISKCON membership card or passport. The Temple President or Temple Secretary shall record Life Patron Members' names, addresses, and membership numbers upon the members' arrival.

In the event that the temple cannot provide acceptable *āśrama* space, the Temple President shall attempt to accommodate the Life Patron Members in alternative facilities, such as a *gṛhastha's* residence.

5.6.2.5.9 The Opposite Gender

It is impossible for a Temple President to avoid some dealings with the opposite gender. In so doing the following guidelines should be adhered to in order to avoid compromising spiritual standards.

A Male Temple President should:

1. Always see all women as mother except one's wife.
2. Never be alone with a woman except one's wife.
3. Avoid intimate dealings with women.
4. Appoint a senior woman to deal with all women's affairs

A female Temple President should:

1. See all men as son except her husband.
2. Never be alone with a man except one's husband.
3. Avoid intimate dealings with men.
4. As far as possible appoint a senior man to deal with men's affairs.
5. In certain conditions it may be prudent for a female president to have her husband deal with the men, or for a male president to have his wife deal with the women.

5.6.2.5.10 Dealings With His Own Family Affairs (If Grihastha).

There is nothing wrong with a householder managing a temple so long as he does not utilize the facilities of the temple for his own personal sense gratification. Certainly the president may get his basic requirements for living and eating fulfilled through the temple, and he may also have his own place to live outside. However, he should not exploit the temple for his own sense gratification. A temple president must be careful not to take more than what would be allotted to any other householder who is working full time for the temple. For example, he should not have specially prepared opulent meals when the temple devotees are eating austerely. In fact he should eat with the devotees. Neither should he use temple funds to buy himself a nice vehicle while the other devotees are walking or taking the bus. He should take what is needed to expand his service, but not for expanding his sense gratification.

5.6.2.5.11 The Local Community

Develop and uphold ISKCON's good reputation in the local community.

5.6.2.5.12 "Blooped" Devotees

1. A complete central file be kept on all devotees for purpose of public relations and/or reclaiming "blooped" devotees and the presidents of the temples be allowed to contact the parents of a devotee in his area.(77)
2. The names of the devotees who have left the movement shall be recorded in the local temple's official Society minutes, and duly notarized.(80)

5.6.2.5.13 Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival

That all Regional Secretaries and Temple Presidents will be responsible for setting up their zonal exhibition booths at the annual Māyāpur festival. This will be followed up by the Secretary of the Sri Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee.(82)

5.6.2.6 Regulations

5.6.2.6.1 Financial Management

In financial management the Temple President should always keep in mind that money should be spent cautiously and not be wasted and the temple should always be kept out of debt. The temple's funds should always be seen as belonging to Lord K

'8dṣṇa and Śrīla Prabhupāda. Certainly, they should never be thought of as being one's own.

The Following Principles Should always be Adhered to:

1. Financial records should be properly maintained.
2. Accurate and meaningful financial statements should be prepared.
3. Budgets should be prepared to avoid and anticipate financial problems.
4. Funds should be properly banked and where not possible very securely kept.
5. As a principle a minimum of two signatories should sign on all temple bank accounts.(77)
6. Government statutes, income tax regulations for recognized non-profit organizations, and all regulations for book keeping shall be complied with.
7. Temple funds shall be invested in book distribution, *prasādam* distribution and other preaching activities as well as property purchases and recurring expenditures which support temple programs. They shall not be advanced, loaned or invested in speculative enterprises or personal projects. A ceiling should be set for discretionary funds.
8. Neither should the Temple President use temple funds to buy himself a nice vehicle while the other devotees are walking or taking the bus. He should take what is needed to expand his service, but not for expanding his sense gratification.
9. Investments of large sums of money (as determined by the local Zonal Secretary or GBC Divisional Council) should be approved by the local GBC Zonal Secretary, GBC Divisional Council and local Temple Board. If investments are made in fixed deposits such accounts should as far as possible have multiple signatories at least two of which can sign.
10. The Temple President should direct the Treasurer, and as far as possible have little to do with the direct handling of temple funds. The Temple President and the Treasurer, and if desired other officers, shall create the temple budget. The Treasurer should carefully handle the finances according to the approved budget under the directions of the Temple President and see to the proper maintenance of the accounts. The Temple President shall sign on accounts. Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted the character and behavior of the Temple Presidents to be above suspicion.
11. Except in unavoidable cases, the Temple President or his/her spouse should not be the Treasurer.
12. The Temple President has to ensure compliance to fiscal and legal requirements.(96)
13. The Temple President shall ensure that his temple shall distribute books on saṅkīrtana on a regular basis, making a sincere attempt to implement Śrīla Prabhupāda's formula that fifty percent(50%) of the temple's income be used for book distribution and fifty percent(50%) be used for the temple expenses. The Temple Presidents should give a minimum of twenty five(25%) of income for book distribution.
14. There was a discussion in Śrīla Prabhupāda's presence of temple accounting. He said accounting is a simple matter of accurate record of income and expenditure. He said temple books should not be private or confidential in the sense that any sums of money should go unrecorded. He stressed we should not keep large sums of money in bank accounts but should collect and spend.(75)

5.6.2.6.1.1 Receiving Restricted Donations

That as far as possible, donations to ISKCON should be accepted without any conditions. However, donations ("Restricted Donations") may also be accepted with limited conditions. ISKCON Leaders must use donations with conditions in accordance with the agreed terms.(93)

5.6.2.6.1.1.1 Acceptable Conditions

Acceptable Conditions are those which:

1. define a general category or use, such as deity worship, education, construction, etc.
2. define a specific geographic location or project, or

3. give the donor a modest amount of recognition.

5.6.2.6.1.1.2 Unacceptable Conditions

Unacceptable conditions are those which:

1. give some right to the donor to reclaim part or all of the donation in the future. All donations become ISKCON's inviolable property without any possibility of alienation,
2. are vague or ambiguous, and thus risk future disputes over interpretation,
3. in other ways risk future litigation or disputes, or which could harm ISKCON's reputation, or
4. compromise ISKCON's right or ability to manage its assets in accordance with Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions and ISKCON law.

5.6.2.6.2 Management and Administration

By careful planning, the Temple Presidents are to

1. learn to invest most of their time in activities that are developmental such as teaching, preaching, studying, and planning, rather than reactive engagements of crisis management, emergency counseling, creating patchwork solutions, etc.,
2. participate in the organization's strategic planning to develop and carry out Temple policies and to provide an annual budget and current written strategic action plan for the temple,
3. regularly review and improve the strategic plan as required to ensure the strategies are current, effective and efficient,
4. motivate the devotees and organize the temple's progress in each area of the strategic plan,
5. conduct temple community *iṣṭa-goṣṭhis* regularly to communicate temple policies, progress and strategies and thereby foster cooperation and participation amongst the devotees,
6. facilitate and organize Department Heads into an effective management team,
7. ensure quality of service and behavior of Department Heads, and
8. train assistant(s) to work with quality and continue without interruption.

5.6.2.6.3 Book Distribution

All Temple Presidents should pledge to participate more directly in any *saṅkīrtana* and book distribution activities, either by going out themselves once a week or by organising marathons or *mahā*-book distribution efforts or by any other means they are capable of.(78)

6

ISKCON Spiritual Masters

(Dīkṣā & Śikṣa-Gurus)

6.1 Principles

6.1.1 Śrīla Prabhupāda's Desire for Continuing the Disciplic Succession

The GBC approves of the paper entitled "On My Order Understood" which establishes as ISKCON law the final *siddhānta* on Śrīla Prabhupāda's desire for continuing the disciplic succession after the departure of His Divine Grace.

6.2 Qualifications of Gurus in ISKCON

6.2.1 Mandatory Qualifications

The following are the minimum qualifications necessary to be approved as a *dīkṣā* or *śikṣa-guru* in ISKCON.

1. Must have been an initiated disciple for at least ten years.
2. Must be strictly following the four regulative principles, regularly attending the morning program, and chanting sixteen rounds daily.
3. Must not have had a fall-down within five years.
4. Must evince no tendency toward moral turpitude in his present or past activities.
5. Must be free from the following undesirable qualities:
 - (a) attachment to *kāmini-kāñcana*, "the devil" in the form of sex objects and wealth;
 - (b) *pratiṣṭhā*, false prestige and personal ambition;
 - (c) *niṣiddhācāra*, behavior contrary to Vaiṣṇava principles;
 - (d) *kuṭi-nati*, diplomatic or duplicitous behavior;
 - (e) *pūjā*, the desire for personal worship;
 - (f) *lābha*, mundane profiteering.
6. Must have excelled in preaching activities.
7. Must exhibit proficiency in knowledge and understanding of śāstra.
8. Must preach without concoction and strictly according to the paramparā, with śāstric knowledge grounded firmly in siddhānta, or conclusive truth.
9. Must be effective in practical preaching and counseling.
10. Must have no loyalties that compete with or compromise his loyalty to Śrīla Prabhupāda, to his teachings, and to ISKCON.
11. Must show understanding of and dedication to Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission with a strong commitment to maintaining and increasing book distribution and other ISKCON projects.
12. Must recognize the GBC as the ultimate managing authority in ISKCON, support the GBC system, and follow the GBC.
13. Should be engaged full-time in devotional service in an ISKCON center or other ISKCON-approved preaching program.

6.2.2 Discretionary Qualifications

These qualifications should be applied when appropriate and as far as possible.

1. Should hold a bhakti-vedānta or bhakti-vaibhava degree.
2. Should be nothing in his character, conduct, or circumstances to give rise to doubt about his ability to follow the code of conduct for gurus.
3. Should not be involved in any abnormal personal situation. An example of such a situation would be a disrupted or anomalous family life which could distract a *guru* from his *guru* duties or otherwise prove a disturbance to him or his followers.
4. Should always be responsible, conscientious, and honorable in ordinary dealings.

6.3 Eligibility of Devotee to Be Guru in ISKCON

6.3.1 All Devotee's Initiations From ISKCON Gurus

1. No devotee shall be eligible to become a *dīkṣā* or *śikṣa-guru* in ISKCON unless he has received all of his initiations from ISKCON-approved *gurus* in good standing.
2. A devotee initiated by a bona fide Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *guru* before joining ISKCON may be considered as a special case by the GBC body.

6.3.2 No One Can Give Dīkṣā While Guru is Present

No devotee shall give initiation as long as his own spiritual master is present on the planet. A devotee whose spiritual master is present must take all who approach him for initiation to his own spiritual master (or other approved initiating *guru*).

6.3.3 Requirement for Consent of Mantra Guru

Devotees who have received first initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda and second initiation from one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples may, with the written consent of the *mantra guru*, be accepted as candidates for initiating spiritual master like any of Śrīla Prabhupāda's other disciples.

6.4 Regulations

6.4.1 Procedure for Authorizing Dīkṣā and Śikṣa-Gurus

A devotee may serve as *dīkṣā* or *śikṣa-guru* in ISKCON after completing the following authorization procedure:

6.4.1.1 Endorsement by an Area Council

A candidate for *guru* in ISKCON must first receive a majority vote of approval in a council composed of all the GBC zonal secretaries of his current preaching area and at least ten other senior devotees residing in the candidate's area of activity. The council will be organized and convened by the GBC Secretary(s).

6.4.1.1.1 Composition of Council

The council must include all Regional Secretaries, Temple Presidents, and resident *sannyāsīs* in the candidate's current preaching area. In addition to the ten (or more) local area members, spiritual authorities and senior devotees in good standing from neighboring areas may also be included in the council.

6.4.1.1.2 Principles of Evaluation

The council shall evaluate the candidate according to the qualifications for *guru* given by Śrīla Prabhupāda in his oral and written teachings and by the GBC Body in its standards and guidelines.

6.4.1.1.3 Council Integrity Maintained

Once the council has been formed to evaluate a particular candidate, it cannot be reconstituted except to replace a member who has left his position as a local ISKCON Leader, or who has resigned from the council, or who has become spiritually unfit.

6.4.1.2 Provision for "No Objection" Letters

If the candidate has resided for less than five years in the area making the nomination, the recommending council shall obtain "no objection" letters from the GBC and Temple President(s) of the other area(s) the candidate resided in during the five years previous to his recommendation.

6.4.1.3 Names Sent to All GBC Members

6.4.1.3.1 Letter of Nomination to GBC Corresponding Secretary

The Chairman of the area council shall send a letter of nomination for the *guru* candidate endorsed by the council to the GBC Corresponding Secretary. The letter of endorsement must include the following items:

1. A thorough description of the qualifications of the candidate, showing point by point how he conforms to the GBC standards and guidelines for *guru*.
2. A complete history of the devotional service of the candidate, including the dates and places of his engagements.
3. A list of the names of the members of the nominating council, giving for each member the service, the seniority, his vote, and an explanation for his vote.

6.4.1.3.2 Corresponding Secretary Verifies and Distributes

After verifying that the candidate had been properly endorsed, the Corresponding Secretary shall send the candidate's name to all members of the GBC.

6.4.1.4 Three GBC Objections Veto Candidate

Any member of the GBC who has a misgiving concerning the suitability of a candidate, or who would prefer the matter to be discussed and decided by the GBC body, has six months from his date of notification to file a written statement of non-approval with the GBC Corresponding Secretary. If the Corresponding Secretary receives at least three letters of non-approval, the candidate shall not take up the role of *guru*, and his candidacy shall be considered by the GBC body at its next annual general meeting.

6.4.1.5 Completion of Authorizing Procedure

6.4.1.5.1 Absence of Three Letters of Non-approval

If the GBC Corresponding Secretary has not received at least three letters of non-approval by the end of the six-month period, the GBC Corresponding Secretary shall so inform the Chairman of the recommending council, upon which the candidate, after taking the prescribed vows, shall be authorized to be a *guru* in ISKCON and perform the duties thereof.

6.4.1.5.2 Presence of Three Letters of Non-approval

If there are three letters of non-approval within the six-month period, but subsequently sufficient GBC members withdrew their objections to lower the number of objectors to fewer than three, the Corresponding Secretary shall so inform the Chairman of the recommending council, upon which the candidate, after taking the prescribed vows, shall be authorized to be a *guru* in ISKCON and perform the duties thereof.

6.4.1.5.3 Corresponding Secretary Monitors and Informs

The Corresponding Secretary shall monitor this procedure and keep all the concerned parties informed as needed.

6.4.2 Vows of Guru

A devotee authorized to act as a *guru* in ISKCON must publicly take the following vows in a ceremony before Śrīla Prabhupāda's *vyāsāsana*. A signed copy of the vows must be filed with the GBC Corresponding Secretary:

1. My personal mission as *guru* in ISKCON shall be the same as the mission of Śrīla Prabhupāda: to flood the world with transcendental literature like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and, as Śrīla Prabhupāda said, to "do as I am doing" in establishing ISKCON all over the world.
2. I recognize the GBC as the ultimate managing authority in ISKCON. I support the GBC system and will follow the GBC as Śrīla Prabhupāda desired.
3. I recognize that a bona fide *guru* is first of all a bona fide disciple, and that in all my actions I shall remain surrendered to Śrīla Prabhupāda's orders and the orders of his authorized representatives.
4. As Śrīla Prabhupāda ordered his followers to serve within ISKCON under the GBC, I acknowledge that for me to represent Śrīla Prabhupāda in my service as a *guru* in *paramparā* "under his order," I can do so only as a member of ISKCON. If I leave ISKCON I shall no longer act as *guru*.
5. As a spiritual master, I shall always set a Kṛṣṇa conscious standard for all devotees by my behavior, which shall be strictly regulated and exemplary at all times. As a public representative of ISKCON, I must always conform with ISKCON policies and never act in any way to weaken or jeopardize ISKCON's world-wide mission. I shall not act in a way to diminish any person's faith in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
6. I shall scrupulously study and review all aspiring disciples, and grant initiation only to qualified devotees so as to preserve the seriousness and sanctity of initiation. I shall only accept as disciples candidates who are qualified according to the standards and procedures established by ISKCON law.
7. I shall give my disciples directions and examples in strict conformity with those of Śrīla Prabhupāda. I shall teach all my disciples that they are part of ISKCON.

6.4.3 Standards of Conduct for Gurus in ISKCON

6.4.3.1 General Standards

1. Must always set the highest example for all devotees.
2. Must guide his disciples to follow Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions.
3. Must protect and nourish the faith of all ISKCON devotees in their *guru*, in Śrīla Prabhupāda, and in Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
4. Must encourage newcomers' faith in ISKCON and protect the faith of existing members.
5. Must not give initiation until the approval process has been fully completed.
6. Must not canvass for disciples.
7. Must allow all uninitiated devotees full freedom to exercise their right to accept initiation from the *guru* of their choice.
8. Must allow uninitiated devotees who have preliminarily taken shelter of him the full freedom to change their minds on their choice of initiating *guru*.
9. Since the *guru-dakṣiṇa* received by an ISKCON *guru* is the property of ISKCON, it must be used for the benefit of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. All *guru-dakṣiṇa* must be kept in a special account, preferably an ISKCON account, with at least two signatures, and accurate account records must be kept.

6.4.3.2 Standards in Relation to the GBC Body

1. Must respect the GBC as Śrīla Prabhupāda's chosen successor as the ultimate managing authority of ISKCON and maintain a respectful serving attitude towards the GBC.
2. As a *guru* in *paramparā* from Śrīla Prabhupāda, he must follow Śrīla Prabhupāda in order to work in ISKCON. Therefore, he must accept the GBC Body as his authority and follow the directives of the GBC.
3. Must submit to any disciplinary sanctions imposed by the GBC Body, including not initiating new disciples.

6.4.3.3 Standards in Relation to GBC Zonal Secretaries

1. Must act under the supervision of and in coordination with GBC Zonal Secretaries.
2. Must not change his residence without consulting the local GBC Zonal Secretary beforehand, since such a move may affect the temples and devotees.
3. Must disclose financial records to the GBC Zonal Secretary if the need arises.

6.4.3.4 Standards in Relation to ISKCON Spiritual Authorities

"ISKCON spiritual authority" refers to Temple Presidents, Regional Secretaries, local GBC Zonal Secretaries, and those of similar stature.

1. Must be accountable to the local ISKCON authorities for his actions.
2. Must cooperate with local ISKCON authorities.
3. Must not initiate any devotee who has not received proper recommendation from the appropriate ISKCON spiritual authority.
4. Must instruct disciples and other devotees to cooperate with ISKCON authorities.
5. Must avoid confrontation with ISKCON authorities and settle any misunderstandings amicably.
6. Must not undermine ISKCON authorities in any way.
7. Must not direct disciples to make changes in service or *āśrama* without first securing the consent of the disciple's local authority.
8. Must act according to his position of service in ISKCON and not merely his position as *guru*.

6.4.3.5 Standards in Relation to a Temple

1. Must work and preach for the interest of the temple.
2. Must coordinate any ceremonies or special programs with the temple schedule.
3. Must surrender the engagement in devotional service of his disciples who live in an ISKCON temple to the temple management.
4. Must not transfer disciples from a temple without permission of the Temple President. A *guru* may, however, request a disciple to leave a particular temple, without obtaining the president's consent, when the *guru* considers it a matter of "spiritual life and death" for the disciple, as for example, being regularly

exposed to direct blasphemy of his *guru*, or being unable to follow the four regulative principles. In this case the *guru* must consult with the local GBC Zonal Secretary.

6.4.4 Monitoring of Gurus by the GBC

6.4.4.1 Annual Reports

Each GBC member must submit a form annually to the Executive Committee indicating briefly the status of all approved ISKCON *gurus* normally residing, regularly preaching, or initiating in his zone. (The Executive Committee will assign a GBC member(s) for monitoring each *guru*.)

6.4.4.2 Emergency Reports

If any approved *guru* has:

1. taken reinitiation/shelter of a non-ISKCON *guru* or institution;
2. rejected ISKCON or Śrīla Prabhupāda; or
3. undergone a change of service, of *āśrama*, or of living situation, which the local GBC member feels threatens to hamper the approved *guru's* ability to give guidance or to set a proper standard of conduct for disciples, then the GBC member shall submit an emergency report to the Executive Committee. If possible, this report shall include a written statement from the *guru* in question as to his intentions in regard to his disciples and his devotional service.

If not possible, then the report shall at least include a description of the approved *guru's* intentions as best they can be discerned through the investigation of the GBC member.

The report shall also contain any other information which would be of value to the GBC Body in determining the *guru's* status, as well as the recommendations of the local Temple Presidents, zonal councils, etc.

The Executive Committee shall review the emergency reports and take any necessary action.

6.4.5 Sanctioning of Gurus by the GBC

The GBC Body may apply any of the following sanctions against a *guru* for misconduct.

6.4.5.1 Warning (or Censure)

If a *guru* is found deviating from or neglecting spiritual practices, but the deviation or negligence is not very severe or habitual, or if a *guru* is transgressing the approved standards and guidelines for *guru* behavior (such as canvassing for disciples, etc.) the *guru* should be warned (or censured) confidentially.

6.4.5.2 Probation

If the warnings are not heeded, or if the deviation or neglect of spiritual practices are of a more serious nature, or if the transgressions of *guru* codes of behavior are serious and habitual, the *guru* may be put under probation with specific conditions which regulate his *guru* functions (including temporary withdrawal of authorization to initiate new disciples). In addition he may be given general recommendations or specific activities to perform as part of a program for his rectification and eventual reinstatement.

6.4.5.3 Suspension

If a *guru* blatantly ignores the terms of probation, or repeatedly breaks one or more of the regulative principles, or acts in a manner which seriously and harmfully disregards existing ISKCON or GBC policies, or leaves his *āśrama* of *sannyāsa* without authorization, or leaves the association of devotees and the ISKCON movement, or completely deviates from standard *sādhana*, he may be suspended. If a *guru* is suspended he cannot give initiation, nor maintain an absolute *śikṣa* position in relation with his disciples, nor be introduced as a spiritual master, nor perform his *guru* functions such as receiving *guru-pūjā* or the acceptance of *dakṣiṇa*.

6.4.5.4 Removal

If a *guru* becomes openly inimical to Śrīla Prabhupāda or ISKCON; or otherwise acts demonically; or becomes an impersonalist (*māyāvādī*); or preaches the unauthorized philosophy of *apasampradāya* groups against Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's principles; or blatantly and consistently defies ISKCON and GBC

policies; or if a *guru's* attachment to sense gratification is serious, prolonged, or hopeless, then, as per *sāstric* injunction, he shall be removed from his position as *dīkṣā* or *sīkṣa-guru*.

6.4.6 Renunciation of Guru Responsibilities

1. If a *guru* becomes hopelessly entangled in sense gratification or material attachments and is unable to function or continue acting as spiritual master for his disciples, he may renounce his position by giving written notice to the GBC with a request for the GBC to give direction to his disciples for their further advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
2. If a *guru* feels for other reasons that he is unable to function or continue acting as a spiritual master for his disciples, he should submit his case to the GBC to receive direction for himself and his disciples.

6.4.7 Specifically Outlawed Doctrines and Practices

6.4.7.1 “Zonal-Ācārya” System

No *guru* should declare himself or allow himself to be declared an “*ācārya*” or “present *ācārya*” for ISKCON or for a geographical area of ISKCON. There should be no use of the word “*ācārya*” as a title of office.

6.4.7.2 “Posthumous Ṛtvik” Doctrine

The doctrine that Śrīla Prabhupāda continues to initiate direct *dīkṣā* disciples after his departure from this world through officiating priests (*ṛtviks*) is a dangerous philosophical deviation. It is totally prohibited in ISKCON. No devotee shall participate in such posthumous *ṛtvik* initiation ceremonies in any capacity including acting as *ṛtvik*, initiate, assistant, organizer, or financier. No ISKCON devotee shall advocate or support its practice.

6.4.8 Worship and Etiquette

6.4.8.1 Ceremonies

6.4.8.1.1 *Guru-pūjā*

The disciples of ISKCON *gurus* other than Śrīla Prabhupāda may offer *guru-pūjā* to their *gurus* outside the temple room. The temple should provide facility for these disciples' worship.

6.4.8.1.2 *Vyāsa-pūjā*

Vyāsa-pūjā for ISKCON *gurus* other than Śrīla Prabhupāda should only be observed on one day a year coinciding with the birthday of the *guru*. This celebration may be held in the temple room.

6.4.8.2 Restricted Titles

A *guru* cannot not use or allow his disciples to apply to him the honorific title “His Divine Grace” or the honorifics ending in “-*pāda*” in written public documents or in open public forum. However, such titles may be used in communications among disciples or from disciples to their *guru*.

6.4.8.3 Photograph on Altar

A *pūjārī* who is not initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda shall keep the picture of his *guru* on the altar while offering *āratī*. The picture must be substantially smaller than those of the predecessor *ācāryas* in disciplic succession, or, if not substantially smaller, be placed on a lower level. After the *āratī*, the picture should be removed from the altar.

6.4.8.4 Seat in Temple Room

There should be one seat reserved for ISKCON *gurus* and their Godbrothers/sisters for giving *sāstra* classes in the temple room. Disciples of ISKCON *gurus* should sit on a lower *āsana* or cushion, since it is improper to sit on the same *āsana* used by one's *dīkṣā-guru*.

6.4.8.5 Guru Under Suspension

6.4.8.5.1 No Public Worship

There should be no public worship of a *guru* who is under suspension by the GBC.

6.4.8.5.2 Disciples Offering Āratī

While performing *āratī* to the Deities a disciple of a suspended *guru* should offer the various articles through Śrīla Prabhupāda to the disciplic succession.

6.4.8.5.3 Disciples Offering Bhoga

When offering *bhoga* to the Deities in the temple or outside the temple in ISKCON establishments like restaurants, a disciple of a suspended *guru* must offer through Śrīla Prabhupāda to the disciplic succession.

6.4.8.5.4 Disciples Offering Obeisances

While offering obeisances in a public place a disciple of a suspended *guru* should recite Śrīla Prabhupāda's *praṇama-mantra* aloud and should chant the *mantras* to the suspended *guru* silently or not at all.

6.4.8.6 Mūrtis of Gurus Inside the Temple Room

There shall be no establishment of *mūrtis* in any ISKCON temple room of ISKCON *gurus* subsequent to Śrīla Prabhupāda in succession.(97-617)

6.5 Guidelines

6.5.1 Rejection of a Fallen "Guru"

N.B.: The following laws are based on *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-bhajanāmṛta* by Śrī Narahari Sārkara (an associate of Śrī Caitanya), *Bhakti-sandharbha* by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, and *Jaiva-dharma* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, in addition to the writings of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

6.5.1.1 When a Fallen *Guru* May Be Rejected

If it is ascertained either by the admission of the *guru*, or by the testimony of irrefutably reliable witness(es) that the *guru* was fallen at the time of initiation, then the disciple has a legitimate reason to reject him and take re-initiation from a bona fide spiritual master.

6.5.1.2 When a Fallen *Guru* Must Be Rejected

6.5.1.2.1 Hopelessly Entangled in Sense Gratification

If a *guru* has become hopelessly entangled in sense gratification, and it has been established by reliable testimony or by his own admissions that he has been regularly violating the regulative principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and if there is virtually no hope for his rectification, then the disciple should reject him and may accept re-initiation.

6.5.1.2.2 Takes on Demonic Qualities

If the spiritual master takes on demonic qualities and becomes inimical to ISKCON, he should be rejected and the disciple may take re-initiation.

6.5.1.3 When *Not* to Reject a Fallen *Guru*

If a *guru* is engaged in sense gratification, violating one or more of the regulative principles, but there is hope that he can be rectified, then his disciples should not reject him but should allow time for such rectification to take place, and they should take shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda and senior Vaiṣṇavas as *sikṣa-gurus*.

6.5.1.4 When a Suspended Guru *May Be Rejected*

A disciple of a suspended *guru* who has severely lost his faith in his spiritual master, or who has developed an offensive mentality towards him, and who is unable to regain his faith, even after hearing many instructions in the matter, may take permission from the spiritual master for release to accept a different initiating *guru*. The devotee should act in consultation with his local GBC representative. If the suspended *guru* withholds his permission, then the disciple may seek permission from the GBC Body.

6.5.1.5 “*Guru Āśraya*” for Guidance

Devotees whose initiating spiritual master has fallen down should take guidance from the GBC papers entitled “*Guru Āśraya*” and “Questions and Answers About Reinitiation.” These papers also present ISKCON’s guidelines on the importance of taking shelter of a spiritual master and the role of *śikṣa-guru*.

6.6 The Śikṣa-Guru

6.6.1 Definition

In accordance with the instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda in the Caitanya Caritamrita,

“A devotee must have only one initiating spiritual master because in the scriptures acceptance of more than one is always forbidden. There is no limit, however, to the number of instructing spiritual masters one may accept.” (CC Adi 1.35 Purport)

“Śrīla Kṛṣṇa dasa Kaviraja Gosvami states that the instructing spiritual master is a bona fide representative of Sri Kṛṣṇa. The initiating spiritual master is a personal manifestation of Śrīla Madana-mohana vigraha, whereas the instructing spiritual master is a personal representative of Śrīla Govindadeva vigraha.” (CC Adi 1.47 Purport),

Devotees may accept a devotee as his/her śikṣa-guru and serve him as a representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If they are under shelter or initiated by a spiritual master in good standing, they are to first acquire the blessings of their dīkṣā-guru in order to accept a śikṣa-guru.

6.6.2 Procedure to be Followed to be Recognized as a Formal Śikṣa-Guru

A devotee may serve as *dīkṣā* or *śikṣa-guru* in ISKCON after completing the authorization procedure as given in Section 7.4 “Procedure for Authorizing *Dīkṣā* and Śikṣa Gurus.”

7

Discipleship in ISKCON

7.1 Right of Devotees to Choose their *Guru*

7.1.1 Rights of ISKCON Members to Worship their *Gurus*

As it is enjoined in scripture that a devotee must honor his spiritual master as much as he honors the Lord, every devotee in ISKCON accordingly has the right to worship, glorify, and serve his *guru*. So long as the *guru* is in good standing, no ISKCON Leader shall curtail or abrogate that right. Temple Presidents must provide devotees the necessary time and facility for them to worship their *gurus*. The disciples, however, must carry out their devotions to *guru* in harmony with the orderly running of temple affairs and without imposing their own *guru-sevā* upon disciples of other *gurus*.

7.1.2 Right to Accept Instruction and Initiation

All members of ISKCON have the right to accept *dīkṣā* or *śikṣa* from the *guru* of their choice, provided that the *guru* is qualified and approved to initiate, the candidate is eligible to accept initiation, and that all the relevant procedures set forth in ISKCON laws have been strictly observed.

7.1.3 Right to Take Association from Any Approved *Guru*

Any uninitiated devotee in ISKCON has the right to read the publications, hear the recorded talks and *bhajanas*, take *darśana* of, correspond with, or associate in other various feasible ways with any authorized ISKCON *guru*.

7.1.4 Right to Become an “Aspirant for Shelter and Initiation”

1. Someone who has been connected with the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement for more than one year, either as a congregational member or as a mature child brought up in a Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee’s household, shall be allowed to accept an ISKCON *guru* as a *śikṣa-guru* and be accepted by that *guru* as an aspirant for shelter and initiation in the future, provided the Temple President or *gurukula* principal (for *gurukula* students) gives his approval, and, in the case of a minor child, a parent gives approval.
2. Someone who has accepted an ISKCON *guru* as *śikṣa-guru* and is an “aspirant for shelter and initiation” may cultivate a personal spiritual relationship with the spiritual master and, by taking personal guidance, try to progress further in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
3. Someone who has accepted an ISKCON *guru* as *śikṣa-guru* and is an “aspirant for shelter and initiation” and who wants to subsequently accept another ISKCON *guru* as *śikṣa-guru*, etc., should inform both *gurus* and follow the procedure as provided for in above (1).

7.2 Responsibility of Candidate for Initiation

It is the personal responsibility of candidates for initiation to correctly decide, by the exercise of their own intelligence, to surrender to a particular devotee as spiritual master. Candidates for initiation should accept initiation from a spiritual master only after developing firm and mature faith in that devotee and in his ability to take them back to Godhead. *Sādhu*, *śāstra*, and *guru* are the authoritative references to apply in ascertaining the level of advancement of a devotee.

Receiving official ISKCON *guru* approval signifies that the devotee has successfully completed the authorization process set forth in ISKCON law, and that in the judgment of certain senior devotees the candidate measures up to the standards and guidelines given in ISKCON law. However, such approval is not automatically to be taken as a statement about the degree of God-realization of the approved *guru*, and it is not intended to replace the intelligent discrimination of the candidate.

7.2.1 First (Harināma) Initiation

7.2.1.1 Qualifications for First Initiation

7.2.1.1.1 One Year Preparatory Period

In order to receive first initiation one must have been engaged favorably in devotional service, strictly following the four regulative principles and chanting sixteen rounds a day, for at least one year without interruption.

7.2.1.1.2 First Six-month Period

During the first six months of following the four regulative principles and chanting sixteen rounds daily, a new devotee who is aspiring for initiation should not commit himself to a particular initiating *guru*. Rather, he should chant Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *praṇāma-mantra* and worship him as Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON and as his *śikṣa-guru*.

7.2.1.1.3 Second Six-month Period

After successfully completing the first six-month preparatory period, and after passing the required examination, the candidate may choose his future *dīkṣā-guru*. Receiving permission from that *guru*, and

notifying the local Temple President, the candidate should take shelter and begin to worship that *guru* as his own spiritual master and chant his *praṇāma-mantra*. Actual initiation may take place only after a minimum six-month period from the date shelter was taken and the local Temple President notified.

7.2.1.1.4 Devotees Residing Within Temple Communities

In addition to satisfying the above requirements, devotees residing in temple communities must, during the one-year preparatory period, regularly attend the full morning program.

7.2.1.1.5 Devotees Residing Outside of Temple Communities

Devotees who do not live in a temple community and who cannot come daily to the temple programs may be initiated provided they have regular morning programs at home or attend regular morning programs at the *nāma-haṭṭa* center.

7.2.1.1.6 Pass Examination

Before a devotee can be permitted to formally take shelter of a particular ISKCON spiritual master and be subsequently recommended for initiation, he or she must demonstrate a basic understanding of Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings by answering an oral or written test administered by the Temple President or other recommending authority. The questions to be answered are:

1. What are the qualifications of a bona fide spiritual master?
2. Why are you convinced to follow the orders of the spiritual master in this life, and even life after life?
3. Why does one worship the spiritual master like God?
4. Do you believe the spiritual master speaks the Absolute Truth? If so, why?
5. Under what circumstances should the spiritual master be rejected?
6. What are the qualifications and responsibilities of a disciple?
7. What is the unique position of Śrīla Prabhupāda in ISKCON?
8. Why do you accept Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead?
9. Why do we follow the four regulative principles?
10. Why do we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa?
11. What is the position of the GBC Body?
12. Explain the difference between the body and the self.
13. What is ISKCON, and why should one remain in ISKCON?

7.2.1.2 Change of Prospective Guru

Sometimes a candidate for initiation who had formally accepted shelter from one spiritual master as a prospective initiating *guru* may subsequently decide to change to another. Such a candidate must communicate this change to the former prospective spiritual master, new prospective spiritual master, and local Temple President. The candidate must also remain fixed under the shelter of the newly proposed initiating *guru* for six continuous months prior to receiving initiation, starting from the time of newly accepting formal shelter.

7.2.1.3 Procedure of Formal Recommendation

This formal recommendation process is not intended to replace or overshadow the (more important) need for other regular contact among the various ISKCON devotees guiding the candidate and his prospective spiritual master regarding the spiritual progress of the candidate. Furthermore, the prospective spiritual master is under no obligation to initiate a devotee because a proper recommendation has been given.

7.2.1.3.1 *Guru* Receives Recommendation in Writing

Before a candidate can receive first initiation, his prospective *guru* must receive a formal written recommendation from the appropriate ISKCON spiritual authority, as determined by the candidate's situation.

7.2.1.3.2 Contents of Recommendation

The recommendation of the recommending ISKCON authority must certify that the candidate has fulfilled the qualifications for initiation to the best of his understanding. The recommending authority must specifically attest that the candidate has been engaged in favorable devotional service, has chanted sixteen rounds of

japa daily, has adhered to the four regulative principles, and has regularly attended a morning program, all for the previous twelve months.

The recommender must also attest that the candidate is sufficiently knowledgeable in the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and in the structure and purpose of ISKCON to have passed the prescribed examination, and that he has accepted shelter of the *guru* for at least six months.

7.2.1.3.3 Recommender Contacts Previous Authorities

If the candidate has not been serving continuously within the jurisdiction of the recommending ISKCON authority for the previous twelve months, then the recommender must still satisfy himself with the activities of the candidate for the full twelve-month period by contacting other ISKCON authorities with knowledge of the candidate's activities during the balance time.

7.2.1.3.4 Devotees Residing In Temple Communities

Before a candidate can receive first initiation, the *guru* must receive a written recommendation from the Temple President under whom the candidate is currently serving.

If the Temple President is also the prospective initiating *guru*, then the following special procedures must be observed: Either the local GBC shall write the recommendation himself, or he shall establish a local Board of Initiations, which does not include the prospective *guru* as a member, to review the qualifications of the candidates. The chairman of this Board of Initiations may then prepare the necessary written recommendations. In the extreme case that the local GBC, Temple President, and prospective *guru* are all the same person, the GBC Executive Committee shall establish the appropriate procedures to be followed.

7.2.1.3.5 Devotees Residing Away from Temple Communities

Qualified candidates for initiation who reside away from temple communities may be recommended for initiation (in the manner prescribed above) by one of the following spiritual authorities (excluding the prospective initiating *guru*) who knows them well: a local GBC, the nearest Temple President, the local Regional Secretary, the concerned congregational preaching director, or an ISKCON *sannyāsī* who is regularly preaching in that area.

7.2.1.4 Vows of Disciple

All new initiates must take the following vows at the time of initiation:

1. To chant a minimum of sixteen rounds daily without fail.
2. To strictly follow the four regulative principles of no meat eating, no illicit sex, no intoxication, no gambling.
3. To accept the order of the spiritual master as one's life and soul.
4. To accept discipleship into the Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya-sampradāya through the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON and to remain faithful to their order and teachings.
5. To remain faithful to Śrīla Prabhupāda's order by maintaining loyalty to ISKCON and its ultimate managing authority, the GBC.

7.2.2 Second, or Brahminical, Initiation

7.2.2.1 Qualification for Second Initiation

7.2.2.1.1 One-year Wait Between First and Second Initiation

To be qualified to receive second initiation, a first-initiated devotee must have been steadily engaged in favorable devotional service, chanting sixteen rounds a day without fail, and strictly following the four regulative principles for a period of at least one year from the time of receiving first initiation. In addition, the candidate must have regularly attended a morning program, whether in a temple, preaching center, *nāma-haṭṭa* center, or at home.

7.2.2.1.2 Two-year Wait for Those Who Fall Severely

A devotee who, after receiving first initiation, falls severely from the spiritual standard by neglecting or forsaking his initiation vows in a serious way or by rejecting the association of ISKCON devotees for a

prolonged time, shall, after he returns to normal practice, be required to wait for at least two years before being given second initiation.

7.2.2.1.3 Examination Option of Initiating *Guru*

It is the responsibility of the initiating *guru* to determine the fitness of his disciple for brahminical initiation. To help do this, he may require his disciple to pass a suitable examination.

7.2.2.2 Procedure for Formal Recommendation

7.2.2.2.1 *Guru* Receives Recommendation in Writing

The *guru* of a candidate for second initiation must receive a written recommendation from the appropriate ISKCON authority. The appropriate authority is determined in the same manner as described above for first initiation.

7.2.2.2.2 Contents of Letter of Recommendation

The recommending authority must certify that the candidate has fulfilled the qualifications for second initiation to the best of his understanding. The recommending authority must specifically attest that:

1. the candidate has been steadily engaged in favorable devotional service, has chanted sixteen rounds of *japa* daily, adhered to the four regulative principles, and regularly attended a morning program, all for the previous twelve months (having received first initiation more than twelve months before) and
2. the candidate has either not fallen severely since first initiation or has been in good standing for at least two years since returning to normal practice.

7.2.2.2.3 Recommender Contacts Previous Authorities

As in the case of a recommendation for first initiation, if the candidate has not been serving continuously within the jurisdiction of the recommending ISKCON authority for the previous twelve months, then the recommender must still satisfy himself with the activities of the candidate for the full twelve-month period by contacting other ISKCON authorities who have knowledge of the candidate's activities during the balance time.

7.2.2.3 Restoration of Brahminical Status

If an initiated *brāhmaṇa* falls severely from the spiritual standard by neglecting or forsaking his initiation vows in a serious way or by rejecting the regular association of devotees for a prolonged time, and then later returns to the spiritual standard, the following procedure is to be observed:

1. The devotee should not wear a sacred thread, chant *gāyatrī-mantra*, or serve the Deity until he has strictly followed and practiced devotional service for a period of no less than six months.
2. He may put on the sacred thread, resume chanting *gāyatrī*, and serve the Deity only after he proves himself fit in the judgment of his spiritual master and local spiritual authority.
3. If, in the judgment of his spiritual master, the deviation was exceptionally severe or prolonged, the spiritual master may again give the disciple *gāyatrī-mantra*. If the spiritual master is beyond mortal vision, the local GBC representative shall decide the proper course of action.

7.2.4 Initiation Only from Approved *Gurus*

Devotees who live or serve in ISKCON may take initiation only from ISKCON approved *gurus*.

7.2.4.1 Violators

7.2.4.1.1 First Initiation Outside

ISKCON members who in violation of ISKCON law take initiation from *gurus* who have not been approved to initiate in ISKCON shall not be permitted to serve within ISKCON. If the non-approved *guru* has an institution or *āśrama* outside ISKCON, then according to standard etiquette, his disciples should serve within the institution of their *guru* and should not serve within ISKCON. (This rule does not apply to persons who were already initiated before they became ISKCON members.)

7.2.4.1.2 Other Initiations Outside

Anyone initiated in ISKCON who has taken any further initiation, or reinitiation, from a non-approved *guru* must renounce their initiation from the non-approved *guru* in order to work within ISKCON. Their ISKCON spiritual master (or if their spiritual master is beyond mortal vision, the local GBC) shall decide the proper procedure for reinstating them in ISKCON, including the need for taking any further initiation.

7.2.4.2 Prior Initiation by Non-Bona Fide Gurus

Persons who have taken initiation from non-bona fide *gurus* before becoming members of ISKCON should follow the injunction of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī that such a useless *guru*, a family priest acting as *guru*, should be given up, and that the proper, bona fide *guru* should be accepted.

7.2.5 Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Disciple by First Initiation

A devotee who has received first initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda has become Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disciple. By accepting second initiation from a Godbrother after Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disappearance, the disciple further confirms his relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda and also becomes a disciple of that initiating Godbrother. The second initiation strengthens, not diminishes, one’s standing as Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disciple. A disciple should always respect a worthy Godbrother from whom he has received second initiation. What such a devotee and the second-initiating *guru* expect from one another in their relationship shall arise from their own mutual understanding.

7.2.6 Reinitiation

A devotee whose *guru* has fallen and who seeks re-initiation from an approved *guru* must observe the following requirements:

1. a six-month period of formally taking shelter,
2. a formal letter of recommendation from the appropriate local authority, and
3. acceptance by the initiating *guru*.

7.3 Guidelines

7.3.1 Unauthorized “Initiation” Ceremonies

In cases where the formal *guru*-disciple relationship has not been properly sanctioned by procedures given in ISKCON Law, no ISKCON member shall engage in giving any of the elements of the initiation ceremony—such as:

giving a devotional name, giving sanctified chanting beads, or neck beads, or participating in some ceremony or ritual of commitment—in any number or combination, to other devotees in ISKCON or its congregations, with the stated or unstated purpose or effect of creating the resemblance of a formal *guru*-disciple relationship.

When such unauthorized activities have already taken place:

- a. all participants should be informed that no initiation has taken place, nor any binding pledge leading towards initiation.
- b. The junior devotee in the transaction should seek to establish a relationship with an authorized initiating *guru* in whom he can place full faith.
- c. All devotees must cease using any names given, if any. (96)

8

ISKCON Members

8.1 Principles

8.1.1 Faith in ISKCON's GBC Body

Faith in the GBC as the ultimate managing authority in ISKCON, shall be preserved, protected and enhanced by all ISKCON members.

8.1.2 Regarding Local Laws

ISKCON members are law abiding citizens. However, where demonic laws interfere with the execution of bona fide preaching duties then one can resist such orders. In such cases Śrīla Prabhupāda recommended to do the needful taking into consideration the circumstances of the laws of the country, the customs of the local people, the reputation of our society and the example which will be set for the future devotees to follow.

8.1.3 Preaching Krishna Consciousness As It Is

It is the duty of the Society's preachers to present the Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy as it is presented in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. (76)

8.1.4 Standing of Members

8.1.4.1 Standards for Devotees In Good Standing

A devotee in good standing may enjoy all the privileges which are normally offered to all the members of the Society, in accordance to their situation, as per ISKCON Law, the ISKCON constitution and the GBC resolutions.

8.1.4.2 Principles for Determining Who Is "In Good Standing"

1. An ISKCON devotee (temple resident/ congregational) who follows the rules and regulations appropriate to his situation, who is not acting inimically to ISKCON or its interests, who is not put under any disciplinary mandate, and;
2. Anyone serving in ISKCON who is a disciple of a bona fide *guru*, who is faithfully following his vows and obligations to his *guru*, and;
3. A person who is appropriately adhering to the rules and regulations in his *āśrama* and
4. A spiritual authority who is not on probation or suspension—is in good standing.

This list is not exhaustive, the GBC or its delegated authorities may add standards for determining devotees in good standing as required.

8.2. Duties

8.2.1 Loyalty to ISKCON and Śrīla Prabhupāda

8.2.1.1 Seeking Instruction Outside ISKCON Improperly

Since all the spiritual knowledge and instruction required is available in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and from ISKCON, no ISKCON member shall be allowed to seek spiritual instruction from any other person or institution outside of ISKCON without approval of the GBC Body. Any member of ISKCON who willfully disobeys the above order will thereby sever his connection with ISKCON.(82)

1. Although all respects should be shown to senior Vaiṣṇavas of the *Gauḍīya-māṭha* or other non-ISKCON Vaiṣṇavas, no one should independently approach these respected personalities with the intention of begging advice or opinions regarding management or any controversial matters pertaining to ISKCON. The GBC is the ultimate authority for resolving such matters, and its decisions should be accepted.(79)

8.2.1.2 Prohibition to Lead Anyone Away from ISKCON

As ISKCON is spiritually non-different from His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, no one has the right to lead anyone away from ISKCON.(82)

8.2.1.3 Initiation Regulation

Devotees who live and work within ISKCON must be initiated in ISKCON, except one previously initiated by a recognized *sampradāya* who later wants to join and serve in ISKCON under the approval and direction of the local GBC.(82)

8.2.1.4 Initiated ISKCON Members Taking Further Initiation Outside of ISKCON

1. Any ISKCON Leader, *sannyāsī*, or senior devotee who was initiated in ISKCON from a bona fide spiritual master who has taken further initiation outside of it, without appropriate permission, must renounce their non-ISKCON initiation, receive a clearance and be re-assigned a preaching field in order to work again within ISKCON. (82)
2. Such reformed devotees shall be reassigned a preaching field by the GBC Executive Committee, or a Divisional Council and in cases not involving a very senior devotee the local GBC Zonal Secretary, for a one year probation.(82)
3. Such reformed devotees will be reassigned a preaching field by the GBC officers committee for a one year probation.(82)
4. To avoid offenses to Śrīla Prabhupāda and to avoid offenses to his godbrothers, the GBC reminds all ISKCON devotees of Śrīla Prabhupāda's instruction that in general we should avoid the association of His godbrothers and members of other spiritual groups unless one has permission from a GBC member for some specific purpose. Intimate *śikṣa* association is prohibited from non-ISKCON spiritual masters.(87)

8.2.1.5 Resident Devotees Normally Initiated in ISKCON

Devotees who live and work within ISKCON must be initiated in ISKCON except if someone was previously initiated by a recognized *sampradāya* who afterwards wants to join and serve in ISKCON under the approval and direction of the local GBC.(82)

8.2.1.6 Reasonable Warnings of a Spiritual Authority's Deviation

That, when reasonable warning is given by the GBC Body that a particular authority is deviating, followers who continue to accept instructions from such deviants cannot claim to be exonerated from personal responsibility by virtue of obediently or blindly following that authority.(93)

8.2.1.7 Association with Non-ISKCON Vaiṣṇavas and Sādhus

1. In obedience to the instruction of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the GBC directs that the members of ISKCON should respect all senior Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas outside ISKCON, but should not intimately associate with them, personally or through printed or recorded media, for guidance, teaching, instruction, or initiation as their presentation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness often differs from that of Śrīla Prabhupāda in emphasis, balance and other aspects of both teaching and practice.
2. This resolution is intended to apply categorically to all ISKCON members. ISKCON Leaders' first responsibility is to give considerate direction, guidance, and counseling to any ISKCON devotees personally affected by this resolution so as to bring them back to the path set by Śrīla Prabhupāda.
In any case, those who continue to act in violation of this resolution are subject to sanctions by Temple Presidents and GBC Zonal Secretaries, who may exercise their discretion to prohibit any such devotees from living on ISKCON properties or participating in ISKCON functions.
Those who persist in violating this resolution are cautioned they may be reported to the GBC Executive Committee for immediate action or action at the following year's annual GBC meeting. The Executive Committee is hereby given authority to undertake any action up to and including suspension from ISKCON of any violator at any time between the GBC annual general meetings at Māyāpur.
3. ISKCON devotees should carefully avoid hearing or speaking personal criticism of the Godbrothers of Śrīla Prabhupāda.(87)

8.2.1.8 Avoiding Rasika Literature

The members of ISKCON should regularly study *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and the other books given by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. The recent proliferation in ISKCON of literature focusing on "rasika-bhakti," intimate Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, and other subject matters suitable only for highly advanced souls, represents a departure from Śrīla Prabhupāda's orders and obstructs the smooth spiritual progress of ISKCON devotees. ISKCON members should therefore avoid collecting, reading, discussing, or distributing such literature.(95)

8.2.2 Support and Adjust to GBC Decisions

The authorized forum for GBC policy is the annual GBC meeting, annual ISKCON Leaders meeting, annual *sannyāsīs* sannyāsīs ized forum for GBC policy is the annual GBC meeting, annual ISKCON Leaders meeting, annual

b____,Øb Êg`____đØb____đØb____ÔØb_vg`____đØb Ó N O ____ôØb_ûS` \Üb_VW@_PÜb_2____@_b_üËC_@____tÜb_(g@_rÜb_Ë_C_IËC_Ë_M¼_«¼_ú½_↓_şÁ_'Á_ÄÄ_ÄÄ_Ä_Ä_year, make decisions, and follow them during the year. Activities contrary to this, shall be considered as a serious breach of etiquette and discipline.(86)

When there are significant difficulties with a GBC member one should state his problem in writing and forward to the GBC Executive Committee for necessary consideration.(82)

8.3. Categories of ISKCON Members

8.3.1 Temple-dependent Resident Members

8.3.1.1 Definition

A Temple-dependent Resident Member is defined as a devotee who is dependent upon ISKCON for residential facilities, food, clothing, and basic health care.

Temple-dependent Resident Members have voluntarily taken a more renounced, less materialistic, plainer form of life for the purpose of dedicating maximum energy toward spiritual advancement and devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Such devotees are free to leave the *āśrama* at any time and continue their residence on their own free will for the purpose of engaging in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

8.3.1.2 Duties

Temple-dependent Resident Members shall have the following obligations and responsibilities

1. To maintain the Kṛṣṇa conscious standards of behavior, including following the four regulative principles and chanting a minimum of sixteen rounds of *japa* per day.
2. To attend the spiritual programs in the temple regularly.
3. To adhere to ISKCON Law and the regulations of the temple or *āśrama*.
4. To be honest and straightforward in all dealings.
5. To be loyal to ISKCON and report any deviations from ISKCON standards to higher authorities.
6. To make no claim of ownership over ISKCON property which has been allocated for use in one's service, and to return such property when requested or when one has decided to leave the *āśrama* or community of residence.
7. To agree to be transferred from one temple to another as may be needed from time to time. Such circumstances require mutual consideration. (Special consideration and sensitivity should be given when asking families with children to transfer to another temple.)
8. To take any regular health test according to local temple policy.
9. To settle disputes through the ISKCON Judicial System or through ISKCON approved arbitration, and not to take recourse in a court of law against ISKCON except where expressly allowed under ISKCON Law.

8.3.1.3 Regulations

8.3.1.3.1 Standards of Service

1. *Sannyāsīs*, *brahmacārīs*, *vanaprasthas*, and brahminical *grhasthas* (living in facilities provided by ISKCON) are to be fully engaged in devotional service with all their time and energy.(92)
2. There are *grhasthas* who dedicate the major part of their time and energies to render devotional service in ISKCON. They need, however, to earn a minimum amount of income for family obligations that are not borne by ISKCON. They are exempted from the fifty percent(50%) donation rule. (92)

Temple-dependent Resident Members shall engage in devotional service as instructed by the local authority with a minimum of 48 hours of practical service a week.

8.3.1.3.2 Change of Temples for Temple Resident Devotees

8.3.1.3.2.1 Both Temple Presidents Should Agree

If a devotee wants to change temples, his present Temple President should agree as well as the new Temple President. The GBC member may be consulted if there is disagreement.

8.3.1.3.2.2 Permission is Necessary To Serve in India

Any temple devotee seriously desiring to go and serve ISKCON in India must obtain the permission of his GBC Zonal Secretary and Temple President. The GBC Zonal Secretary should not discourage serious devotees in their zone from serving ISKCON in India if they are having a serious and appropriate service to do in India. However, they shall still require the permission of GBC Zonal Secretary and Temple President.(77)

8.3.1.3.2.3 Devotees should not be encouraged to Abandon Prescribed Temple Duties

Even if there is any alleged deficiency in a temple program, that is not sufficient grounds in itself for a *sannyāsī*, party leader or anyone else to encourage a devotee to abandon his prescribed duty in the temple. If the Temple President and GBC representative do not correct a deficiency in a period of time agreed upon by the Temple President, the GBC representative and the devotee making a complaint, the GBC, Divisional Council or appropriate authority may transfer the devotee to other duties.(77)

8.3.1.3.3 Child Protection Concerns

Persons who after an ISKCON investigation are confirmed to be guilty of child abuse must report their status to the local Temple President upon their arrival in an ISKCON community. Also, it is the obligation of a Temple President to determine, for every member joining his community, if the newcomer is a confirmed

child abuser. The Temple President is then obliged to notify the local householders and GBC of the offender's presence.(94)

8.3.1.3.4 Written Agreement Between the Temple and the Resident

A simple written agreement should exist between the temple and dependent resident members stating conditions under which the residential dependent members will be maintained by the temple.

8.3.1.4 Facilities

The facilities ISKCON temples should provide for Temple-dependent Resident Devotees will vary according to local conditions. Generally, though, the minimum should include:

8.3.1.4.1 For All Members

1. Modest but adequate dormitory facility.
2. Adequate *Kṛṣṇa-prasādam*.
3. Suitable clothing for protection of body.
4. Basic medical care or health insurance as affordable by the temple. (Strong encouragement is given that temple managers see this as a basic requirement and not a luxury.)
5. To not have their privilege of residence revoked without adequate cause.
6. Reasonable allowance for study time.
7. Sufficient time for health programs if required.
8. Regular program for attending India pilgrimage.
9. Reasonable time for cultivation of family members.

8.3.1.4.2 For Married Families, Additionally

1. Adequate residence for family and children.
2. Education for children
3. Life insurance for parents to maintain dependents in case of unexpected death, as affordable by temple.
4. Reasonable arrangements for family needs to be met with dignity.

8.3.1.5 Financial Standards

1. That, since preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the principle business of ISKCON, the GBC recommends that, as far as possible, devotees living in the *āśramas* of ISKCON temples should collect money through preaching activities such as book distribution, membership, cultivation of the congregation, restaurants, temple stores, etc. Since Śrīla Prabhupāda stated that "business means to help the preaching", it may also be necessary for ISKCON Leaders to organize businesses which utilize devotee resources in generating income for the support of the temple. However, ISKCON Leaders involved in such activities should insure that the main focus of the temple remains on preaching and not on business.

Business activities other than as described above are permissible, provided they are not in contradiction to the regulative principles. As far as possible, ISKCON Leaders should encourage devotees for preaching work, while also engaging devotees according to their nature and *āśrama*, and the temple needs.

Recognizing that there are varied economic and social conditions in different parts of the world, as well as the fact that sometimes special collection drives have to be organized for particular projects, the GBC accepts that the sale of paraphernalia may be necessary as a means of generating income. These programs of paraphernalia sales, however, fall within the realm of "business", or "collection" activities and should therefore not be termed as "*saṅkīrtana*".

2. That transactions between ISKCON entities and devotees involving the transfer of funds over US \$1,000 or equivalent, should be substantiated by written contracts, purchase orders, invoices and/or other appropriate documentation. This principle should also be followed in dealings between devotees and non-devotees.(92)

8.3.2 Non-dependent Temple Resident Members

Those *grhasthas* who choose to engage in full-time occupation outside of ISKCON must follow the fifty percent(50%) donation rule, and all of their non-occupational time should also be engaged in devotional service, sacrificing a major portion given in voluntary service to ISKCON.(92)

8.4 Disciplinary Remedial Measures

ISKCON devotees (temple-resident or congregation) shall be subject to the following disciplinary remedial measures actions:

8.4.1 Censure

8.4.1.1 Definition

A censure is to be understood as a reprimanding remedial measure aimed at reformation of the member and prevention of further offending acts. It is the warning voice of more serious disciplinary action.

8.4.1.2 Procedure

The Temple President along with two other temple officers, or by a two third(2/3) majority vote of the Temple Board, if it exists, or by any higher local spiritual authority as per ISKCON Law shall have the power to censure an ISKCON devotee serving within their region.

8.4.1.3 Reasons for Censuring

An ISKCON Devotee may be censured for any of the following transgressions:

8.4.1.3.1 Misconduct and Indiscipline

1. Willful violation of GBC resolutions.
2. Vilification of ISKCON or the GBC Body or other ISKCON Authority
3. Misconduct in temple or spiritual community (physical assault except in self-defense, inappropriate dealings with opposite sex, abusive behavior to other devotees, and so on).
4. Habitually or knowingly making false charges and accusations or other consistent *vaiṣṇava-aparādhās*.
5. Seriously interfering with the *guru* and disciple relationship with another devotee.
6. Duplicitous or untruthful dealings (lying to spiritual authorities, and other serious prevarication).
7. Acting irresponsibly in publicly expressing grievances rather than taking recourse to the prescribed process for settling grievances as per ISKCON Law.

8.4.1.3.2 Improper Discharge and Neglect of Duty, and Misuse of Funds.

1. Consistent disobedience of service instructions.
2. Consistent failure to be accountable to authorities.
3. Consistent or serious misuse of ISKCON funds or any acts that endangers the temple or preaching mission.
4. The GBC Executive Committee, Ministry of Justice, and the Board of Education are authorized to establish time limits wherein their directives (action points) are to be carried out.
5. If whoever is named in the directive (including GBC members, Temple Presidents, *sannyāsīs*, or any member of ISKCON) and who has received notice of the directive either personally or through registered post, does not act upon the given direction in the designated time, they are to be automatically censured and subject to probation if they continue to delay or not comply with the directive, are uncooperative or are intransigent.
6. At the time of censure, the censured party has the right to “show cause” why there may be extenuating circumstances making it impossible to carry out the directive. This “show cause” will be presented to and decided on by the body which issued the initial directive and their decision will be binding until the next annual GBC meeting where the situation will be reviewed.(97-401)

8.4.1.3.3 Spiritual Discrepancy

1. Willful and consistent neglect to follow the rules and regulations of Kṛṣṇa consciousness as appropriate to the vows one has taken.
2. Conscious and serious philosophical deviation from Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings.
3. Consistently irregular in their personal *sādhana* as appropriate to the vows one has taken and without bona fide cause.

If the order to censure is given, it shall be put in writing by the respective authorities and copies preserved. Furthermore, it shall be carefully impressed upon the offender the meaning of the censure note. (See appendix section for proforma wording.(page.180))

A member who has been censured three times shall be placed on probation.

Each censure shall last for a period of three years after which it is expired. Once one has successfully satisfied the conditions of probation and has regretted and repented his acts then his slate of censures is wiped clean.

8.4.2 Probation

8.4.2.1 Procedure and Conditions

A devotee shall be placed on probation by the appropriate authority according to ISKCON Law for a specified time when prescribed in ISKCON Law or when one has been censured three times.

However, if there is a serious spiritual offense as provided for in ISKCON Law, or if the transgressions of spiritual practices for an ISKCON initiated or resident devotee are of a more grave nature involving serious moral turpitude then a member can be directly put under probation without having three censures.

8.4.2.2 Rectification Programs

A specific program of rectification shall be assigned as deemed appropriate for the period of his or her probation.

Such programs may include:

1. Disciplinary or remedial transfer to another location.
2. Reformatory change of service.
3. Prohibited for visiting or living in a specified temple or community.
4. Specific spiritual remedial programs.
5. A divestiture of certain actions for the period of probation.
6. Reasonable and just reformatory programs.

8.4.3 Divestiture or Disqualification

8.4.3.1 Definition

An appropriate authority according to ISKCON Law can order the divestiture (disqualification) of a devotee for his performance of specified activities in any one of following categories:

1. Right to initiate by an ISKCON *guru*
2. Priestly functions (worshipping the deity, performing fire *yajña*, etc.)
3. Managerial authority (Temple President, Regional Secretary, GBC Member, Temple Board Member, Department Head, *gurukula* teacher)
4. Preaching responsibilities (authority to give temple classes, public speaking and other preaching on behalf of ISKCON)

8.4.3.2 Divesting Authority

Generally the authority who invested, or given the authority can also divest, the devotee unless otherwise provided for in ISKCON Law.

8.4.4 Dissociation

Dissociation is an order which restricts, excludes or prohibits the association and participation in ISKCON to one of the following degrees:

1. Prohibited from being a dependent ISKCON (temple) devotee.
2. Prohibited from living in a ISKCON community
3. Prohibited from being an active temple or congregation member but can visit as a guest.

8.4.5 Expulsion (Excommunication)

1. Some members of the Society who have previously been in good standing have subsequently deviated from the ISKCON standard and whereas such members by their bad conduct and character may damage the good name of the Society. In such cases, the GBC Body may, by a two third(2/3) vote of the members present expel any member of the ISKCON provided that:
 - a. The member is openly deviating from the fundamental tenants of the Society's teaching.
 - b. The member is openly and flagrantly antagonistic to the GBC or other ISKCON authority.
 - c. The member is engaged in illegal activities.
2. In an extreme case, the GBC, by a two third(2/3) vote of the members present may issue a notice of non-participation. If such a notice is issued against an expelled member, such member shall not, in so far as possible, be allowed to participate in the functions of ISKCON. This law shall run concurrently with other disciplinary laws.(83)
3. The GBC has been designated by Śrīla Prabhupāda as the highest ISKCON authority, and the final appellate power rests with that body in all ISKCON affairs.(79)

Someone who is excommunicated is prohibited from visiting the temple except expressly allowed to visit as a guest by the local authority. ISKCON devotees should avoid association with an excommunicated person except when authorized to preach to him for his rectification.

8.4.6 Principles of Clemency and Repentance

Should a person found guilty of a transgression or offense express his repentance in an appropriate manner or in writing then it shall be duly considered by the adjudicating or appeal authorities. It shall be at their discretion whether such expression is adequate to remedy the situation and accordingly shall adjust the prescribed remedial measure or grant reprieve.

The principle is to give remedial measures with the spirit of rectifying the erring devotee and protecting the interests of ISKCON rather than as a punishment.

8.4.7 Reinstatement of Apostates

8.4.7.1 Conditions of Reinstatement

That devotees who have left ISKCON are welcome back into ISKCON at any time provided only that they agree that the ultimate managerial authority for all of ISKCON must be the GBC Body, that they will follow all GBC resolutions, and that they accept His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON, as the preeminent pure devotee under whose guidance, teachings, and instructions Lord Caitanya's movement should now spread.

8.4.7.2 Procedure of Reinstatement

The procedure for formal reinstatement shall be that the devotee desiring to return shall send a signed letter to any GBC member stating his agreement to the above-listed provisions. This GBC member shall send the letter to the GBC Corresponding Secretary, who shall distribute copies to all GBC members. If no objections are received by the Corresponding Secretary within 90 days of the date of mailing of the copies to all members, then the Corresponding Secretary shall send a notice of reinstatement to the devotee in question. During the waiting period the devotee may serve under the auspices of a GBC member.

Notwithstanding the above, in the following cases reinstatement may only be granted by resolution of the full GBC Body:

1. Devotees who were ISKCON initiating *gurus* at the time of their original departure from ISKCON, or devotees who accepted disciples since leaving ISKCON;
2. Devotees who are accused or who have been found guilty of any serious crime.
3. Devotees who are currently in the *sannyāsa āśrama*.
4. Devotees who were removed from ISKCON by a GBC Resolution.
5. Devotees for whom a written objection from a GBC member has been submitted to the Corresponding Secretary within 90 days of notification, as per above.(90)

8.4.8 Additional Codes for Determining Spiritual Offenses

8.4.8.1 Offenses Against Founder-Ācārya and Guru-paramparā

A person guilty of denouncing, openly blaspheming, or publicly abandoning loyalty to the Founder-Ācārya, the previous *ācāryas* in the disciplic succession, or Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, incurs automatic dissociation from ISKCON, the right to revoke being reserved to the local GBC. If the offending person holds a position of spiritual authority, the right to revoke the dissociation is reserved to the GBC Body. If the seriousness of the offense warrants a more severe reaction, other measures may be brought to bear including dismissal from authority, disqualification for initiating, and excommunication.

8.4.8.2 Offenses Against Unity of ISKCON and Guru-paramparā

A person in a position of spiritual authority guilty of creating or attempting to create a schism in ISKCON, for example by culpable destruction of faith in the initiating spiritual master, the *guru-paramparā*, or the GBC, incurs automatic suspension, the right to revoke being reserved to the GBC. If no rectification is forthcoming, other penalties may be added, including dismissal from spiritual authority and excommunication.

8.4.8.3 Offense of Accepting Re-initiation and Renouncing Once Bona Fide Guru

A devotee duly initiated by a bona fide ISKCON initiating spiritual master who is in good standing who rejects his *guru* by accepting any form of re-initiation or subsequent initiation without the permission of the initiating spiritual master incurs automatic excommunication the right to revoke being reserved to the initiating spiritual master or the GBC.

The so-called “re-initiations” are deemed invalid, null and void. If the initiating spiritual master concerned has no objection, a GBC may grant reprieve by lessening the penalty to dissociation within his zone—if he feels remedy is possible without endangering the spiritual lives of others in ISKCON.

8.4.8.4 Offense of Collaborating in Guru-paramparā Offenses

A person guilty of having recommended or encouraged a member or associate of ISKCON to accept any form of initiation outside of ISKCON or any further initiation or duplicate initiation from someone other than his bona fide ISKCON initiating spiritual master shall be corrected with a censure. If the guilty person is a spiritual authority, he shall incur automatic suspension; and if rectification is not forthcoming, then additional remedial measures may be adopted, including dismissal. If a spiritual authority has failed to discourage a member in his care from accepting re-initiation or renouncing his spiritual master, he shall be corrected with a suitable remedy.

8.4.8.5 Offenses to Sacred Objects

A person who blasphemes or tries to inflict physical injury upon installed Deities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or who desecrates the Vedic literature or commits a similar offense to a sacred object incurs automatic dissociation, including probation from entering ISKCON temples. In the case of the above-mentioned offense to the Deities, the offender receives automatic dissociation, the right to revoke being reserved to temple spiritual authorities.

If a *brāhmaṇa* willfully removes and renounces his sacred thread, or if an initiate consciously throws away his *japa* beads, or in the case of a similar offense to sacred objects used in devotional service, the offender incurs an automatic dissociation, the right to revoke being reserved to the concerned temple spiritual authority or the concerned initiating spiritual master.

8.4.8.6 Culpable Falsehood before the GBC

A person who commits perjury (intentional falsehood) while asserting something or testifying something before the GBC or a body representing the GBC is to be corrected with a suitable remedial measure.

8.4.8.7 Envious Acts Against ISKCON

A person who uses a public speech, published writings, or other media of social communication to blaspheme, or to seriously damage the good faith of ISKCON members and associates, or who tries to stir up hatred or contempt against ISKCON or the GBC is to be corrected with a just remedial measure.

8.4.8.8 Offenses Against Spiritual Authorities

8.4.8.8.1 Violent Offenses Against Spiritual Authorities

1. One who uses physical force against a GBC or who willfully injures, through false denunciation, the good reputation of a GBC, incurs in the zone concerned an automatic dissociation, the right to revoke being reserved to a GBC. If the offender is a spiritual authority, a just corrective measure—including removal from his position of spiritual authority—can be added, in accord with the seriousness of the offense.
2. One who commits the above offenses against an ISKCON *guru* or *sannyāsī* or other senior spiritual authority, incurs an automatic probation. If the offender is a spiritual authority, he also incurs an automatic suspension, the right to revoke being reserved to the offended person.
3. One who uses physical force against a ISKCON Leader or senior *brāhmaṇa* is to be corrected with a just remedial measure.
4. One who acts contemptuously toward a spiritual authority or toward the principles of brahminical respect shall be corrected with a just remedial measure.

8.4.8.8.2 Teaching Unauthorized Doctrines

A person who teaches members of ISKCON any teachings condemned by the *Bhāgavata* philosophy and who does not make a retraction after having been cautioned by the GBC or another spiritual authority shall be corrected with a just remedial measure.

8.4.8.8.3 Stirring Up Hostilities against Spiritual Authorities

One who publicly stirs up hostilities or hatred among members against the GBC or its deputed representative, on account of some disliked spiritual directive, or one who incites members of ISKCON to disobey the GBC, incurs an automatic probation and is to be corrected by just remedial measures.

8.4.8.9 Misuse of Spiritual Authority and Unauthorized Assumption

8.4.8.9.1 To Give or Receive Initiation Without Sanction

A person who (without being duly empowered) acts as an initiating spiritual master by giving initiation, or by accepting worship or titles as if one was an initiating spiritual master, incurs automatic suspension with a censure, the right to revoke being reserved to the GBC. If the person persists after having been cautioned, he may be corrected with just penalties up to excommunication. For one who accepted an unauthorized initiation from an unauthorized ISKCON member, his initiation shall not be valid and he should be corrected with remedial measures.

8.4.8.9.2 To Transgress ISKCON Law Regarding *Guru-Disciple Dealings*, Including to Give *Sannyāsa* Initiation Without Permission

If a bona fide spiritual master transgresses ISKCON Law on *guru* behavior codes, including giving any initiation without following the proper procedure, a remedial measure is to be applied up to giving a censure and if repeated then additional remedial measures may be applied.

8.4.8.9.3 To Make Illegitimate Profit from Devotional Service

A spiritual authority guilty of misappropriating funds or goods or of making a personal profit without sanction shall be held responsible to repay to the concerned institution a just amount. Other remedial measures may be added, and in serious cases the person may be removed from his position of spiritual authority.

8.4.8.9.4 To Unjustly Remove Another from Spiritual Authority

If a spiritual authority removes a subordinate spiritual authority or *brāhmaṇa* from his devotional service without due process or just cause, the unjustly penalized person is to be reinstated or given an equal service. The erring authority is to be corrected up to receiving a censure.

8.4.8.9.5 Culpable Negligence

One who through culpable negligence acts in such a way as to damage the propagation of ISKCON, destroys valuable ISKCON property, or causes serious injury to the spiritual life of an ISKCON member (or members), is to be corrected with a just remedial measure.

8.4.8.10 Offenses Against Kṛṣṇa Conscious Obligations

8.4.8.10.1 Violation of Obligations Imposed by a Remedial Measure

One who violates the obligations imposed by a compulsory remedial or corrective measure can be subjected to additional remedial measures.

8.4.8.10.2 Spiritual Authority Not Maintaining a Regulative Principle

A spiritual authority guilty of willfully breaking any of the regulative principles shall incur immediate suspension, the right to revoke being reserved to his immediate superior spiritual authority—with the exception of a *sannyāsī* who intends to regress in *āśrama* after taking prior necessary permission from the GBC.

8.4.8.11 Other Offenses

No drug or sex-related paraphernalia can be sold by ISKCON devotees.(79)

The GBC Body hereby declares that the ISKCON does not condone abuse of any kind, especially that which is directed towards dependents such as women, children, aged and cows. Battery, verbal and emotional abuse are destructive to the devotional creeper and thus considered serious *Vaiṣṇava-aparādhas*. Any attempt to justify this type of abusive mentality on the basis of *śāstra* is misconstrued and is firmly rejected by all practicing Vaiṣṇavas.(97-501)

8.4.9 Grievances Regarding Management

If a *sannyāsī* or party leader has a grievance regarding the management of a temple, particularly in regard to the *brahmacārī* program, his complaint should be properly aired to the Temple President and the local GBC representative. The matter should not be brought before the devotees in general.

When a person becomes a member of ISKCON or assumes an office within ISKCON, he does so on the condition of submission to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of ISKCON, and however much he may be dissatisfied with the exercise of that jurisdiction, he shall refrain from invoking the supervisory power of the civil court, but shall seek redress of any grievance(s) through the ISKCON judicial process. Otherwise, he may be removed from office and/or his membership in ISKCON terminated.(88)

8.5 General Guidelines

8.5.1 Prohibition of Chocolate

As it contains various stimulants like caffeine (contained in coffee), theine (contained in black tea) and theobromine (contained in cocoa), chocolate should not be eaten by ISKCON devotees.(93)

8.5.2 AIDS Test

1. The GBC Body requires that all devotees living and/or serving in our temples should take an AIDS test, local laws permitting. All new devotees, as they join, should also take an AIDS test.
2. The GBC Health and Welfare Committee advises that temples should not allow persons who are HIV positive to engage in services within our temples which involve the preparation or serving of bhoga or *prasādam*.

8.5.3 Holding ISKCON Assets In One's Private Name

Anyone holding ISKCON assets in his private name, in the name of another, or in the name of a corporate entity and controlled by himself or another, shall provide an annual detailed confidential declaration of such assets and the reasons for the holding arrangements to his GBC representative. When the GBC representative holds such assets, he shall disclose the same information to the GBC Body in the manner provided by it.(88)

9

Āśramas (Spiritual Orders) in ISKCON

9.1 Sannyāsa-Āśrama

9.1.1 Principles

ISKCON *sannyāsīs* are individually and collectively responsible for maintaining the purity and high spiritual standard of ISKCON by their personal example and in their preaching according to the instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

9.1.2 Regulations

9.1.2.1 Application for *Sannyāsa* Initiation

1. Any GBC member can nominate a man from his zone for *sannyāsa* each year at the GBC annual meeting. The man must be a preacher and not sexually inclined. He must be an initiated *brāhmaṇa*. A GBC should avoid recommending a *sannyāsī* whimsically.(75)
2. Any GBC member can place a devotee on a two-year trial period for *sannyāsa*. After one year, the GBC Body will discuss the qualifications of the candidate and pending their approval, the candidate will enter into the final one-year trial period. At the end of the final year, the GBC will vote for the appointment of the *sannyāsī*.
3. *Sannyāsa* candidates must meet personally with the *Sannyāsa* Committee in Māyāpur before receiving final approval for taking *sannyāsa*, unless exempted by the *Sannyāsa* Minister.(95)
4. Candidates for *Sannyāsa* must submit their applications in accordance with the Society's Rules of Order and include a statement by a GBC member listing the candidate's qualifications to take *sannyāsa* and a letter written by the candidate explaining his reasons for wanting to accept *sannyāsa*.
5. When the GBC Body approves a candidate for *sannyāsa*, they reserve the right to assign the candidate a mission of their choice which may take him far from his previous area of service. Before making such an assignment, the GBC Body shall discuss the suitability of the candidate for the assigned mission with the local GBC, the *Sannyāsa* Committee, the candidate's *sannyāsa-guru* and the candidate.(97-102)
6. A devotee must pass the *Bhakti-śāstrī* test before being placed on the *sannyāsa* waiting list. Those who are currently on the list must pass the *Bhakti-śāstrī* test before taking *sannyāsa*. Exceptions to this require a two thirds(2/3) vote of the GBC Body.(97-301)

9.1.2.2 *Sannyāsa* Recommendations

1. If a GBC member or initiating *guru* who has recommended someone for *sannyāsa* withdraws his recommendation, the candidacy is canceled.
2. The GBC Body can waive the preliminary one year of the two years suggested in the previous proposal by its own decision at the time of discussion of the candidates. (At this time the *sannyāsa-guru* of the candidates should be specified).
3. All *sannyāsa* candidates are to be examined on the basis of the following qualifications before their names are accepted on the list of candidates for *sannyāsa*:

- a. How free is he from sex desire?
 - i. How long has he been a *brahmacārī*?
 - ii. How long has he been living away from his wife?
 - b. What is his preaching record? Is it demonstrated by his ability to preach strongly? Is he a preaching leader? Has he been doing this for a good amount of time?
 - c. Is he strict in his personal conduct? Is he beyond suspicion?
 - d. Is he philosophically strong? Is this demonstrated through his lectures?
 - e. Is he willing to accept fully the authority of the GBC and work under the auspices of the GBC?
 - f. Does he have the proper quality of leadership to train and lead *brahmacārīs* who are under his direction?
 - g. Is he self-reliant?. Does he have the ability to keep himself continuously engaged in some way which contributes positively to our preaching work?
 - h. Is the field of his preaching after taking *sannyāsa* clear and acceptable to the GBC or other authorities?
4. Applications for *sannyāsa* candidacy should include written endorsements from the local GBC(s) and the local managerial body or bodies where the candidate serves. In addition, it should include a resume detailing the candidate's devotional career.(96)

The sponsor of a proposal for a candidate for *sannyāsa* should each year give a report of the candidate's qualifications according to the GBC Rules of Order, "The Qualification for *Sannyāsa*." To be put on the list, an initial report is required. Thereafter an annual report is also necessary.(93)

9.1.2.3 Reinstatement Procedures for a Devotee

Who Has Fallen From His *Sannyāsa* Vows

If a *sannyāsī* frequently falls down or goes away for a prolonged time from ISKCON but later returns, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. A *sannyāsī* who returns should not wear the *sannyāsī dhoti*, but later he may also be re-instated. Exactly when these procedures should be used will have to be judged according to individual circumstances.(81)
2. Anyone abandoning the *sannyāsa-āśrama* to take up the *grhastha-āśrama* shall immediately relinquish his *sannyāsa* name and title and resume his name at first initiation.

9.1.3 Duties

1. Each ISKCON *sannyāsī* should allocate some time for traveling and preaching in various ISKCON temples in addition to his existing administrative and other responsibilities.
2. ISKCON *sannyāsīs* shall always endeavor to increase their active assistance to the GBC in maintaining the spiritual standard of ISKCON, expanding the dynamic preaching of ISKCON, and preserving Śrīla Prabhupāda's mood and instructions.

9.1.4 Guidelines

9.1.4.1 *Sannyāsa* Reinitiation

1. Those who have taken *sannyāsa* from a *sannyāsī* in ISKCON who was in good standing but later fell from *sannyāsa* are recommended to take *sannyāsa* re-initiation by an authorized ISKCON *sannyāsī*.
2. Anyone who took *sannyāsa* outside of ISKCON and whose *sannyāsa-guru* has fallen, but wants to serve as an ISKCON *sannyāsī* must take *sannyāsa* re-initiation from an ISKCON *sannyāsī*.

9.2 *Vanaprastha-Āśrama*

9.2.1 Eligibility

Vanaprastha is generally recommended for 50 years of age and has to be taken with the permission of the local GBC after the recommendation of the local Temple President. *vanaprastha* cloths are received from the Spiritual Master whose blessing is also required. There should be no whimsical taking of *vanaprastha*.(76)

9.3 *Gṛhastha-Āśrama* (Householder)

9.3.1 Giving Fifty Percent (50%) of One's Income to ISKCON

9.3.1.1 Definition

1. The following is established as the official definition of "giving fifty percent (50%) of one's income to ISKCON", according to the scriptural reference cited. For the present, this definition shall only be applied in the statement of the qualification of a [*gṛhastha*] GBC member given in the following resolution:
2. "A *gṛhastha* should calculate his donation of fifty percent (50%) of income to ISKCON as follows: calculate gross personal income, deduct the required income tax remittance, then deduct fifty percent (50%) of the remaining net personal income and donate it to ISKCON. Supporting evidences: *Bg.*16.1-3, *SB.*1.5.36; 1.17.24; 1.17.38; 3.21.31; 5.19.7; 8.19.37.
3. *Gṛhasthas* should not be discouraged to work at jobs or develop their own business with their own means.(77)

9.3.2 Polygamy

No polygamy is allowed in ISKCON

9.3.3 *Gṛhastha* Coordinator

9.3.3.1 Duties

To function under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

1. To report to the Health and Welfare Committee Chairman, who will report on the Coordinator's progress to the GBC Body.
2. To assemble materials for a *gṛhastha-āśrama* handbook.
3. To gather information on how marriage matches occur in different parts of the world.
4. To work out guidelines in consultation with senior *gṛhasthas* in good standing about child raising, economic security, etc. (theoretical and practical).
5. To correspond with *gṛhasthas* and managers worldwide about householder questions.
6. To tabulate the successes and failures of grassroots efforts to deal with *gṛhastha* problems now underway in different regions of the ISKCON world and make the information available to all ISKCON devotees.
7. To insure adequate information is available on *gṛhastha* life.
8. To establish a system to counsel *gṛhastha* couples according to Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions.
9. To establish and support continental representatives.
10. To work out guidelines, in consultation with senior *gṛhasthas* in good standing about child raising, economic security, etc.
11. To organize seminars, presentations and/or conferences on *gṛhastha* life.(96)

9.4 *Brahmacārī-Āśrama*

Brahmacārī life in a temple is a bona-fide process for cultivating the highest grade of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that it is not intrinsically inferior to *brahmacārī* life in a traveling context.

9.5 *Āśrama* Considerations For Vaiṣṇavis

1. The devotional service of the women is considered equal by Lord Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master.
2. ISKCON does not support an independent all-women's *āśrama*, because in every case a woman should be protected by a man.(76)
5. It is against Vedic and Vaiṣṇava principles for women to take *sannyāsa*, and whereas it is not authorized by Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is resolved that those women rejoining ISKCON after taking *sannyāsa* are free to rejoin their families. If any woman devotee is internally committed to celibacy they are welcome to follow that decision in ISKCON in white cloth and to render devotional service up to their full capacity and dedicate

themselves to the *sankīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. They are to be encouraged and respected as preachers. (94)

10

ISKCON Temples and Affiliates

10.1 Standards for ISKCON Temples

1. At least one day a week there must be public chanting and food distribution in public performed by each temple, wherever possible.(77)
2. Each temple should observe one major festival a year.
3. All ISKCON centers should have extra classes for new devotees in addition to the regular morning and evening classes.(84)
4. All ISKCON centers shall always offer hospitality of at least prasādam to any Life Patron Members who visit. Life Patron Members should be offered to stay overnight regardless of how meager the facilities are and of it is not possible to afford accommodations then it is the responsibility of the temple to give assistance in finding accommodations.(82)

10.2 Regulations for ISKCON Temples

10.2.1 Unrelated Businesses

When an ISKCON entity is registered as a religious, charitable, or non-profit organization under the laws of its particular state or country, if those laws prohibit such an entity from engaging in activities of a commercial nature, then, of course, the ISKCON entity must comply. Such businesses, though, cannot be contained as part of the ISKCON entity's activities when the ISKCON entity is constituted as a non-profit corporation. The managers of such businesses may decide to donate funds from their business activities to ISKCON. Such donations cannot encumber ISKCON with any obligations toward the donor or the business.

10.2.2 Priority in Preaching

It may be seen that certain activities like *prasādam* distribution, restaurants, temple stores, book distribution, Life Patron Membership, or soliciting of donations with devotional paraphernalia, are carried out by ISKCON non-profit organizations as part of their missionary activities. As long as these activities are not of a primarily commercial nature, are not for the benefit of individuals, are not in violation of local law, and do not endanger the ISKCON entity with unnecessary liability, they may be conducted by the ISKCON entity directly. If the activities develop such that the primary focus is profit rather than preaching, such that local laws would be violated by the non-profit ISKCON entity, or such that unnecessary liability is risked, then they must be legally separated.(93)

10.2.3 Financial Contract Parameters

Transactions between ISKCON entities and devotees involving the transfer of funds over US \$1,000 or the equivalent should be substantiated by written contracts, purchase orders, invoices and/or other appropriate documentation. This principle should also be followed in dealings between devotees and non-devotees.(93)

10.2.4 Bank Account Signers

There be at least two joint signers on all temple bank accounts.(77)

10.2.5 Temple Residents' Cultivation of Parents

To insure that every temple resident with living parents maintains a program of sending a monthly letter to the parents, if the parents are at least approachable.(77)

10.2.6 Sastra Degrees

The ISKCON Board of Examinations shall have power to review and approve proposed examinations for the awarding of the degrees *bhakti-sāstrī*, *bhakti-vaibhava*, *bhakti-vedānta*, and *bhakti-sarvabhauma*. The basis for review and approval shall be the guidelines given by Śrīla Prabhupāda for the awarding of these degrees. No ISKCON center may award these degrees without seeking the approval of the ISKCON Board of Examinations.

10.2.7 Firearms

No firearms which are in violation of local laws shall be kept in any temple.(76)

10.2.8 Debts to the BBT

Whenever there is a change of management in a temple (or zone), the new management shall accept all existing debts to the BBT.(79)

10.2.9 Calender

The calendar generated by the program written by the Calendar Research Committee shall be the standard calendar to be followed by all ISKCON centers.(90)

10.3 Guidelines for ISKCON Temples

10.3.1 Foreign Visa Sponsorship

10.3.1.1 Explanation

This is a guideline to be followed in regard to those devotees who live in a less developed country and desire to perform devotional service in a more developed country.

10.3.1.2 General Guidelines

That permanent residency visas (called "green cards" in USA) for a developed country should not be given quickly or indiscriminately to nationals coming to serve from a less developed country.

No developed country (includes North America) temple shall sponsor a foreign devotee for a visa to render service in their temple unless the devotee has:

1. written permission from the GBC representative in his country of origin, and
2. a character reference as a devotee in good standing and written permission from his spiritual master and local temple authority.(93)

10.3.1.3 Guideline in Relation to Going to the USA

Devotees coming from a less developed nation should be first given only temporary religious worker or temporary religious minister visas. Three to five year visas should be given prior to green card issue.

10.3.2 Orienting Income-Generating Activities towards Preaching

The GBC recommends that all ISKCON Leaders endeavor to gradually orient the income-generating activities of the temple devotees in the *āśramas* primarily towards preaching-related sources. The pace of such a shift is to be determined by the local leadership. ISKCON Leaders and traveling preachers should respect and cooperate with the policies being instituted in the various zones. This guideline is not in any way intended to contradict or create an exception to any ISKCON Law restricting the commercial activities of legal entities which are ISKCON Affiliates. ISKCON Leaders and/or members encouraging the conduct of or engaging in activities prohibited for ISKCON affiliates under such laws should take care to see that such activities are conducted by other entities.(93)

10.4 Affiliates of ISKCON

10.4.1 Definition

Associations throughout the world, whether incorporated or unincorporated, are affiliates of ISKCON when they meet the prescribed criteria, and are given the approval of the GBC Body. Some of the affiliates will be known as Temples.

10.4.2 Purpose

The GBC Body is desirous of preparing a prototype Affiliation Agreement to be used as a basis for the execution of Affiliation Agreements with each recognized ISKCON Temple or Project.

10.4.3 Recommendations for Opening ISKCON Affiliated Centers

1. Anyone who wants to recommend a city for a temple must first open a preaching center there for a year without installing deities, and next year it can be approved as a temple.
2. A main criteria for making a preaching center into a permanent center is whether the center has gained the local support.
3. Recognizing, opening, and moving preaching centers must be approved by the GBC Zonal Secretary and, where applicable, by the Zonal or Divisional Council.
4. Opening of a new ISKCON temple, or upgrading a Preaching Center to the status of an ISKCON Temple, shall be approved by the Continental Committee, where applicable, or where not possible, then after due consideration and resolution of the GBC.(75)
5. Once opened, a temple should never be closed, as long as it was opened with proper authorization.(75)

10.4.3.1 ISKCON Affiliate Using Property as Public Place of Worship Regulation

That any ISKCON affiliate wishing to purchase property to be used as a public place of worship must obtain the written permission of the local GBC(s) and the majority of the Property Trustees associated with the property. The Property Trustees should give or withhold permission only on the basis of whether the new property will be secure and whether the new purchase will prejudice the security of any other ISKCON properties. The Executors Committee may give more specific guidelines. (93)

10.4.4 Procedure and System of Affiliation

10.4.4.1 Empowerment for Creating Affiliation Agreement

The Incorporations Subcommittee is empowered to develop a prototype agreement in consultation with legal counsel.

10.4.4.2 Criteria for Affiliation

Associations throughout the world, whether incorporated or unincorporated, may become affiliates of ISKCON. Some of the affiliates will be known as Temples. All affiliates shall meet the following criteria, and as far as possible under local laws it must provide statements of its adherence to these criteria in its organizational instrument or by-laws which cannot be changed without the approval of the GBC Body.

10.4.4.3 Qualifications of Affiliate Officers

1. They must be initiated devotees in the ISKCON *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava sampradāya*.
2. They must be chanting daily sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.
3. They must be strictly following the four regulative principles, namely, no eating of meat, fish, or eggs, no taking of intoxication, no illicit sex, and no gambling.
4. They must meet any other general requirements of membership in ISKCON described in the Laws of ISKCON.

5. They must have signed the prescribed Oath of Loyalty to ISKCON.

10.4.4.4 Affiliate Conditions Regarding Real Property and Assets

1. The affiliate must agree to irrevocably dedicate all of its assets to the purposes of ISKCON. For real property assets, the affiliate must agree to allow the GBC Body or its duly authorized representatives to have veto power over any proposed sale, mortgage, transfer, encumbrance, lease of any substantial portion, or other form of alienation of its real property. The affiliate must agree that, where possible under local law, it will provide clauses in the recorded deeds to its real properties which:
2. Prohibit alienation of its real property without the expressed written consent of the GBC Body or its representatives designated for this purpose, and require that should its affiliation ever be terminated, either voluntarily or involuntarily, it will immediately transfer its real property and other assets to a fully recognized affiliate of ISKCON, as designated by the GBC Body, without consideration, and immediately cease its use of all granted licenses .

10.4.4.5 Affiliate Conditions Regarding Religious Doctrine

The affiliate must agree that the GBC Body is the ultimate authority on matters of religious doctrine and religious practices and must conduct its activities in a manner consistent with the constitution and laws of ISKCON and the resolutions of the Society. It must agree that the GBC Body is represented to the affiliate by one or more GBC members designated by the GBC Body as the Zonal Secretary(ies) of the affiliate. The Zonal Secretary(ies) shall represent the will of the GBC Body to the affiliate, unless overruled by the Executive Committee or GBC Body according to appropriate procedures.

10.4.4.6 GBC Body Reserves Rights in Regard to Affiliates

The affiliate must further agree that the GBC Body reserves the right to remove any of the Directors or Officers of the affiliate if it finds, in its sole discretion and judgment, that:

1. such directors or officers have caused the affiliate to significantly deviate from the ecclesiastical doctrines of ISKCON, or they have personally deviated from the spiritual practices of ISKCON to the extent that the spiritual integrity of the affiliate or its adherence to the ecclesiastical doctrines is at risk; or
2. the Officers of the affiliate have failed to dedicate the assets of the affiliate to the purposes of ISKCON or grossly mismanaged the assets so as to jeopardize the solvency of the affiliate. In general, the GBC Body will respect local procedures for replacement of directors or officers which may be removed by the GBC Body under this section. However, if the GBC Body finds, in its sole discretion and judgment, that after a reasonable period of time local procedures for replacement have not functioned properly, it may itself appoint the replacements.

10.4.4.7 Affiliate Standards Regarding Reports and Records

The affiliate must submit regular reports to the GBC Zonal Secretary (GBC Member) assigned to the affiliate by the GBC Body, according to the requirements of the GBC Zonal Secretary and the regulations of the GBC Body. The affiliate must keep proper books of accounts for all financial transactions and proper records of all assets and liabilities, and must allow inspection of these records by the assigned GBC Zonal Secretary or any other designated representative of the GBC Body.

10.4.4.8 Legal Obligations for Affiliates

The affiliate must agree that any dispute with the GBC or with any other ISKCON affiliate will be adjudicated under the GBC's binding arbitration procedures. It must expressly agree that it shall not institute civil proceedings in any court of law in any jurisdiction against the GBC or any other ISKCON affiliate without the expressed written consent of the GBC Executive Committee.

10.4.4.9 Affiliate Receives License to Use the Name of ISKCON under Conditions

The affiliate must use its license of the name of ISKCON and any other copyrighted or trademarked property of ISKCON in accordance with the regulations of the GBC Body for such licenses, and must otherwise avoid endangering the reputation of ISKCON and the value of its copyrights or trademarks.

10.4.4.10 Corrective Measures

The GBC Body does not control its affiliates, which shall always remain independent organizations. The GBC Body shall, however, require that the affiliates conduct their activities in keeping with the rules, regulations, and policies of the Society. Corrective measures that it may take in the event it determines that an affiliate is not adhering properly to the rules, regulations, and policies of the Society are:

1. Issue directives to the affiliate that it is not fulfilling its obligations and give notice to the affiliate as to the corrective action which is required. Replace the GBC Zonal Secretary assigned to oversee the affiliate or add additional co-GBC Zonal Secretary(ies).
2. Where permitted under local law, appoint or replace one or more controlling directors or officers of the affiliate.
3. Suspend or revoke the affiliation and so notify the various classes of members associated with the affiliate.
4. Once the affiliation is revoked, to require the former affiliate to transfer the assets which were formerly dedicated to the purposes of ISKCON to another organization which is affiliated. The GBC may take whatever legal steps are required to effect this transfer.

10.4.4.11 Limit of GBC Control

Other than the provisions provided for herein, the GBC will not in any way control the operation of affiliates. The affiliates will remain independent organizations. Specifically, the GBC will not have a right to assume ownership of, sell, mortgage, lease, or otherwise alienate the property of the affiliate, except as provided above.(92)

10.4.4.12 Property Rules Compliance for ISKCON Affiliation

The following is adopted as a principle to be incorporated in the future ISKCON Constitution and other laws governing ISKCON affiliations:

Unless the Executors Committee grants a special temporary exemption, those temples who do not adhere to placing their properties in the name of ISKCON and having the designated ISKCON Property Trustees as trustees of the property may not be considered as authorized ISKCON temples.(92)

11

ISKCON Immovable Properties

11.1 General Provisions

That all existing GBC resolutions concerning property management and Deity relocation matters are hereby superseded by the following section:

11.1.1 Definition of an ISKCON Property

An ISKCON Real Property is a real property owned by an ISKCON affiliate, or held for the exclusive and perpetual benefit of one or more ISKCON affiliates; or buildings owned on land which is contractually under the exclusive control of an ISKCON affiliate for a total period of minimum fifty (50) years.

11.1.2 Definition of an ISKCON Property with Deities

For the purpose of property related laws, an ISKCON property with Deities is a property on which there is a Deity which has been either formally installed, or publicly worshipped according to the ISKCON standard for formally installed Deities.

11.1.3 Property Trustees Definition

A Property Trustee is an ISKCON official with certain duties for the protection of ISKCON's interests for properties assigned to him.

11.1.4 Executors Committee Definition

The Executors Committee is a permanent GBC Committee assigned to assist the GBC for executing the details of Śrīla Prabhupāda's will, overseeing and coordinating the activities of Property Trustees, and additional duties relating to ISKCON Properties.

11.1.5 Definition of "Property Trustee Principle"

(The following section is from Śrīla Prabhupāda's will, consisting of part of paragraph 4 and all of Paragraph 5.)

None of the immovable properties standing in the name of ISKCON in India shall ever be mortgaged, borrowed against, sold, transferred, or in any way encumbered, disposed of, or alienated. This direction is irrevocable. Properties outside of India in principle should never be mortgaged, borrowed against, sold, transferred, or in any way encumbered, disposed of, or alienated, but if the need arises, they may be mortgaged, borrowed against, sold, etc. with the unanimous consent of the Property Trustees.

11.2. Regulations

11.2.1 Registering Real Properties

1. No funds of an ISKCON affiliate or of the BBT may be used for or pledged against the purchase or major development of any real property that is not held or will not be held as an ISKCON property.
2. All ISKCON properties shall be registered in such a way that the Property Trustees shall have, to the maximum degree possible under local law, the actual authority to perform the functions required of them under ISKCON Law.
3. The copies of the registration deed and corporate papers shall be submitted to the Secretary of the GBC Executors Committee, who shall hold them.

11.2.2 Encumbering or Alienating ISKCON Properties

1. No ISKCON property outside of India shall be sold, mortgaged, borrowed against, transferred or in any way encumbered, disposed of, or alienated without the prior unanimous written permission of the Property Trustees assigned to that property. Property Trustees, in granting permission, should consider that, in principle, Śrīla Prabhupāda did not want ISKCON Properties to be sold, mortgaged, etc., except "when the need arises". (see Property Trustee Principle definition)
2. It is not allowed for any private individual or non-ISKCON entity to hold equity in any structure built on ISKCON property if that equity constitutes a legal encumbrance on that property.
3. No ISKCON property in India shall ever be mortgaged, borrowed against, sold, transferred, or in any way encumbered, disposed of or alienated. This direction is irrevocable.

11.2.3 Mortgaging Properties with Installed Deities

An initial purchase mortgage may be taken against a real property in which a Deity will be installed, but no additional mortgages shall be permitted without the permission of the GBC Body.

11.2.4 Regulations for Alienating Properties with Deities

1. No property in which the Deity of the Lord is installed can be sold without approval of the GBC Body.
2. A proposal to the GBC for sale of an ISKCON Property and relocation of installed Deities must be accompanied by:
 - a. a written recommendation with explanation by the local Temple President and management council,
 - b. The written request of the local GBC Zonal Secretaries,
 - c. the written approval of the Property Trustees, and
 - d. a report by the Trustees giving their reasons for the approval.

3. In the event the local GBC, temple management and Property Trustees are not all unanimous in recommending that an ISKCON property with installed Deities be sold, and/or the Deities be moved, and a majority wants to sell or relocate, or if there is an imminent risk of losing the property, the GBC Executive Committee shall appoint an impartial three-man committee to investigate the situation and prepare a comprehensive report with their recommendation for or against the proposal. If the three-man committee finds that the proposal is acceptable, then the entire GBC body may be approached either at its annual meeting or by correspondence proposal, for approval of the plan.
4. If a local GBC Zonal Secretary finds himself unable to maintain an ISKCON property in which installed Deities reside, and also is unable to obtain the consent of the Property Trustees to sell the property, then he may approach the Executive Committee, which is empowered to take whatever steps are necessary in collaboration with the Property Trustees to save the property, including the appointing of an ad-hoc co-GBC.
5. If installed ISKCON Deities are being relocated to a new property, the trustees of the Deities' original property are responsible to oversee the relocation, according to GBC directives, to ensure that:
 - a. any funds realized from the sale of ISKCON property are not mismanaged or in anyway diverted so as to decrease the Deity's equity, and
 - b. the new property is adequate to the needs of the Deities and the community.

11.2.5 Regulations for Maintaining Records of Real Properties

1. The copies of the registration deed and corporate papers shall be held by the Secretary of the Executors Committee. The ISKCON affiliate having purchased or acquired a real property shall be responsible to submit these documents within six months from the date of purchase.
2. A record of all ISKCON properties shall be maintained by the Secretary of the Executors Committee, including current value, purchase price, address of property, owner's name, and other information as specified by the Executors Committee. The Secretary of the Executors Committee shall provide the above information to the GBC Executive Officers and members as required.

11.2.6 Non-Adherence to Property Registration Regulations

That unless the Executors Committee grants a special temporary exemption, those temples who do not adhere to the Property Trustee Principle may not be considered as authorized ISKCON affiliates.

11.2.7 Registering Properties in a Non-ISKCON Affiliate's Name

If an ISKCON Property cannot be registered according to these regulations, the property registration must have the prior consent of the GBC Executors Committee.

11.2.8 Exemptions and Additions to ISKCON Property Law

1. Before making any improvements on an ISKCON property, the local management shall comply (where applicable) with building, health and fire codes. Building permits shall be obtained as required by local law before commencing the work. The local GBC Zonal Secretary shall oversee that this guideline is being adhered to. (95)
2. To have a "private" residence on an ISKCON property, someone must have a written legal agreement signed with the proprietary ISKCON entity.

The agreement shall include the following:

 - a. The property shall remain legally unencumbered.
 - b. In case any improvements are ever to be made on the residence, they shall comply with these guidelines:
 - i. That they comply with the ISKCON Law on making "property improvements".
 - ii. That it shall state whether the improvement is a donation, or a claimed asset of the resident. In the case of a claimed asset, the limit and nature of any compensation shall be detailed so as to avoid any legal complication in the future.
 - iii. That the written permission of the competent local authorities shall be taken prior to making any improvements.
 - c. The resident shall maintain the spiritual standards of ISKCON.
 - d. Reasonable clauses for vacating the resident if required.
 - e. Any other clauses needed for maintaining good relations and avoiding legal or practical problems between the occupant and ISKCON.

3. If needed or desired, an ISKCON rural community outside India may be permitted to alienate or encumber a portion of its properties subject to one or more of the following conditions:
 - a. The temple project has excess land which ISKCON cannot fully develop in the foreseeable future.
 - b. ISKCON property is endangered by a large mortgage, inability to conform to government regulations, or any other cause.
 - c. The community needs to facilitate householders in order to build up the project in a manner which will not be detrimental to the Deity's interests.
4. If any of the above conditions exists, approval to alienate or encumber may be sought as follows:
 - a. The local administration and GBC Zonal Secretary must explain to the property trustees how the rural community's property fits under one or more of the above mentioned conditions.
 - b. In their application, the local administration and GBC Zonal Secretary must also explain how they plan to protect the Deity's and ISKCON's interests providing the following information:
 - i. Which properties will remain ISKCON's and the Deities' possessions, including lands for temple, Deity gardens, *āśrama*, brahminical and other temple devotees' lodging, non-encumbered rental or income-earning assigned homesteads, temple's cows, temple's agricultural lands, temple-owned *Gurukula*, temple administration, preaching facilities, utilities, roads, and any other similar areas.
These lands and properties will be designated "Deity property".
 - ii. Which properties are to be alienated from ISKCON and how they will be used. Such uses could include sale, rental or any encumbered allotment of land for homesteads, privately owned cottage industries, private agriculture and dairy, community government, and any other use not against Kṛṣṇa conscious principles. These lands and properties will be designated "Non-Deity property".
 - iii. How income earned from the alienation shall only be utilized for removing danger to the property by paying off pending mortgages or BBT capital loans, fulfilling government regulations, constructing temple buildings, etc., to ISKCON's and the Deities' capital benefit.
 - iv. Evidence that there are devotees ready and able to invest in buying or renting alienated land.
 - v. A proposed scheme or covenant on land sale to prohibit use of land for purposes against the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness (as legally as possible).
 - vi. Statement that the land price is equal to or greater than the local fair market value for such property.
 - vii. A land use sketch showing where the lands designated in (1) and (2) above will be situated.
 - viii. Any other supporting information.
 - c. If the Property Trustees unanimously approve of the proposal and the Deity is situated anywhere on the ISKCON property, the proposal in the above format must be forwarded with the trustees' recommendation to the Executors Committee. The Executors Committee may then approve the proposal demarcating "Deity property" [non-alienable], and "Non-Deity property" [alienable], by two third (2/3) majority. If a simple majority approves, but less than two thirds (2/3), the Executors Committee may forward the proposal to the GBC Body for resolution.
 - d. After the proposal is approved, the project may be designated as an ISKCON Village Community and the Property Trustees alone can approve proposals from the local management to alienate or encumber land not designated as the Deity's. The Property Trustees shall insure that proceeds from the alienation are invested according to the approved plan.
 - e. In their order, the Executors Committee shall give specific instructions to insure proper execution and provide safeguards to protect the capital assets as per the approved scheme.
5. In the case of donations of real property or other donations specifically for real estate purchases or improvements, any conditions relating to the property imposed by a donor must be clearly spelled out in writing. The Property Trustees associated with the property must consider the conditions in light of the ISKCON Guidelines for Donations With Conditions, and if they agree in writing that the conditions are within the specified guidelines, then the donation may be accepted.(93)

11.3 Property Trustees

11.3.1 Duties

1. To have their names included on ISKCON property titles or on holding corporations for properties assigned to them.

2. To see that assigned properties are properly registered according to ISKCON Law and to advise local managers in this regard.
3. To report transgressions of ISKCON property law in assigned properties.
4. To consider proposals of local managers for acquiring new properties in areas under their jurisdiction, and to grant or withhold approval of the proposals.
5. To oversee the tax and legal status of entities owning assigned properties in order to certify that the properties are adequately safeguarded.
6. To give or withhold permission on merit to allow any ISKCON property without an installed Deity to be mortgaged, borrowed against, sold, transferred, or in any way encumbered, disposed of, or alienated.
7. To give or withhold recommendation on merit to allow any ISKCON property with an installed Deity to be mortgaged, borrowed against, sold, transferred, or in any way encumbered, disposed of or alienated.
8. To give written reports to the GBC Body, or the Executors Committee, regarding proposals to move an installed Deity or alienate the property of the Deity.
9. To assist the GBC Executive Committee in saving an endangered property on which installed Deities reside.
10. To be responsible to oversee the relocation of installed ISKCON Deities to a new property ensuring that property sale proceeds are not mismanaged or in anyway diverted so as to decrease the Deity's equity, and that the new property is adequate for the Deities.
11. When assigned by the GBC, to approve purchase of property or perform special assignments regarding property safeguards.
12. Whereas the position of property trustee is of grave importance within ISKCON because the trustee is entrusted with the responsibility of preserving Śrīla Prabhupāda's will, every devotee holding the position of property trustee must therefore:
 - a. routinely participate in ISKCON activities (temple programs, festival gathering, etc.) or, in the event that trustee doesn't reside within close proximity to an ISKCON temple, maintain a standard ISKCON *sādhana* program at home and regularly attend major temple festivals such as Janmāṣṭamī, Vyāsa-pūjā, Gaura-pūrṇimā, etc.,
 - b. regularly associate with ISKCON devotees.,
 - c. visibly adhere to the spiritual standards expected of any full-time member of ISKCON, and
 - d. sign the Oath of Allegiance.(96)

11.3.2 Powers

1. To grant or withhold approval to sell, mortgage, borrow against, transfer, or in any way encumber, dispose of, or alienate an ISKCON property under their jurisdiction that does not have an installed Deity.
2. To grant or withhold recommendation to sell, mortgage, borrow against, transfer, or in any way encumber, dispose of, or alienate an ISKCON property under their jurisdiction that does have an installed Deity.
3. To inspect and review on demand an ISKCON affiliate's institutional or corporate records, financial accounts, tax records, or property records in order to safeguard assigned real properties held in the name of the affiliate from being alienated or encumbered due to negligence, error, mismanagement, or other improper acts, or in order to determine if all ISKCON property laws are being followed by the affiliate.
4. To act as required signatories on all real estate transactions involving assigned properties.
5. To act as trustees for any funds held in trust from sale proceeds of the Deity's property until new property is purchased and the Deity permanently and properly settled.

11.3.3 Procedures of Appointment

1. The Property Trustees who have been designated in Śrīla Prabhupāda's will have been appointed for life, except as mentioned below.
2. In the event of the death, or failure to act for any reason, of any of the Property Trustees, there shall be a successor initiated disciple of ISKCON who is following strictly all the rules and regulations of ISKCON as detailed in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books provided that there are never less than three or more than five trustees acting at one time. "No objections" to the appointment must be obtained in writing from the local GBC's, and the Monitoring Executor for the property in question must certify in writing that the change is in accordance with ISKCON Law and Executors Committee policies. The trustees shall be responsible to notify the Executor Committee of any changes so effected by sending copies of all relevant documents to the Secretary of the Executor Committee.
3. Any changes, filling of vacancies, or additional appointments of Property Trustees that cannot practically be done by the Property Trustees as above shall be done by GBC Body, or on behalf of the GBC Body by the Executors Committee, which shall take into consideration the local GBC Zonal Secretary's

recommendations. Property Trustees shall be selected primarily from among the GBC members, or alternatively from among senior responsible devotees. At least one Property Trustee shall not be involved in the local management.

11.3.4 Regulations

Wherever legally possible, the names of the Property Trustees shall be included on all new and existing titles to ISKCON properties or where applicable as directors or trustees of the controlling Board of Directors or Trustees of the “holding trust” of the property.

11.4 The Executors Committee

11.4.1 Duties

1. To implement the specific legal and familial provisions of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s will; and to take appropriate steps to insure that ISKCON members duly fulfill their specific responsibilities in relation to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s will.
2. To oversee the performance of all Property Trustees in seeing that all ISKCON properties are properly registered according to ISKCON Law.
3. To delegate authority to its individual members for implementing the Property Trustee Principle.
4. To submit an annual report to the GBC.

11.4.2 Powers

1. To delegate authority to individual members to guide and monitor the Property Trustees.
2. To make rules for ISKCON regarding property related standards and execution of legislation and Śrīla Prabhupāda’s will. These rulings may be amended or rescinded by the GBC Body at their discretion.
3. To nominate and appoint Property Trustees where none exist or to replace vacancies according to approved procedures.
4. To make recommendations and to propose legislation to the GBC in regards to property matters and Śrīla Prabhupāda’s will.
5. To grant special temporary exemptions from placing their properties in the name of ISKCON or having Property Trustees as trustees of the property.

11.4.3 Agenda of Annual Meeting of the Executors Committee

1. To elect Officers of the committee.
2. To review old business and to review the activities of its members and of the Property Trustees.
3. To deal with matters referred by the GBC Body.
4. To deal with other agenda topics as may be proposed by the members.

11.5 Guidelines

11.5.1 Debts

1. Since temples are places of worship and ISKCON’s funds and assets are considered to be the personal property of the Supreme Lord, it was Śrīla Prabhupāda’s desire that as a general principle of management that Temple Presidents and temple administrations shall keep ISKCON temples free from debts. No external debts should be created by any temple administration. The approved guideline for implementing this is:
 - a. Except for BBT book consignment purchases and deferred payment short-term purchases which can be timely met by the temple from its normal cash flow, all other purchases and expenses should be made on cash basis. Temple Presidents should involve their Temple Board if this is deemed not possible before incurring a significant debt and the advice of the local GBC Zonal Secretary should be sought.
 - b. Immovable property purchases on mortgage or time payment done with concerned property as only collateral and after taking requisite permission as per ISKCON Laws on property are exempt.
 - c. Purchases of vehicles or other movable assets such as equipment of machinery should only be done with the concerned vehicle or other movable assets as collateral and not endangering other assets of

- default. If purchasing a vehicle or other movable assets will compromise a major portion of the temple cash flow, or there is danger of defaulting, then this should be avoided.
- d. Any debt which could endanger the immovable properties in case of default shall require the permission of the Property Trustees in writing prior to creating the debt, and if the property has installed Deities, then the permission of the GBC Body shall be required.
2. GBC Zonal Secretaries shall insure that their Temple Presidents and administrations learn to follow the principle of keeping the temple free of debts, and are following this principle.
 3. The GBC Zonal Secretary to the GBC Body shall include in his annual report:
 - a. Any deviation from following this principle and what steps have been taken to correct it.
 - b. Any debts which with just cause could not be avoided and the current status of the debt.
 4. In urgent cases during the year, the GBC Zonal Secretary shall inform the GBC Executive Committee of any blatant disregard of this principle or action which is placing the temple entity into significant debt risk, for which the GBC Zonal Secretary is not able to prevent or correct.
 5. Temple Presidents and administrations which chronically endanger the Lord's properties by deviating from this principle shall be liable for remedial or disciplinary action including:
 - a. Attendance of an approved course on proper financial management procedures.
 - b. Censure.
 - c. Probation and/or reducing to an acting status.
 - d. Removal, in extreme or chronic cases.

12

Temple Worship and Deity Worship

12.1 Deity Worship and Altar Regulations

12.1.1 Standards of Deity Worship

1. The book, "The Method of Deity Worship for the International Society for Krishna Consciousness," is approved by the GBC Body. All devotees engaged in Deity worship in ISKCON temples with installed Deities should study and take guidance from this book.
2. There should be no change in the system of Deity worship as established by Śrīla Prabhupāda. In all matters of new Deity worship which Śrīla Prabhupāda has not established or about which he has not given specific instructions, the GBC must be consulted.(83)

12.1.2 Protection of Deities

All temples must make arrangements for the protection of installed Deities immediately. This is to include adequate protection during *darśana* times when the curtain and doors are open. Locking iron gates are recommended. All GBC members must include details on how the Deities in each temple in their zone are being protected in their annual report.

12.1.3 Pictures of the Spiritual Master and Parampara Acaryas'

2. The pictures of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, Śrīla Gauraki '8fora dāsa Bābājī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and preferably Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī should always remain on all ISKCON temple altars.
3. A *pūjārī* who is not initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda shall keep the picture of his *guru* on the altar while offering *ārati*. The picture must be substantially smaller than those of the predecessor *ācāryas* in disciplic

succession, or, if not substantially smaller, be placed on a lower level. After the *ārati*, the picture should be removed from the altar.(87)

4. Disciples of a suspended *guru* when offering *bhoga* to the Deities in the temple or in any ISKCON establishment, (like restaurants, etc.) outside the temple must offer through Śrīla Prabhupāda to the disciplic succession.(87)

12.1.4 Vaisnava Marriage Ceremonies Before the Deities

Only initiated devotees of Kṛṣṇa who are strictly maintaining their vows of initiation may be married before the Deities in a *vaiṣṇava* ceremony. An ISKCON devotee priest can perform a ceremony for uninitiated devotees that may include the lighting of the sacred fire, but not before Deities, if he is reasonably certain that the devotees to be married are not engaged in regular and/or serious deviation from the four regulative principles. It is preferred that this ceremony not be held in the temple room if other facilities are available. An ISKCON devotee who is qualified under local law to perform religious ceremonies may marry other uninitiated devotees at his own risk. (93)

12.1.5 Prema-dhvani Prayers

1. The proposal 4 of “rules of conduct” of the laws of ISKCON regarding the specific method of chanting the *prema-dhvani* prayers shall be deleted, except the “ISKCON Founder-Ācārya A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda *ki jaya*” that shall be retained, chanted before chanting “*Nāmācārya Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura ki jaya*”.(81)
2. That in the temple room *kīrtana*, only the name of Prabhupāda and his predecessors can be chanted. The words ISKCON *guru vṛndā ki jaya* is to be used in the *prema-dhvani* prayers in place of the existing prayers.

12.1.6 Regulations for Worship of Śrīla Prabhupāda

1. There shall be a separate daily *guru-pūjā* for Śrīla Prabhupāda in the temple.
2. The only *guru-pūjā* inside the temple room will be for Śrīla Prabhupāda.(81)

12.2 Guidelines

12.2.1 Worship of Demigods as *Vaiṣṇavas*

1. Worship of demigods as independent gods is not permitted in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. However, the Nectar of Devotion says that demigods should be respected. Worshipping demigods as *Vaiṣṇavas* is authorized for preaching, in order to teach people the right position of the demigods as great *Vaiṣṇavas*.
 - a. The worship is only as a *vaiṣṇava* (This means that the *deva/devī* shall be offered: the *prasādam āratī* items immediately after they are offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* flower garlands, and *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* foodstuffs. No independent worship is offered. Only the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu's names is done, as Lord Caitanya did in South India.)
 - b. Their status as servants of Kṛṣṇa is made as clear as possible through signs, symbols, and iconography, and
 - c. Offerings are of *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*.
2. Deities of demigods (incl. Lakṣmī where no Viṣṇu is established), shall not be established without permission of the GBC. Where they are permitted or where ISKCON acquires a temple with already established mūrtis of demigods, they may remain, provided they are worshipped as *vaiṣṇavas*, as provided above.
3. ISKCON temples may hold, on special occasions, ceremonies or *pūjās* respecting and worshipping demigods as great *vaiṣṇavas*, provided they shall be designed as an introduction, precisely to draw people into that culture, and not as a substitute for it, thereby not falling under Śrīla Prabhupāda's structure. Properly conducted, they are favorable to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and should not be rejected.

12.2.2 Renting Space for other Groups' Religious Functions

It is permitted for other groups, at the discretion of the local ISKCON authorities, to rent space in ISKCON premises, outside the temple room, for their own ceremonies and functions, even for functions listed below (a-e), provided that the public understand clearly that the function is not being sponsored or conducted by

ISKCON. However, no function on ISKCON property shall include any activity contrary to the four regulative principles. The GBC recommends that temples provide outside groups rental contracts clearly stipulating the above restrictions.(96)

The following activities are not allowed as part of ISKCON functions, whether conducted on ISKCON property or elsewhere:

- a. Satya Nārāyaṇa *kathā*. (This is a concocted form of worship).
- b. *Garbha* dance, when it is conducted in association with the worship of Durgā. (*Garbha* dance is usually performed as part of *Nava-rātri*, a Durgā festival. However, there are also *Garbha* dances in glorification of Kṛṣṇa. Temple authorities permitting a *Garbha* dance must be confident that the performance is entirely Kṛṣṇa-centered.)
- c. The reading of Tulasīdāsa's *Rāma-carita-mānasa*. (*Rāmāyaṇa* readings should be from Vālmiki *Rāmāyaṇa*, as Tulasīdāsa's work is tinged with impersonalism.)
- d. Lectures advocating *Māyāvāda* or other offensive philosophies.
- e. The singing of the Hindi *ārati* song "om̐ jaya jagadīśa hare". (This is a prayer for material benedictions).

12.2.3 Sponsoring Professional *Bhāgavata-kathā* Reciters

The following guidelines should be followed:

- i. If the speaker is not an ISKCON devotee, he should be a practicing *vaiṣṇava* who can speak in public with enthusiasm about Lord Caitanya, ISKCON, and Śrīla Prabhupāda.
- ii. ISKCON should systematically cultivate such speakers as potential initiated devotees, so that at least their own standard of *sādhana* is enhanced. ISKCON will try to engage a few favorable outside reciters, rather than many, so that those few may become more immersed in ISKCON's mood.
- iii. All *kathās* should showcase devotees in *kīrtana*, *prasādam* distribution, as well as photos, paintings, and Deities from ISKCON temples or homes.
- iv. The temples sponsoring such *kathās* shall be pledged to pursue vigorous follow-up programs among those who attended the *kathās* in order to cultivate them as temple members and practitioners of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- v. Distribution of full sets of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhāgavatam*, in both Indian languages and in English, should be the main feature of these *kathās*.
- vi. We should be confident that the speaker will not express any *māyāvāda* or *sahajiyā* philosophy or sentiments.
- vii. The speakers should represent the full *Bhāgavatam*, and not just the Tenth Canto.
- viii. The speakers should speak as a benefit for ISKCON, receiving only minimal compensation.
- ix. The ISKCON speakers should always speak last in order to correct any errors in the other presentations.
- x. If the speaker is not an ISKCON devotee, the event should be held in another name.

12.2.4 *Sthāpaka-śāstra*

It is advised as a guideline that all ISKCON temples with installed Deities may immediately begin and maintain a *sthāpaka-śāstra* using a long-lasting hard-bound book suitable for establishing a legacy. Each temple's historical events should be recorded in the *sthāpaka-śāstra* by the Temple President and Head *pūjārī* after due consideration and mutual agreement. The *sthāpaka-śāstra* should be maintained on the altar as the Deities' personal paraphernalia. Suggestions for entries are:

1. Formation of the temple.
2. Special *līlās* and instructions given by the Founder-Ācārya, Śrīla Prabhupāda.
3. Special history of the Deities e.g.: how They were named, how They came, Their standard of service, Their extraordinary *līlās*, etc.
4. Accomplishments of the devotees and temple e.g.: winners of Christmas marathons.
5. Temple's annual history.
6. The last words of retiring Temple Presidents.(95)

12.2.5 Regulations Regarding *Vaiṣṇava* Calendar

1. ISKCON temples throughout the world shall follow the official calendar calculated according to the conclusions of this report, which are:

- a. The calculations should be made based upon the local time of sunrise.
 - b. A computerized method of calculations is acceptable.
 - c. The length of a *muhūrta* shall be calculated as a 15th part of the daytime and a 15th part of the nighttime.
 - d. Sunrise shall be defined as the time of calculated visibility of the upper limb of the sun at the horizon, and the time of sunset as the time of calculated disappearance of the upper limb of the sun at the horizon.
 - e. The calculations shall be based upon the positions of the heavenly bodies as determined according to modern scientific astronomical observations.(90)
2. The calendar generated by the program written by the Calendar Research Committee shall be the standard calendar to be followed by all ISKCON centers.(90)
 3. Śrīla Prabhupāda's Appearance Day be fixed as the calendar day after the observance of Janmāṣṭamī, and the calendar program changed accordingly.
 4. The official ISKCON calendar should include the significant dates in Śrīla Prabhupāda's life, such as the day he took *sannyāsa*, departed for America, arrived in America, founded ISKCON, etc.(92)
 5. The disappearance day of H.H. Gaura Govinda Mahārāja be observed on the ISKCON GBC and BBT calendar every year.(96)

13

Education

13.1 Board Of Education

13.1.1 Definition

The ISKCON Board of Education is a GBC standing committee dealing with primary and secondary education in ISKCON, composed of GBC and non-GBC members. The Board will formulate and execute concrete plans which shall enable it to effectively insure the quality of Kṛṣṇa conscious primary and secondary education throughout ISKCON. Each member of the ISKCON Board of Education shall have responsibility for specific duties and shall make specific commitments for which he shall be held accountable.

13.1.2 Powers

1. That all Board of Education resolutions are binding on ISKCON Educational Institutions, subject to review each year in Māyāpur by the GBC.(89)

13.1.3 Duties

The ISKCON Board of Education shall continue to maintain the activities of the former Ministry of Education.

1. To establish and maintain a central administrative office.
2. To meet annually in Māyāpur.
3. To plan international policies and strategies.
4. To interface with the GBC Body.
5. To resolve problems brought to it.(94)
6. To give Gurukula schools permission and guidance.(81)
7. To formulate and execute concrete plans which shall enable it to effectively improve and insure the quality of Kṛṣṇa Conscious primary and secondary education throughout ISKCON.
8. To develop and print curriculums.

9. To establish standards for voluntary accreditation of *gurukulas* worldwide and manage the accreditation process.
10. To act as an advisory service for ISKCON leaders and devotees worldwide in all matters concerning elementary and secondary education and child protection. It is reaffirmed herein that the ultimate responsibility for education and child protection rests with the local GBC and temple authorities.
11. To maintain official ISKCON child abuse records.
12. To report to the ISKCON Education Office Liaison (described below) of any known discrepancies in local follow up of reports.
13. To maintain other records, files, mailing lists as appropriate.
14. To organize the Education Conference on COM.

13.1.4 Regulations

13.1.4.1 Membership

Its membership, to be appointed by the GBC Body upon the Board's recommendation, shall be:

1. A Chairman / Secretary.
2. GBC members as Regional Representatives.
3. At-Large members who, while not representing a particular area, are experienced in education or have a specific contribution which enhances the composition of the Board.

The yearly GBC Chairman shall also serve as a member of the ISKCON Board of Education.

Duties of the different categories of members shall be initially as per the document entitled "Proposal to the GBC for Reorganizing the International Board of Education", dated February 14, 1991 and filed with the Corresponding Secretary, or as they may be modified by the Board of Education in the future and reported in writing to the GBC Body.

13.1.4.2 Duties of the Chairman of the Board

1. To supervise and review the activities of the Office.
2. To be referred any matters which come to the Education Office which are beyond its scope.
3. To refer them further to the Board of Education or to the GBC Body.

13.1.4.3 Gurukula Education

That within ISKCON, *gurukula* schools shall open only with the permission of the Board of Education, and operate under the guidance of the Board of Education and the local GBC.(81)

13.1.4.4 Children's Books

All children's books, including coloring books, for use by Kṛṣṇa conscious schools should have approval of the Board of Education.(79)

14

Saṅkīrtana – Book Distribution

14.1 Significance

That the leaders of ISKCON, as followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda, ought to see book distribution as our most effective means of preaching. "Know it for certain that there is no better way to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness than through the distribution of my books." We can make a worldwide revolution in the hearts of the people of this world and save these people from material existence through the distribution of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

But book distribution strongly increases only when we have a constant influx of new ISKCON devotees. So to increase book distribution, we must make new devotees. Therefore, wherever we have powerful leaders—whether GBC members, *gurus*, *sannyāsīs*, or Temple Presidents—they ought to impress upon their followers that book distribution and making new devotees to go out on book distribution are ISKCON's main work. The *guru*, whether *śikṣa* or *dīkṣā*, has great power to increase ISKCON's preaching. Therefore, in cooperation with the GBC Body and the individual GBC members, the *guru* should use that power to encourage and inspire his disciples to make new devotees and increase the distribution of books. *gurus* can impress upon their disciples the importance of the Māyāpur Project, remind them of its dependence on the BBT's income from book distribution, and encourage them to dedicate themselves to the mission of distributing books and building the Māyāpur City. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself did this, and so can the leaders who follow him. We all understand that we must build the temple and city in Māyāpur. And the way to do this is through book distribution. Therefore the leaders of ISKCON—GBC members, *gurus*, *sannyāsīs*, Temple Presidents, and senior devotees should bring the Māyāpur City, and the book distribution that supports it, to the forefront of ISKCON's consciousness. All ISKCON leaders are urged to strive vigorously to instill within their followers a consciousness of the crucial importance of the Māyāpur City and book distribution to the success of ISKCON's mission.

14.2 Regulations

1. GBC Zonal Secretaries and Temple Presidents shall be responsible to ensure that Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are distributed on *saṅkīrtana* on a regular basis.(81)
2. Regarding temple's BBT debts, Śrīla Prabhupāda said a temple can order with thirty days credit, and after that time they must pay in full for the books received, even if they were not all sold.(75)
3. If the establishment of a project within a particular zone will cause that zone or the temples within that zone to stop or greatly diminish their BBT remittances (i.e. the GBC mandate of 25%-50%), the GBC Zonal Secretary must receive approval from the GBC Body at the annual GBC meeting.(86)

14.2.1 Regarding Awards and Recognition

1. A monthly newsletter shall be sent out to all temples listing all zones and temples in order, giving details of all book sales and including interesting articles concerning developments of preaching fields in various zones.
2. Annual awards shall be presented during Māyāpur *Gaura-pūrṇimā* annual festival for outstanding services in the field of *saṅkīrtana* in the following areas:
 - a. Most successful country
 - b. Most improved country
 - c. Most successful temples (*mahā*-large, large, medium, and small)
 - d. Most improved temples (*mahā*-large, large, medium, small and *mahā*-small)
 - e. Top individual *saṅkīrtana* devotees.
3. Award winners shall be determined each year by the *Saṅkīrtana Newsletter* staff.
4. A BBT Newsletter may provide financial information.(80)
5. The scoring system for the *Saṅkīrtana Newsletter* is changed to include the following:
 - a. For the "Regular" category:
 - i. To count only literature which is actually sold and given into the hands of the receivers personally, and
 - ii. Literature distributed by accepting post dated checks shall only be counted when the minimum BBT price has been received.
 - b. A new category named "Subsidized" for the following methods of distribution:
 - i. Devotees working in teams of two or more and recording their total group effort as one score,
 - ii. Subsidized books which are sold at BBT price or less, and
 - iii. Sponsored books given to people who can value them (i.e.: VIPs, libraries, schools, prisons, etc.).

The above methods of book distribution must be specified when reporting scores to the newsletter.
 - c. Distribution by individuals and temples who give out literature free of cost shall not be counted in the newsletter.(97-103)

14.2.2 Regarding Book Distribution Techniques

1. Illegal techniques shall not be used on book distribution. Such illegal methods include: misrepresenting one's physical health, claiming falsely that contributions go for welfare projects and claiming falsely to be affiliated with a charity.(77)
2. "If costumes are used on *sañkīrtana* it must be done legally with permits from local authority".(77)
3. Each GBC Zonal Secretary man will go out in the field in each of his temples during the year to observe the same [to know how his devotees are implementing the resolution, "no illegal techniques".](77)

14.2.3 Regarding Traveling *Sañkīrtana*

No GBC member shall allow the *sañkīrtana* parties of his zone to carry out *sañkīrtana* activities outside of his zone without having received the express written permission of the host GBC Zonal Secretary or the Temple President concerned.(80)

14.2.4 Regarding Śrīla Prabhupāda Marathon

1. The Christmas marathon shall be officially titled the "Śrīla Prabhupāda Marathon".
2. Only legal and ethical techniques shall be used on book distribution and other techniques are not to be used. The standard of approved *sañkīrtana* techniques can be obtained from the GBC Minister for book distribution.(77)

14.2.5 Seminars Conducted by the Ministry for Book Distribution

1. The five-day seminar course established by the Global Book Distribution Minister is accepted as the official training course for all ISKCON book distributors. This course is to be taken by all:
 - a. New regular book distributors within the first twelve months of their book distributing career, and
 - b. Regular book distributors by Gaura-pūrṇimā 1998, and
 - c. Part time book distributors are encouraged to take this course.
2. The Global Book Distribution Minister is responsible to supervise the standard and content of the Book Distribution Graduate Course, promote it, and ensure that the requirements of this resolution are met.

14.3 Guidelines

1. The Temple Presidents should give an absolute minimum of twenty five percent(25%) of the Temples income for book distribution.(81)
2. Each temple may give books to ISKCON centers in third-world countries like India, Bangladesh, Śrī Lanka, Nepal, Africa and Latin America for establishing Kṛṣṇa conscious reading rooms. The temple contributing should receive *sañkīrtana* points for those books according to the Book Distribution Ministry approved system. In such a case the recipients will not receive points.(79)

15

Congregational Development

15.1 Significance

That the leaders of ISKCON, as followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda, ought to see the duty of training and facilitating congregational members as their primary function, in order to fulfill the order of Lord Caitanya: "Therefore I order every man within this universe to accept this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and distribute it everywhere." and the numerous instructions that Śrīla Prabhupāda has given in his books, lectures, letters and conversations on how people can practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their home, be initiated, establish a center in

their home, preach *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from their home. Wherever we have powerful leaders—whether GBC members, *gurus*, *sannyāsīs*, or Temple Presidents—they ought to impress upon their followers that everyone must be brought into the congregation and empowered to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness purely. This will directly please Lord Caitanya and Śrīla Prabhupāda. Congregational preaching should be understood to be one of the most essential works of ISKCON (books are the basis; preaching is the essence) following the footsteps of Lord Nityānanda and the previous *ācāryas*.

15.2 Guidelines

15.2.1 Encouraging the Congregation\: The *Sikṣa* Ceremony

1. ISKCON Leaders and GBC Members (with the exception of ISKCON initiating spiritual masters who cannot perform this ceremony except when it is for an approved *guru-āśraya* (sheltered) or approved aspirant disciple) shall, within their area of authority, be permitted to publicly bestow acceptance and recognition to members of its congregation for devotional achievements and progress in devotional service.
2. Local temples and congregational preaching units should implement programs for aiding the congregational members to enhance their standing, and for training them to qualify for the higher levels. This should include following a recommended study course for the different levels (Adult Education and Congregational Preaching Monitors shall recommend.)
3. Standard certificates shall be issued worldwide. (The proforma certificates shall be created and circulated by the Corresponding Secretary in consultation with the Congregational Preaching Monitor.)
4. The recognition shall be granted in any of the following categories (giving these is optional, as also the bestowal ceremony according to local time, place and circumstance):

15.2.1.1 Accepting the Sacred Order of Lord Caitanya

(Sat-saṅgi, or Śraddhāvān)

Qualifications: Accepting the instructions or sacred order of Lord Caitanya to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa (minimum one round per day), to worship Lord Kṛṣṇa (to visit the temple or otherwise cultivate devotional service as far as possible), and to read the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa (*Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and other books of Śrīla Prabhupāda). [Note: Since this broadly correlates with *śraddhā* or *sat-saṅga* stages of devotion, they can generally be called as “*Sat-saṅgi*” or “*Śraddhāvān*”.]

15.2.1.2 Kṛṣṇa (or Gaurāṅga) *Sevaka*

Qualifications: Chanting a minimum of four rounds of Hare Kṛṣṇa *japa* per day, refraining from meat-eating, believing in Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, possessing a devotional attitude, and avoiding of grossly immoral acts (drugs, prostitution, etc.)

15.2.1.3 Kṛṣṇa (or Gaurāṅga) *Sādhaka*

Qualifications: Chanting a minimum of eight rounds of Hare Kṛṣṇa *japa* per day, refraining from intoxication, meat-eating, gambling, and extra-marital sex, offering of *bhoga* to pictures, establishing an altar at home, and generally accepting the process of *sādhana-bhakti*.

15.2.1.4 Śrīla Prabhupāda *Āśraya*

Qualifications: Practicing the minimum standard of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for ISKCON members as given by Śrīla Prabhupāda, namely chanting of minimum sixteen rounds of Hare Kṛṣṇa *japa* per day, refraining from intoxication, meat-eating, gambling, and illicit sex, and generally showing a strong conviction in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

15.2.1.5 Śrī Guru Caraṇa *Āśraya*

Qualifications: Same as Śrīla Prabhupāda *Āśraya*, with additional faith and surrender in an authorized spiritual master coming in the disciplic succession. Must have been practicing Śrīla Prabhupāda *Āśraya* standard for a minimum of six months. They should pass the exam provided for in ISKCON Law.

15.2.2 Annual Doubling of the Congregation

ISKCON temples should try to annually double their congregation by training and empowering the congregation through small local *nāma-haṭṭa Bhakti-vṛkṣa* Branch Groups (known also as Kṛṣṇa conscious “cell” groups, *bhakti-saṅgas*, etc.)

15.3 ISKCON Leaders’ Duties In Regard to Congregational Preaching

15.3.1 GBC Zonal Secretary

1. Each GBC Zonal Secretary shall allocate the responsibility for preaching to the congregation in the different geographic areas of his zone to temples or Congregational Preaching Directorates to insure maximum effectiveness in congregational preaching and development.
2. If a *nāma-haṭṭa* center upgrades to become an ISKCON temple or otherwise a temple is established in a Congregational Preaching Directorate area, then naturally the GBC Zonal Secretary will make new arrangements to re-allocate the respective geographic responsibilities for preaching to the congregation in the affected areas.(93)

For those geographic areas which fall beyond the capacity or desire of ISKCON temples to supervise, promote, and expand the congregational preaching, the local GBC Zonal Secretary(s) and the Zonal Council (if any) can appoint a responsible devotee in good standing to be a “Director” of a “Congregational Preaching Directorate” or “Branch” of ISKCON who can lead a team of preachers to systematically cultivate, preach to, and expand the congregational preaching in a specified area.

3. To oversee that every temple maintains a program of sending a monthly letter from a devotee to his parents, if his parents are at least approachable.(77)

15.3.2 Responsibility of ISKCON Leaders to Conduct Congregational Preaching

Local spiritual authorities shall be responsible to establish programs for effectively involving, training and otherwise helping and encouraging congregational devotees to gradually become qualified for initiation.

1. An ISKCON temple shall be responsible for preaching to the congregation in the city, adjacent areas nearby, and any other extended area as may be designated by the local GBC Zonal Secretary(s) and Zonal Council (if any).
2. The congregational preaching program in such cases shall operate as a department of or part of the ISKCON temple, who shall bear the expense and shall provide the other requirements needed for this preaching. (see p. 129)

15.4 Regulations

15.4.1 Initiation of Congregational Devotees

Congregational members shall be subject to the same standards for initiation as stated in ISKCON Law on initiation and for acceptance of Guru. ISKCON Law states that the local Temple or Regional Authorities must recommend the congregational candidate. However this shall be done in the same manner as any other qualified devotee. If a local authority considers a candidate for initiation not qualified, then the candidate should be informed what needs to be done in order to become qualified according to ISKCON Law. It shall be prohibited to require a minimum donation or financial commitment or other requirements not mentioned by Śrīla Prabhupāda or ISKCON Law. As already mentioned in ISKCON Law, an individual *guru* is under no obligation to initiate a devotee because a proper recommendation has been given.(96)

15.4.2 The Congregational Preaching Directorate

For those geographic areas which fall beyond the capacity or desire of ISKCON temples to supervise, promote, and expand the congregational preaching, the local GBC Zonal Secretary(s) and the Zonal Council (if any) can appoint a responsible devotee in good standing to be a “Director” of a “Congregational Preaching Directorate” or “Branch” of ISKCON who can lead a team of preachers to systematically cultivate, preach to, and expand the

congregational preaching in a specified area. For all practical administrative purposes, the Director of such a unit is considered a Temple President.

15.4.2.1 Duties of a Congregational Preaching Branch Director

A Director of a Congregational Preaching Branch for purposes of ISKCON Law shall have for all effective purposes the position and responsibilities of a Temple President over his team of preachers and establishment.

In addition the Director shall have the following specific duties:

1. To provide leadership and spiritual guidance for the devotees under him.
2. To manage the finances of his program.
3. To recommend qualified candidates for initiation.
4. To encourage persons ready for joining a temple to do so.
5. To concentrate on congregational preaching.
6. To be accountable to the GBC Zonal Secretary.
7. To perform additional duties as assigned by the GBC Zonal Secretary and Zonal Council.

15.4.2.2 Location

The central office of the “branch” may be based in a temple premises with the permission of the Temple President, or they may have a separate place.

15.4.2.3 Cooperation with the Temple President

If any ISKCON temples exist nearby or do preaching in the area, then their no-objection shall be required to establish such a branch. Arrangements for *saṅkīrtana* rights and other aspects needed to maintain good relations and cooperation shall be made with the concerned Temple President.

16

Prasādam Distribution

16.1 Hare Kṛṣṇa Food For Life

16.1.1 GBC Recognition of Hare Kṛṣṇa Food For Life Program

The GBC Body officially recognizes “Hare Kṛṣṇa Food For Life” as ISKCON’s program for widespread distribution of *Kṛṣṇa -prasādam* and gives the program its blessings.

“Hare Kṛṣṇa Food for Life” and “ISKCON Food Relief” are officially part of the Ministry of Communications.

16.1.2 Duties

1. To promote, coordinate and organize *Kṛṣṇa-prasādam* distribution programs all over the world under appropriate titles.
2. To promote and supervise the ISKCON third world (i.e. India, Asia, Africa, etc.) *prasād* distribution program known as ISKCON Food for Life or ISKCON Food Relief as established by ISKCON’s Founder-Ācārya.

16.1.3 Regulations

That all temples are encouraged to take up the Hare Kṛṣṇa “Food For Life” program as outlined by the Communications Ministry and Food for Life Ministry. The GBC Body recommends this program as a highly effective means to increase *prasādam* distribution and ultimately book distribution as well and as a way for ISKCON to gain acceptance by the public and government agencies.

1. No person can collect funds using the name Food for Life without the written permission of their local ISKCON authority and the Ministry of Communication.
2. The above parties (the applicant, local ISKCON authorities and Ministry of Communication) are to mutually agree upon a percentage of funds to be collected using the name Food for Life. This must comply with local laws and must be used for the stated purpose either by:
 - a. conducting *prasādam* distribution, or
 - b. sponsoring *prasādam* distribution projects somewhere in the world.(97-106.1, 106.22)

17

Justice

17.1 Appealing a Decision

17.1.1 The Principle

In personal dealings between individual devotees and their authorities, appealing the decision of a lower authority to a higher authority for reaching a final solution is a standard principle in ISKCON.(93)

17.1.2 Procedure

1. If a devotee feels aggrieved by a decision, or the lack of a decision, of his Temple President for something which affects him in his personal spiritual life (initiation, marriage, transfer, removal, permissions, etc.), the devotee may appeal the matter to the local GBC Zonal Secretary or to an assistant of the GBC approved for this purpose.
2. While the appeal is being considered, the concerned devotee must follow the decision of the Temple President unless the GBC has given a stay order for the duration of the appeal.
3. During an appeal, all concerned parties should be heard and the decision in the appeal shall be considered as final.
4. If requested, decisions should be given in writing.
5. If the Temple President wants to appeal a matter relating to a decision of his GBC Zonal Secretary he can do so to the GBC Body, or in emergencies to the GBC Executive Committee, but while the appeal is going on he should follow the decision of the GBC Zonal Secretary unless the GBC Executive Committee gives a stay order from following it.
6. When the matter being appealed is related with something which will produce an irrevocable consequence or contravene ISKCON Law, the status quo should be maintained until the appeal is decided.(93)

See also Ministry of Justice.

18

Fund Development and Life Patron Membership

18.1 General Regulations

ISKCON centers shall always offer reasonable hospitality to any life members in good standing who visit the center. The minimum hospitality is to offer at least *prasādam*. Life members should be offered to stay overnight regardless of how meager the facilities are and if it is not possible to offer accommodations, then it is the responsibility of the temple to give reasonable assistance in finding member's accommodations.(82)

Collection of funds in the name of the homeless, the handicapped and the under-privileged is not acceptable method of fund raising, unless the collections are used for genuine purposes.(97-106.3)

18.2 General Guidelines

According to Śrīla Prabhupāda's expressed desire, whenever possible all temples should offer at least a one-year Back to Godhead subscription to every newly enrolled life member. New members who are not residing in primarily English-speaking areas shall have the option to be provided the magazines in another language if available.(90)

See also Ministry of Fund Development and Life Patron Membership (page 37.)

19

Devotee Health and Welfare

19.1 The Principle of Welfare of Each ISKCON Member

The welfare of individual ISKCON members is always of concern to the Society and its leadership. Specifically, devotees who have dedicated themselves to the work of the Society according to their ability and then later come to face some hardship due to old age, illness, lack of a means of livelihood, etc. should be provided the necessities of life. It is the duty of every ISKCON devotee to make whatever arrangements are within their power to provide these necessities wherever there is a need, without seeking compensation.

Trust funds, welfare organizations, and other such entities may be established by individual ISKCON members, temples, the GBC Body, etc. for carrying out these responsibilities, but the overriding principle of such endeavors must always be voluntary charity to the *vaiṣṇavas*. Taxes, assessments, and fees must never be used for such purposes, as such would serve only to decrease the feelings of love and trust upon which our Society is based.(91)

19.2 Protection of Women

19.2.1 Principles

The GBC hereby requests all temple and congregational leaders to practically engage female devotees in areas of temple *sādhana* and preaching, giving careful and mature consideration to devotee ability, local culture, devotee seniority, dedication, service, need for encouragement, and temple environment. ISKCON is a family where everyone should feel welcome. Although temple environments may differ, the underlying principle of facilitating ladies' *sādhana* must remain, based on an attitude of encouragement and respect.

19.2.2 *Sannyāsa* Widows

For those widows in ISKCON whose husbands took *sannyāsa* prior to March 1988, any needs that they may have for financial support shall be taken up on a case-by-case basis by the Health and Welfare committee. The Committee should act as a "placement agency" attempting to match widows with temples and service opportunities. The goal should be to find a temple which will provide shelter in exchange for reasonable service. ISKCON's obligation is to offer the same modest standard we offer to all devotees. If the widow is infirm and unable to be "placed", as above, the Health and Welfare Committee shall attempt to arrange general welfare support.

See also Women's Ministry (page 39.)

19.3 Child Protection

1. The local governing authority of each ISKCON school or community is responsible to appoint two or three devotees to investigate and follow-up on all suspected or confirmed cases of child abuse.
2. Suspected or confirmed cases of child abuse must be reported to local government authorities for investigation and/or prosecution. In India, the ISKCON Board of Education may authorize a waiver of this requirement if the perpetrator is willing to sign a statement authorizing the Board of Education to publicize the incident to all ISKCON-related educational projects and other concerned parties.
3. All suspected or confirmed incidents of child abuse must be reported immediately to the local GBC Zonal Secretary, and within thirty days, to the ISKCON Board of Education. The ISKCON Board of Education shall review the investigation and give a finding as to the status of the alleged perpetrator as confirmed, suspect, or innocent/not-suspected.
4. The perpetrator or alleged perpetrator must be immediately segregated so that he has no possible contact with the victim or other children. This segregation may take the form of relocating the perpetrator to another part of the project, away from children; banishment from the project (and possibly from other ISKCON projects with children); or in severe cases, banishment from all ISKCON projects. The degree of segregation will be determined by the nature and severity of the offense, the attitude of the perpetrator, the feasibility of protecting the children from further abuse or intimidation, and the sentiments of the local devotees, especially the parents. In no case should a confirmed or suspected perpetrator remain in the local community unless the local ISKCON authorities obtain the written authorization of no less than three fourths (3/4) of the parents of children at the project or in the community. The local government authorities and/or the ISKCON Board of Education will make the final determination of the appropriate degree of segregation.
5. Any confirmed child abuser may never again serve in association with children in any ISKCON project. The Board will also make available to all ISKCON educational projects and temples the names of all accused, admitted, confirmed or convicted child abusers.
6. Abused children must get appropriate professional counseling so that the serious ill-effects of the abuse can be minimized.
7. All ISKCON educational projects must have preventative programs which train children how to avoid and report child abuse incidents.
8. The local GBC members are directly responsible to implement the measures outlined above. Should the GBC Body find a GBC member or other ISKCON Leader's responsible for suppressing or covering-up complaints of child abuse, or supporting intimidation of those who might complain, the GBC member shall be open to censure or probation, and the ISKCON Leader shall be open to appropriate disciplinary action.(90)

9. Incidents of child molestation within ISKCON or ISKCON related organizations must be reported by the ISKCON authority to the local governmental agency or agencies for civil or criminal action, as appropriate.(89)
10. In countries such as India, where it is not practical to report child abusers to the police, the local GBC or Continental Committee must establish a mechanism whereby all child molestation incidents are thoroughly investigated, and confirmed abusers are banned from residing in or working in all ISKCON communities. Local resolutions confirming these actions must be forwarded in writing to the ISKCON GBC Board of Education, and all temples where the abusers may be likely to travel. The policy should be regularly explained to the devotees in these countries.(92)

See also Ministry of Health and Welfare (page 38.)

20

Farm Communities

20.1 Regulations

1. Farms can not be opened without prior approval of GBC. It can be done during the year by correspondence and through the GBC Property Committee.
2. No farm community shall be supported by a temple, but should be self sufficient from the beginning. Those farms opening can take a loan but must pay it back.

21

International Projects

21.1 Regulations

21.1.1 Board of Directors

For all international projects, (i.e. built with international funds) there shall be a Board Of Directors of not less than five or more than seven of which the local GBC shall act as the Managing Director. The Board Of Directors shall establish goals and strategies which they will be responsible to follow up on.(86)

21.2 Obligation of GBC Members In Relation to International Projects

The GBC members are obliged to support Śrīla Prabhupāda's international priority projects such as Sridhāma Māyāpur, etc.(80)

21.3 Special Projects in India

1. Śrīla Prabhupāda's desires and goals for expanding ISKCON activities through special projects in India (construction, development, maintenance, food distribution, etc.) is known to all GBC members. It is resolved that the GBC accepts the final responsibility for these.(79)
2. Regarding all construction projects in India, along with commissioning money for new projects, we must finish and maintain/repair all old projects, especially the international projects like Bombay, Vṛndāvana, Māyāpur and New Delhi Glory of India. We should also seriously consider improving already established projects before constructing new ones.(81)
3. The Māyāpur, Vṛndāvana, Bombay, and New Delhi Glory of India temples be accorded special status as the direct responsibility of the GBC Body as a whole, in addition to being the zonal assignment of individual GBC members. The entire GBC Body must discuss each of them at every annual meeting, must receive three reports per year from the management of each of these projects, and must be consulted on major decisions.(90)

21.3.1 Śrī Māyāpur Project

21.3.1.1 Construction of the Temple of Vedic Planetarium

21.3.1.1.1 Significance

From the completion of the Śrīla Prabhupāda Centennial year (1997) ISKCON shall make the achievement of Śrīla Prabhupāda's and the previous *ācāryas'* dream to build the Māyāpur Temple of Vedic Planetarium as the focus of all its activities until its completion (the twenty-year anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's foundation stone laying).

21.3.1.1.2 Guidelines

1. Maximum total cost for all things necessary to build the temple should be approved by the full GBC Body.
2. Total planning and construction time as approved by the GBC Body.
3. The temple must include:
 - a. As main deities, *Pañca-tattva*, *Rādhā-Mādhava* and the eight *gopīs*, and the *guru-paramparā*.
 - b. Vedic planetarium.
 - c. Four *dhāmas* exhibits.
 - d. *Kīrtana* hall.
4. The temple shall be constructed for maximum longevity and minimum maintenance and upkeep.
5. Funding for this construction shall come from worldwide book distribution and worldwide fundraising efforts.(89)
6. The SMPDC (Sri Mayapur Project Development Committee) shall make a presentation at each year's festival to the general devotees regarding the Māyāpur development plans.(90)
7. Formation of an institute to research the *Vedic* understanding of universal order, under the Bhaktivedanta Institute. The SMPDC will review their work.(78)
8. The entire GBC Body shall be the standing committee for insuring the development of Śrī Māyāpur Mandir and City, and they shall make an annual presentation to the GBC Body.

21.3.1.2 Śrī Māyāpur Project Development Committee

21.3.1.2.1 Definition

For implementing the desires of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the previous *ācāryas*, the GBC and ISKCON shall begin work on Sri Māyāpur Project. To this effect, a development committee called "Śrī Māyāpur Project Development Committee,"(SMPDC) shall be responsible for planning and constructing the Māyāpur project.

21.3.1.2.2 Duties

1. To plan for the Māyāpur Project.
2. To construct the Māyāpur Project.
3. To delegate responsibilities in order to realize the Māyāpur Project.
4. To allocate funds for this project, once they have been contributed by the BBT and other sources.

5. To give an annual report to the GBC Body.

21.3.1.2.3 Powers

1. To expend funds without further sanction for the implementation, planning, etc. of the Śrī Māyāpur Development Project from any funds received.
2. To decide on proposals regarding the Śrī Māyāpur project and to sanction the plans, designs, programs and questions which arise.
3. To meet as required for the successful completion of the Temple of Vedic Planetarium construction and implementation, especially during the following stages:
 - a. Project formulation: estimates and cost flow evaluations, planning procedures, appointing engineer architects, etc.
 - b. Approval of preliminary drawings: modifications approximate cost, preliminary selection of materials, etc.
 - c. Approval of final design: last revisions, revision of approximative cost, etc.
 - d. Approval of interior plan: final modification of interior, etc.
 - e. Approval of estimates: hiring contractors, and on any other occasion as may be necessary.
4. To sanction the procurement of necessary and qualified devotees to work under the project, this sanction with the permission of local GBC and Temple President, provided the individual is agreeable.
5. To review the reports made by the various research groups and approve on the recommendation and implementation.
6. To be always in the awareness of the progress of the project, and to stimulate the ideals of the project of ISKCON at large.
7. To do all other things on behalf of the GBC which are required to further the Māyāpur Development Project, and to give reports to the GBC at the annual meeting.
8. To appoint personnel on any committee formed for planning, research, etc. of the project.
9. This committee will elect a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary and a Project Director to co-ordinate the working of the committee, and their term shall be one year.
10. On the order of the Chairman (or in his absence, or non-availability, the Vice-Chairman) the Secretary will notify the committee members fifteen days in advance of the venue and of the next meeting, and that the quorum of the meeting thereby officially called shall be a majority of the members in person or by proxy.
11. The Chief Architect and the Head Supervisor shall be entitled to attend the meetings relating to their work, and that the SMPDC shall be entitled to call any one to sit in the meeting, or render a report before the committee, but that such ex-officio invitees, or others present shall have no voting power in the committee.
12. All other conditions in the "standing orders" regarding committee shall be followed.

21.3.1.2.4 Regulations

1. The SMPDC shall appoint a "working sub-committee or team" from any of its members for being immediately available to the planning department and other research groups and for dispensing funds sanctioned and made available by the previous decision of the SMPDC, and for doing all other things related as may be resolved by the committee as its representative.
2. The committee shall appoint a "Māyāpur Planning Department," being a team of devotee architects, engineers, draftsmen, construction supervisors, etc., which shall be responsible to make plans, co-ordinate research groups, supervise construction, take quotations and tenders, work with professional architects, engineers and experts, and give regular reports to SMPDC and its working subcommittee.

21.3.1.2.5 Māyāpur Project Fund Raising Committee

21.3.1.2.5.1 Definition

A committee is formed under the direction of the SMPDC for the specific purpose of fund raising all over the world for the Śrī Māyāpur project.(82)

21.3.1.2.5.2 Duties

1. To raise funds and co-ordinate the fund-raising for the Śrī Māyāpur Development Project including forming new parties, donations, and other means. It shall enjoy the co-operation of the rest of the Society in the implementation of their program.
2. The above fund raising committee shall elect its office bearers for one year and meet during the Māyāpur festival and subsequently during the year, at least once, and may form sub-committee's reports which shall be submitted by the Fund Raising Committee to the SMDPC for their advice.

21.3.1.2.6 Research institute

1. A research institute styled as "Bhaktivedanta Universal Order Research Institute" (or "Bhaktivedanta Astronomical Research Institute", or BI) shall be established and research the Vedic understanding of the Universal order on a full-time basis for the purpose of erecting an exhibit at Śrī Māyāpur, and thereafter in other places, for giving public and scientific circles the real picture of the universe.
2. The above mentioned B.I. shall be financed under the auspices of the Śrī Māyāpur Development Project Committee's Fund.(78)

21.3.2 Vṛndāvana International Project

21.3.2.1 Focus of the Vṛndāvana Project

The Vṛndāvana ISKCON project shall be organized with the focus on education, i.e. that all aspects of the project will be seen as parts of a campus that exists to further the educational aims. All persons who come to the campus, for an hour, a week, a year, or any length of time, should find opportunities to be educated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.(90)

21.3.2.2 Save Vṛndāvana Campaign

ISKCON shall spearhead an international "Save Vṛndāvana" campaign, which could have tremendous preaching potential, both in India and abroad. A committee, the Save Vṛndāvana Campaign Committee, is hereby formed to take up the work. (90)

21.3.3 Jagannātha Purī Bhaktivedanta Āśrama

1. That the Bhaktivedanta *āśrama* in Jagannātha Purī shall be known as an international project. Funding for this project from the India Fund will await the completion of the Māyāpur Temple and Planetarium.
2. That the development oversight of the thirty (30) acre land now in ISKCON's name in Jagannātha Purī will be under a Standing Committee known as the ISKCON Purī Development Committee. (IPDC).(91)

22

Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Gaura-pūrṇimā Festival

22.1 Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee

22.1.1 Definition

Śrīla Prabhupāda instructed the worldwide devotees of ISKCON to annually gather together and observe a pilgrimage, *dhāma-parīkramā* and festival at the ISKCON center in Māyāpur-*dhāma* on the occasion of Gaura-pūrṇimā (the Appearance Day of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu) and around that occasion to also observe a *parīkramā* and festival at the ISKCON Temple in Vṛndāvana-*dhāma*. This is known as the Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival.

The Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee shall discuss improvements in the Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival, and set programs.(77)

22.1.2 Membership of the Festival Committee

1. The GBCs of Śrī Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana are ex-officio permanent members of the committee.
2. The Regional Secretaries and Temple Presidents/Co-Directors/CEO of Śrī Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana or their assignees are permanent invitees to the committee.
3. Other committee members shall be elected every three years by the existing committee members by taking a representative from each continent from those volunteers who commit themselves to come and serve during the festival for a fixed period of time. Unexcused or repeated absence from the festival shall terminate committee membership.(83)

22.1.3 Duties

22.1.3.1 General Duties

1. To schedule the annual ISKCON Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival.
2. To establish detailed programs, including seminars, processions, award ceremonies, classes, etc., during festivals. The purpose shall be to bring the ISKCON world community closer together and to increase the communication of Kṛṣṇa conscious ideas and understanding among the participants as far as possible.
3. To develop new facilities for the festivals as required.
4. To establish journals, periodicals, pamphlets, manuals, etc., as required to further the objectives of the committee.
5. To confer awards, prizes, certificates, etc., upon deserving parties.
6. To take steps to insure that there are adequate festival facilities i.e., *prasādam*, rooms, *parīkramās* in Vṛndāvana and Māyāpur.(82)

22.1.3.2 Regarding Finances

1. The Secretary of the Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee will make available to the GBC, on request, a financial report of the income and expenditure of the Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival (shortly after the festival is finished).(82)
2. If there is any balance of funds it shall be invested to improving the festival facilities.(82)
3. To arrange to finance the festival through fixing and collecting individual festival fees, collecting donations, and other methods.

4. To manage the finances making allotments according to budget.
5. The festival income from fees shall not be considered as temple income, but kept in a separate fund. The Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee is authorized to pay/contribute to the local Temple for room rent and facilities or services utilized.

22.1.3.3 Regarding Management

1. To directly, or through a delegated authority, manage, coordinate, and organize the annual ISKCON Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival and all *pandals*, *parikramās*, pilgrimages, and programs related thereto.
2. To appoint subcommittees, secretaries, cultural secretaries, coordinating secretaries, and all other officers.
3. To have the local (Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana) temples participating in the festival program act as agents of the committee and follow the directives and standards of the committee during the period of the annual festival.
4. The Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee is authorized to appoint any qualified devotee situated in a foreign country to assist in facilitating, promoting and coordinating the annual Gaura-pūrṇimā Festival by interfacing with the devotees and temples outside India in their assigned area. Such a devotee should have adequate time to devote to the annual festival service.(80)

22.1.4 Guidelines

The Śrī Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee may, at their discretion, organize booths during the Annual festival for temples, regions, zones, countries or continents at Śrī Māyāpur, in which annually each temple, country or zone should exhibit their Kṛṣṇa conscious achievements of the year. This will increase the enthusiasm of the devotees in general and inform the public of ISKCON's preaching achievements.(81)

22.2 General Regulations

1. The approved schedule for the annual Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana festival shall be that the Vṛndāvana-*dhāma* festival immediately follows the Māyāpur-*dhāma* festival, and any other festivals may be scheduled thereafter.(83)
2. An annual traveling *padayātrā parikramā* of Navadvīpa-*dhāma*, following the example of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and Lord Nityānanda, be organized with tents, and a full program be held as a part of the annual Gaura-pūrṇimā festival. To make this a success a maximum number of senior *Vaiṣṇavas'* presence is requested.(81)
3. That all Regional Secretaries and Temple Presidents will be responsible for setting up their zonal exhibition booths at the annual Māyāpur festival. This will be followed up by the Secretary of the Sri Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival Committee.(82)

22.3 General Guidelines

1. Zones may provide an audio-visual or video presentation for the festival and time shall be provided for exhibiting that to the GBC's and the devotees in general.(81)
2. All temples should try to at least send one representative along with as many men as possible to the Māyāpur festival to resist weakening of ISKCON.(80)

23

ISKCON Related Organizations

23.1 General Regulations

1. Any ISKCON Ministry, organization, individual, or project (including those legally independent from ISKCON) receiving funding from ISKCON or the BBT, including mandatory assessments, taxes, and so forth, from temples and/or zones, be required to provide financial reports clearly delineating assets, liabilities, expenditures, and income. Such reports are to be submitted to the GBC Corresponding Secretary at least forty-five days prior to the beginning of the annual meeting, and shall be distributed to all GBC members and made available to other concerned ISKCON officials upon request.
2. The Corresponding Secretary shall compile a list of ISKCON Ministries, organizations, individuals, or projects to whom this resolution applies, and annually notify them of their report deadline at least sixty days in advance.
3. Anyone who is submitting a request for GBC/ISKCON funding should, along with their appeal, include their budget and previous financial reports for information. This resolution will not take effect until after the 1990 annual meeting.
4. All fund-raising activities performed by an ISKCON non-profit entity that are considered as un-related businesses which could endanger ISKCON should be separately incorporated and should comply with guidelines given by GBC legal advisors.(80)

23.2 The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust

23.2.1 General Regulations

1. Only the BBT has the right to publish any of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. All books published by the BBT shall be copyrighted by BBT International.
2. The BBT Trustees' eligibility to serve shall be approved by the GBC Body if the GBC Body finds a trustee unacceptable.
3. Only BBT books may be sold on *sarikīrtana* by ISKCON temples. Anyone who wishes to write a book for mass distribution shall present that book to the BBT trustees for approval.
4. BBT publications shall only be sold to customers (for their book distribution) who are not attacking ISKCON institutions or what ISKCON stands for.
5. Every publication from the BBT shall invite readers to correspond with either the secretary of the BBT or the temple of their choice. If possible, a list of temples shall appear in each publication. All names received requesting free books shall be immediately sent to appropriate temples, provided the temples pay the costs involved.(84)
6. If the establishment of a project within a particular zone will cause that zone or the temples within that zone to stop or greatly diminish their BBT remittance (i.e. the GBC mandate of 25-50%) the GBC Zonal Secretary must receive approval before the GBC Body at the annual Māyāpur meeting.(86)
7. There shall be a GBC subcommittee known as the Supervisory Committee for India BBT Funds. This committee shall recommend to the GBC Body how to allocate funds given to ISKCON for India Projects by the BBT. The committee shall also audit and supervise the spending of those funds and make regular reports to the GBC Body and the trustees of the BBT.(89)
8. The GBC accepts the authenticity of the unabridged complete edition of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* published by North America BBT.
9. After the BBT Trustees have determined the amount of funds available for ISKCON projects, the GBC shall decide how to divide it.
10. All ISKCON literature published [in quantities over 5000 intended] for the public in mass distribution on *sarikīrtana*, must be published exclusively by the BBT or a center or publisher specifically authorized by the BBT.(75)

11. No ISKCON temple or other entity shall sell, give away, or otherwise permanently dispose of any original works of art which were created to illustrate Śrīla Prabhupāda's (or other BBT) books. If temples wish to transfer ownership of these artworks, they must do so to another ISKCON temple or to the BBT.(89)
12. When a temple continues illegal means of *sāṅkīrtana*, the BBT trustees are authorized to do the needful to rectify.(77)
13. The GBC will decide how the BBT contributions for temple building in India, etc. shall be spent.(75)
14. BBT publications shall only be sold to customers (for their book distribution) who are not attacking ISKCON. Any former member of ISKCON who preaches against ISKCON shall be excommunicated or appropriately disciplined. It shall be prohibited to sell BBT publications to them by ISKCON members. If they are claiming to be officially members of ISKCON, they should be legally disenfranchised.(83)

23.2.2 Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vyāsa-pūjā Book

1. An annual *vyāsa-pūjā* book for Śrīla Prabhupāda shall be published by the BBT for the next ten thousand years.
2. A high-quality, hardbound Śrīla Prabhupāda *vyāsa-pūjā* book for the whole Society shall be published annually. It shall include offerings from all GBC members, ISKCON centers, and *sannyāsīs* worldwide. Continental *vyāsa-pūjā* books are welcome additions.
3. The author of each temple's offering in the annual world *vyāsa-pūjā* book shall be stated in the book.

23.2.3 Back to Godhead Magazine

There may be various co-editors of non-English BTG magazines but the English edition editor will be responsible to keep the standard. In this he will work in cooperation with the co-editors and BBT trustees of the various foreign language BTGs. As for the editorial policies he should follow, he shall take consultation from the GBC.(77)

23.3 Bhaktivedanta Institute

1. The Bhaktivedanta Institute (BI) is authorized to delegate someone in any zone or country to deal with the scientists more effectively.
2. BI goals shall annually be presented at the GBC meeting with a review report on the progress on the following year to the GBC in Māyāpur. Also the BBT trustees are authorized to review and approve the annual budget for the BI each year. (80)
3. The BI will establish centers only after obtaining permission of the local GBC zonal Secretaries.(86)

23.4 Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Trust (MVT)

The MVT Committee, which controls the funds of the Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana fund, shall submit yearly reports to the GBC on the expenditure from this fund.(77)

23.5 ISKCON Television, Inc.

That the GBC establishes a policy prohibiting "pirating", i.e., unauthorized duplicating of any ISKCON Television (ITV) videotapes, from now in perpetuity as the official policy of ISKCON for the benefit of the preaching effort. This includes any unauthorized duplication of any division of ISKCON engaged in producing video cassette.(81)

Appendices

1 Miscellaneous

All ISKCON official mouthpiece publications shall not be permitted to carry advertising for astrological services.

2 Position Papers

2.1 “On My Order” Understood

ISKCON devotees and leaders have repeatedly requested a clear vision from the GBC on Śrīla Prabhupāda’s order in 1977 regarding continuing the disciplic succession, but as yet it has not been presented. Many interpretations of the “appointment tapes” have been published by the GBC and outside parties, many inimical to ISKCON, and a clear GBC stand would help ISKCON devotees in their preaching and search for unity in diversity. A clearer concept and a general consensus on many things have been achieved after discussions and philosophical research. The *siddhānta* in regard to *guru-tattva* in ISKCON has been unclear, and there is a need for a statement from the GBC to give direction. Therefore it is resolved that the following conclusions are accepted as the official GBC position in regard to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions regarding continuing the disciplic succession:

1. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s explicit and consistent desire and program had always been that eventually His Divine Grace’s disciples and followers would take up the service of initiating new disciples into the disciplic succession as initiating *gurus*.¹ This procedure is supported by all evidence from *sādhu*, *śāstra* and *guru* as the bona fide method of continuing the disciplic succession. In fact, this is the only concept of continuing the disciplic succession ever mentioned by Śrīla Prabhupāda.
2. In 1977, Śrīla Prabhupāda repeatedly said he would “select,” “choose,” “appoint,” or “designate” some disciples to take up the service of initiating new disciples. When Śrīla Prabhupāda was asked who would initiate after his physical departure he stated he would “recommend” and give his “order” to some of his disciples who would initiate on his behalf during his lifetime and afterwards as “regular *gurus*,” whose disciples would be Śrīla Prabhupāda’s grand-disciples. Śrīla Prabhupāda repeatedly cited Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s statement “*āmāra ājñāya guru hoīya*” and stated that one would be eligible to act as an initiating *guru* based “on my order”, i.e. on the “order” of Śrīla Prabhupāda as the representative of Lord Caitanya.² Subsequently, Śrīla Prabhupāda named some disciples to initiate on his behalf, as he had previously stated.³ Although Śrīla Prabhupāda did not repeat his earlier statements, it was understood that he expected these disciples to initiate in the future. Śrīla Prabhupāda stated that being a spiritual master is “not difficult,” that the primary qualification for is to “strictly follow” the previous spiritual masters.⁴ Śrīla Prabhupāda’s repeated use of the phrase “on my order” makes it abundantly clear that those who would be “selected” were simply to strictly carry out His Divine Grace’s “order”, and as long as they did so they would be bona fide spiritual masters. It is up to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s followers to be and remain qualified by strictly following his instructions.
3. In ISKCON, the basis of anyone’s acting as an ISKCON spiritual master is the transcendental “order” of Śrīla Prabhupāda, which conveys in succession the divine order of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is therefore clear that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s use of words like “appoint,” “recommend” or “select” was not in the mundane sense of appointing someone to a post or position, and certainly not to some state of “realization,” nor as a full endorsement of qualification, as has been commonly misunderstood, but is rather a conditional mandate dependent on the follower’s “strictly following” the “order” of the spiritual master. In fact, the Sanskrit word “*ājñā*” means to be the order-carrier or to represent a higher authority. Failing to “follow strictly” the “order” of the previous *ācāryas* would disenfranchise the putative *guru*.⁵ Although Śrīla Prabhupāda was a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and a liberated soul, he humbly presented as his only qualification that he was a humble “servant of the servant,” that he was simply carrying out the “order” and strictly following the instructions of his spiritual master, Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who was a liberated soul. Śrīla Prabhupāda taught by example. Therefore, His Divine Grace’s “selecting” someone would be to do what Śrīla Prabhupāda stated he was doing, i.e. simply to “carry out the

order” of the previous *ācāryas*.⁶ Reinforcing that truth is Śrīla Prabhupāda’s well-known instruction that a spiritual master must always consider himself a disciple and servitor of his own *guru*.

4. After Śrīla Prabhupāda named some disciples to initiate, his personal secretary suggested some others for also starting to initiate, but Śrīla Prabhupāda, after considering the matter, said they were not yet ready. His Divine Grace said the GBC could consider and later add others when needed. Thus, by delegating that duty to the GBC, Śrīla Prabhupāda personally detailed the procedure for increasing the number of initiating *gurus*. Earlier, His Divine Grace had taught Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s instruction that his GBC would be responsible to “elect” qualified devotees to be initiating *gurus*. When asked who would succeed him, His Divine Grace said that he “gave the legacy” to all his disciples and whoever strictly follows him is qualified to succeed him.⁷
5. When a devotee is allowed to carry out the “order” of Śrīla Prabhupāda to expand the disciplic succession by initiating new disciples, it is not to be taken as a certification or endorsement of his being an “*uttama-adhikāri*,” “pure devotee,” or to having achieved any specific state of realization. It is simply a statement that the devotee has been given permission to execute the “order” to serve as a *guru* because it was considered that he was “strictly following” Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions and had maintained an adequately exemplary *sādhana* and behavior up to the standard approved for serving as a *guru*. Moreover, Śrīla Prabhupāda never stated that he was appointing an “*ācārya*” or an independent or “absolute authority” for the *sampradāya*. To the contrary, His Divine Grace established the GBC and said that the GBC would be the “ultimate managing authority” for all affairs (material and spiritual) of the society in accordance to *sādhū*, *sāstra* and *guru*.⁸ *Gurus* and disciples are expected to cooperate and follow the decisions of the GBC as desired of Śrīla Prabhupāda.
6. It may be that in the future a devotee may achieve great realization and advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and become a “self-effulgent *ācārya*,” a renowned “*ācārya*” for the *sampradāya*, but Śrīla Prabhupāda stated such things are not to be confirmed by administrative decrees or actions. If an advanced devotee’s spiritual qualities are “self-effulgent,” devotees may naturally accept him as an “*ācārya*” or advanced or realized spiritual master and his association and guidance will be sought, but the GBC cannot “rubber stamp” him nor change ISKCON’s system of management consequently. ISKCON will continue to be managed as Śrīla Prabhupāda provided without “change” by the GBC. That is Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instruction.⁹
7. Uninitiated ISKCON devotees should seek out a spiritual master who is strictly following Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions and representing Śrīla Prabhupāda, with full faith that by following such a spiritual master who is strictly following a liberated soul; they will achieve the same results obtainable by serving Śrīla Prabhupāda directly. (Other instructions in this regard may be separately published.)
8. Disciples are to respect their spiritual masters as direct representatives of Kṛṣṇa, i.e. as “*sākṣād dharitvena*,” in accordance with *sāstras*. Disciples should worship their spiritual master according to their faith and according to the standard *Vaiṣṇava* etiquette approved by ISKCON. All ISKCON devotees should encourage disciples in developing faith in their spiritual masters.

2.1.1 Notes

1. As early as 1967 Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote:

Øb_”üb_øCEû¿Àšû¿ÿÿÿ\Øb_RJ→¿_____iG_jsJ_pÜb_pØb_āŚC_Üb_mØb_à@_h

f His bonafide representative, can become a spiritual master and I wish that in my absence all my disciples become bonafide spiritual masters to spread Kṛṣṇa Consciousness throughout the whole world.” (Letter to Madhusūdāna 02-11-1967)

and in 1968 he wrote to Harṁsaduta:

“Maybe by 1975 all of my disciples will be allowed to initiate and increase the number of the generations. That is my program.” (Letter to Harṁsaduta Swami)

Also,

“Therefore if anyone is anxious to be initiated, he should first of all hear our philosophy and join chanting at least for three months, and then if required, I shall send chanted beads for him if you recommend. As we are doing here. Don’t be allured by such *māyā*. I am training you all to become future spiritual masters, but do not be in a hurry. (08-21-1968, Letter to Acyutānanda and Jaya Govinda)

“I am just trying to disseminate this message of my spiritual master and if there’s any credit for this service, everything goes to Him. This message of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness is coming down from Kṛṣṇa Himself, and we are all servants of the Supreme Lord working under the consecutive disciplic succession. Please try to understand our philosophy through various books that I have already published and sometimes after you will have to carry out this order of disciplic succession.” (03-14-1969, Letter to Prahādānanda)

“Some time ago you asked my permission for accepting some disciples, now the time is approaching very soon when you will have many disciples by your strong preaching work. Stick to the line of our strong preaching method and many misguided persons will be blessed by your proper guiding.” (05-16-1972, Letter to Acyutānanda)

“I have heard that there is some worship of yourself by the other devotees. Of course it is proper to offer obeisances to a Vaiṣṇava, but not in the presence of the spiritual master. After the departure of the spiritual master, it will come to that stage, but now wait. Otherwise it will create factions.” (10-01-1974, Letter to Haṁsaduta Dāsa)

“Now has the GBC become more than *guru* Mahārāja? As if simply GBC is meant for looking after pounds, shilling, pence. The GBC does not look after spiritual life. That is a defect. All of our students will have to become *guru*, but they are not qualified. This is the difficulty.” (11-10-1975, Letter to Alalanātha Dāsa)

“Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bonafide *guru*, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bonafide spiritual master and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness very widely, that will make me and Kṛṣṇa very happy.” (12-02-1975, Letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Swami)

2. Vṛndāvana, May 28, 1977

Satsvarūpa: By the votes of the present GBC. Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted.

Prabhupāda: Yes. I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up, I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating *ācāryas*.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Is that called *ṛtvik-ācārya*?

Prabhupāda: *Ṛtvik*, yes.

Satsvarūpa: Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...

Prabhupāda: He's *guru*. He's *guru*.

Satsvarūpa: But he does it on your behalf.

Prabhupāda: Yes. That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become *guru*, so on my behalf, on my order... *Āmāra ājñāya guru hañā*. Be actually *guru*, but by my order.

Satsvarūpa: So they may also be considered your disciples.

Prabhupāda: Yes, they are disciples. Why consider? Who?

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: No, he's asking that these *ṛtvik-ācāryas*, they're officiating, giving *dīkṣā*. Their... The people who they give *dīkṣā* to, whose disciples are they?

Prabhupāda: They're his disciples.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: They're his disciples.

Prabhupāda: Who is initiating. He is granddisciple.

Satsvarūpa: Yes.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: That's clear.

Satsvarūpa: Then we have a question concer...

Prabhupāda: When I order, “You become *guru*,” he becomes regular *guru*. That's all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. That's it...

Prabhupāda: And Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, *āmāra ājñāya guru hañā*. One can understand the order of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he can become *guru*. Or one who understands his *guru's* order, the same *paramparā*, he can become *guru*. And therefore I shall select some of you. (hums)

It should also be noted that in most cases when Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke about his disciples becoming *gurus* he cited the *āmāra ājñāya* verse.

3. July 7, 1977, Vṛndāvana

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Those are their favorite words. Śrīla Prabhupāda? We're receiving a number of letters now, and these are people who want to get initiated. So up until now, since your becoming ill, we asked them to wait.

Prabhupāda: The local, mean, senior *sannyāsīs* can do that.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: That's what we were doing... I mean, formerly we were... The local GBC, *sannyāsīs*, were chanting on their beads, and they were writing to Your Divine Grace, and you were giving a spiritual name. So should that process be resumed, or should we...? I mean one thing is that it's said that the spiritual master takes on the... You know, he takes on the... He has to cleanse the disciple by... So we don't want that you should have to... Your health is not so good, so that should not be... That's why we've been asking everybody to wait. I just want to know if we should continue to wait some more time.

Prabhupāda: No, the senior *sannyāsīs*...

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: So they should continue to...

Prabhupāda: You can give me a list of *sannyāsīs*. I will mark who will...

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Okay.

Prabhupāda: You can do. Kīrtanānanda can do. And our Satsvarūpa can do. So these three, you can give, begin.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: So supposing someone is in America, should they simply write directly to Kīrtanānanda or Satsvarūpa?

Prabhupāda: Nearby. Jayatīrtha can give.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Jayatīrtha.

Prabhupāda: Bhavanan..., er, Bhagavān. And he can do also. Harikeśa.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Harikeśa Mahārāja.

Prabhupāda: And... Five, six men, you divide who is nearest.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Who is nearest. So persons wouldn't have to write to Your Divine Grace. They could write directly to that person?

Prabhupāda: Hm.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Actually they are initiating the person on Your Divine Grace's behalf. Those persons who are initiated are still your...

Prabhupāda: Second initiation we shall think over, second initiation.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: This is for first initiation, okay. And for second initiation, for the time being they should...

Prabhupāda: No, they have to wait. Second initiation, that should be given...

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Should... Some devotees are writing you now for second initiation, and I'm writing them to wait a while because you're not well. So can I continue to tell them that?

Prabhupāda: They can do second initiation.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: By writing you.

Prabhupāda: No. These men.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: These men, they can also do second initiation. So there's no need for devotees to write to you for first and second initiation. They can write to the man nearest them. But all these persons are still your disciples. Anybody who gives initiation is doing so on your behalf.

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: You know that book I'm maintaining of all of your disciples' names? Should I continue that?

Prabhupāda: Hm.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: So if someone gives initiation, like Harikeśa Mahārāja, he should send the person's name to us here and I'll enter it in the book. Okay. Is there someone else in India that you want to do this?

Prabhupāda: India, I am here. We shall see. In India, Jayapatākā.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Jayapatākā Mahārāja.

Prabhupāda: You are also in India.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Yes.

Prabhupāda: You can note down these names.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Yes, I have them.

Prabhupāda: Who are they?

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Kīrtanānanda Mahārāja, Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, Jayatīrtha Prabhu, Bhagavān Prabhu, Harikeśa Mahārāja, Jayapatākā Mahārāja and Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja.

Prabhupāda: That's nice. Now you distribute.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Seven. There's seven names.

Prabhupāda: For the time being, seven names, sufficient. You can make Rameśvara.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Rameśvara Mahārāja.

Prabhupāda: And Hṛdayānanda.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Oh, yeah. South America.

Prabhupāda: So without waiting for me, wherever you consider it is right... That will depend on discretion.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: On discretion.

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: That's for first and second initiations.

Prabhupāda: Hm.

4. Make sure that they are well aware of the four rules and regulations and that they are fixed in chanting the prescribed number of sixteen rounds daily on the beads. Without these two principles no one can make advancement on the path of regulated *bhakti*. Teach them the science of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and train them to be first class representatives of Kṛṣṇa. It is not very difficult, simply one has to hear from the perfect authority who is in disciplic succession from Kṛṣṇa Himself, and then repeat the same message without any change. If one does this then he is qualified to become *guru*. (Letter to Jayadhama 08-20-1976)

Guru is only one. *guru* means, as you explained, *ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā, cakṣur unmlītaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*. One who eradicates the *ajñāna, andhakara*, darkness. In the darkness, if somebody brings lamp, *ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā...* The *jñāna-rūpa*, torchlight, he's *guru*. So maybe of different degrees, but anyone who opens the spiritual eyes, he's *guru*.

But it doesn't matter that degree. Actually, if the *guru* teaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then he may be in lesser degree, but he's accepted as *guru*. There is no question of rejection. Because Kṛṣṇa is actually *jñāna*. One who teaches Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, "One has to know Kṛṣṇa, one has to surrender to Kṛṣṇa," this kind of teaching is required.

So the real test is whether the *guru* is a Vaiṣṇava, whether he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa. That is also confirmed by Caitanya Mahāprabhu: *kibā vipra kibā śūdra nyāsī kene naya, yei kṛṣṇa-tattva vettā sei guru haya*. A... It doesn't matter

what he is, whether he's a *sannyāsī* or a *grhastha* or a *brāhmaṇa* or a *śū.*, born in *brāhmaṇa* family or... It doesn't matter. *Yei kṛṣṇa-tattva*. Anyone who knows Kṛṣṇa, he can become *guru*, not others. So that is the statement of the *sāstras*. Avaiṣṇava cannot become *guru*. (Lecture, Ahmedabad 12-13-1972)

Just like post peon give you five thousand rupees, delivers. He does not deliver. Somebody else is delivering. He's simply carrying. That's all. Similarly, if we simply carry the message of Kṛṣṇa as it is, we become perfect. It is not very difficult. If I simply carry the message of Kṛṣṇa, where is the difficulty? Everything is there. Kṛ

'90ṇa has said everything. Kṛṣṇa says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktō mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru*. We carry this message. Just always think of Kṛṣṇa, always offer obeisances to Kṛṣṇa, become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. *Man-manāḥ*, think of Kṛṣṇa always. We have to carry this message. Where is the difficulty? So to become a bona fide spiritual master, there is no difficulty. If you, simply, if we carry the message of Kṛṣṇa as it is without any adulteration. So we must find out a person who is actually bona fide spiritual master by this test: that he's not—I mean to say—adulterating Kṛṣṇa's message. He's not playing havoc with the message of Kṛṣṇa in order to introduce himself, his person. He's simply presenting the message of Kṛṣṇa as it is. Then he's spiritual master. Nobody else. Thank you very much. (NOD Lecture, Vṛndāvana 10-31-1972)

So Caitanya Mahāprabhu says *āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa yāre dekha tāre kaha kṛṣṇa-upadeśa*.

He says, *āmāra ājñāya*. by My order, you become a spiritual master.

So one may be very illiterate, no education, (and) or no scholarship, may not be born in *brāhmaṇa* family, or may not be a *sannyāsī*. There are so many qualifications. But one may not have all these qualifications. He may be rascal number one, but still, he can become spiritual master. How? *Āmāra ājñāya*. As Kṛṣṇa says, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, if you follow, then you become spiritual master. One may be rascal number one from material estimation, but if he simply strictly follows whatever is said by Caitanya Mahāprabhu or His representative spiritual master, then he becomes a *guru*. (Vyāsa-pūjā address, London 08-21-1973)

It is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's wish that everyone should become a Vaiṣṇava and *guru*. Following the instructions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His disciplic succession, one can become a spiritual master, for the process is very easy. One can go everywhere and anywhere to preach the instructions of Kṛṣṇa.

... the duty of every Vaiṣṇava is to travel and preach *Bhagavad-gītā*, either in his country or a foreign country. (Cc.M. 24.277)

“ We do not have to manufacture anything new. We are getting perfect knowledge from Kṛṣṇa through the disciplic succession, so our position is very firm. Whatever we hear from the bonafide spiritual master should be practiced in life and the same message delivered to whomever we meet. In this way you become spiritual master. (Letter to Kīrtirāja 12-31-1975)

5. This time I have requested all Nairobi important friends that: “Now you take *sannyāsa* and become *guru*. Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked everyone to become *guru*. *Āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa*. You have come to Africa. Now become their *guru* and deliver them.” “Now, how shall I do it?” *Yāre dekha tāre kaha kṛṣṇa-upadeśa*: “Simply speak. Don't become very big upstart. Simply speak what Kṛṣṇa has done. That's all. You become *guru*.” (Conversation, Bombay 03-11-1975)

Bambarambhe laghu-kriya, in the Sanskrit word, that you can make a very high-grade arrangement, but the result is zero. So that hierarchical arrangement is exactly not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But our method is very simple. If one is fortunate enough to meet a bona fide spiritual master and if he acts strictly under his discipline, he also becomes within a very short time another spiritual master. (Interview, Seattle 09-24-1976)

Because people are in darkness, we require many millions of *gurus* to enlighten them. Therefore Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission is, He said, that “Everyone of you become *guru*.” *Āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa*. You haven't got to go foreign countries. Wherever you are, you teach; become *guru*. It doesn't matter. *Ei deśa*. He says, *ei deśa*. If you have got power, you can go other country but it doesn't require. In whichever village, whichever country or town you are, you become a *guru*. This is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission. *Āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa*. “This country, this place.” So “But I have no qualification. How can I become *guru*?” There is no need of qualification. “Still, I can become *guru*?” Yes. “How?” *Yāre dekha tāre kaha kṛṣṇa-upadeśa*: “Whomever you meet, you simply instruct what Kṛṣṇa has said.” That's all. You become *guru*. Everyone is very anxious to become *guru*, but rascal does not know how to become *guru*, a simple thing.

So that is our mission. All of you who have come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, that is our request, that you, all of you, become *guru* but don't speak nonsense. That is request. Simply speak what Kṛṣṇa has said. Then you become *brāhmaṇa*. You'll be *guru*, and everything. Thank you very much. (Lecture, Honolulu 05-21-1976)

Caitanya Mahāprabhu said that “You become a *guru*.” *Āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa*. “You become a *guru* and deliver them.” So “I am a fool. I have no education. How can I become a *guru*?” So answer is “No, no. *Yāre dekha tāre kaha kṛṣṇa-upadeśa*.” If you simply advise people what Kṛṣṇa has said, then you become *guru*. But if you manufacture your ideas, then you are not a *guru*. (Conversation Bombay 01-07-1977)

Āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa. Suppose you are living in that village. Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, “You become a *guru* here.” Here. You haven't got to go out. *Ei de*

'ṣṭa, “where you are living.” Just see how nice it is. *Āmāra ājñāya*: “By My order, you become a *guru* and deliver the people of this place.” This is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's... So “I am not educated, I do not know. How I shall become?” No, you haven't got to bother. *Yāre dekha tāre kaha kṛṣṇa-upadeśa*: “Simply you repeat what Kṛṣṇa has said. You become

guru.” That’s all. Everyone can do that. *Gītā* is there. You sit down in your place and preach *Bhagavad-gītā* and try to induce them to take it. You become *guru*. (Conversation, Bombay 04-23-1977)

Our Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission is that “You become *guru*,” as I was telling, “and teach, deliver persons where you are.” If you say, “How can I become *guru*?” there is no difficulty. Simply repeat the words of *Bhagavad-gītā*. That’s all. You become *guru*. So our mission is to create real *guru*, not these jugglers. And real *guru* is he who speaks on behalf of Kṛṣṇa. And that is wan... It is very simple.

This is our mission. Everything is there. Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, *yāre dekha tāre kaha kṛṣṇa-upade...* “You simply make your life successful by understanding *Bhagavad-gītā* and preach this. You become *guru*.” So where is the difficulty? Why don’t you do that? (Conversation, Bombay 04-24-1977)

This is very easy. So I am not a scholar. I am simply... Whatever is said there, I am trying to distribute in a palatable way. That’s all. It is not my manufacture. And that is Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s... *Amāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa*. You all become *guru*. “How can I become *guru*? I have no education. I have no knowledge.” No, you haven’t got to acquire all these things. That is already... *Yāre dekha tāre kaha*. Finished. So I never tried to become a scholar. But I tried, whatever is spoken by Kṛṣṇa, deliver. That’s all. And that is *guru*. (Conversation, Vṛndāvana 06-26-1977)

6. “Personally I am humble servant of Kṛṣṇa as you are also, but I am deputed to accept your service just to transfer it to Kṛṣṇa as via media. I shall try to do this service to you and Kṛṣṇa throughout my life, and I am so proud to have such assistants as you are to help me in my mission to push on the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Movement.” (Letter to Dayānanda, 05-01-1969)

“You are all my children and I love my American boys and girls who are sent to me by my spiritual master and I have accepted them as my disciples.” (Letter to Satsvarūpa and Uddhava, 07-27-1970)

“Practically, I do not have any disciples; I select so many masters to train them in the service of the Lord.” (Letter to Jai Mazo, 01-18-1968)

“I have not done anything personally, very wonderful. I am simply serving my spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and all the *ācāryas* in the disciplic succession.” (Letter to Bhīma Dāsa et al, 05-16-1974)

6. November 2, 1977

Prabhupāda: ...after you, who will take the leadership?” And “Everyone will take, all my disciples. If you want, you can take also. (laughter) But if you follow. They are prepared to sacrifice everything, so they’ll take the leadership. I may, one, go away, but there will be hundreds, and they’ll preach. If you want, you can also become a leader. We have no such thing, that ‘Here is leader.’ Anyone who follows the previous leadership, he’s a leader. ‘Indian,’ we have no such distinction, ‘Indian,’ ‘European.’”

Brahmanānda: They wanted an Indian to be the leader?

Prabhupāda: Yes. (laughs) “Everyone, all my disciples, they are leaders. As purely as they follow, they become leader. If you want to follow, you can become a leader. You are Indian. But you don’t want.” I told them that.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Yes, they probably wanted to propose somebody who would take over our movement.

Prabhupāda: Yes. Leaders. All nonsense. Leader means one who has become first-class disciple. He is leader. *Evam paramparā-prapta...* One who is perfectly following... Our instruction is *ara na kariha mane āśā*. You know this? What is that? *Guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete kariyā aikya, ara nā kariha mane āśā*. Who is leader? A leader, to become leader, is not very difficult, provided one is prepared to follow the instructions of a bona fide *guru*.

7. See Prabhupāda’s will.

8. “He [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta] never asked anybody to become *ācārya*. He asked that ‘You form a governing body of twelve men and go on preaching. . . .’ None, none of them were advised by guru Mahārāja to become *ācārya*. His idea was ‘Let them manage; then whoever will be actually qualified for becoming *ācārya*, they will elect. Why I should enforce upon them?’ That was his plan. ‘Let them manage by strong governing body, as it is going on. Then *ācārya* will come by his qualifications.’” (Conversation, Bombay 09-21-1973)

“His [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta’s] idea was *ācārya* was not to be nominated amongst the governing body... a self-effulgent *ācārya* would be automatically selected.” (Letter to Rūpānuga, 04-28-1974)

“A *vaiṣṇava ācārya* is self-effulgent, and there is no need for any court judgment.” (Cc. M 1.220)

“A powerful Vaiṣṇava who has converted others into Vaiṣṇavas is to be worshipped, but because of material contamination, sometimes such an exalted Vaiṣṇava is disrespected by other, minor Vaiṣṇavas.”

“... It has actually been seen that even an authorized devotee who is engaged in the service of the Lord by preaching the mission of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is sometimes criticized by neophyte devotees.”

“... Neophytes, unable to appreciate the exalted service of the advanced devotee, try to bring the *mahā-bhāgavata* to their platform. We experience such difficulty in propagating this Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Unfortunately we are surrounded by neophyte Godbrothers who do not appreciate the extraordinary activities of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. They simply try to bring us to their platform, and they try to criticize us in every respect. We very much regret their naïve activities and poor fund of knowledge. An empowered person who is actually engaged in the confidential service of the Lord should not be treated as an ordinary human being, for it is stated that unless one is empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world.” (NOI, Text 6, pp.64)

2.2 Devotees Initiating Before Their Guru's Physical Departure

2.2.1 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's View

Some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's godbrothers were approached to find out what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's view was on this issue. All of them informed [us] that none of his disciples gave initiation when he was present. His Divine Grace did not instruct anyone to give initiation during his presence nor for that matter did he give any specific instructions about them initiating after his disappearance.

In the Gauḍīya Māṭha, after Śrīla Oṃ Viṣṇupada Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's disappearance, the etiquette of not initiating in the presence of the spiritual master has continued. In fact, if anyone breaks from this tradition, he is excommunicated from their mission.

2.2.1.1 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's Instructions

Although apparently Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura did not specifically, in black and white, instruct anything about a disciple not giving initiation when the *guru* is present, it is quite clearly implied in the instructions below. The question of initiating in the presence of one's *guru* is inappropriate for a disciple who naturally is cultivating his service attitude to the *guru*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura was very emphatic about the disciple's sincere dedication to his *guru*. The following quotes are from a Bengali book called Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāder Upadeśāmṛta:

Q: Will I be able to accept disciples?

A: "Give up envy and show mercy to living entities—living entities who become averse to Kṛṣṇa, make them Kṛṣṇa conscious. Do not become a *guru* to become envious. Do not become a *guru* in order to drown yourself in sense gratification—do not become a *guru* just for show off. But if you can become a sincere servant of your *guru* and Kṛṣṇa, if you can receive their mercy-potency, then there is nothing to fear. Otherwise there will be disaster." (p. 235)
"If one is not dedicated to his *guru* he can not be qualified to be a *guru*." (p. 337)

Q: What is the difference between *guru* and me?

A: I am lighter than the lightest; even lighter than that. But one who is serving the greatest constantly, that spiritual master is greater than the greatest; even greater than that. (p. 235)

Q: Is it true that without the mercy of the spiritual master nothing can be achieved?

A: Yes. I am blind, who will show me the way other than the *guru*? Everything is achieved by the mercy of the *guru*. We are *laghu* (light), our only shelter is the *guru*. He who serves the Lord all the time in all respects, he is the *guru*.

Q: Does one invite misfortune when he does not follow the orders of his spiritual master properly?

A: Of course! If one does not follow the orders of his spiritual master who is the personification of all auspiciousness, he will suffer misfortune—his material desires will increase, and after death he will go to hell. He who does not follow the order of his spiritual master, is a resident of hell. He is a materialist or a big sense enjoyer. One who disobeys the order of his spiritual master enters in the womb of a pig. Those who have strong desire for sense enjoyment, even after getting a bona fide spiritual master due to their good fortune, due to the inability to serve the spiritual master with heart and soul, do not derive any spiritual benefit. Due to their inability to appreciate the value of this priceless object, they consider this material nature to be real, and suffer life after life. (p. 506)

From these statements of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, it is clear that only a qualified disciple can become a bona fide spiritual master, and a true disciple simply depends upon the mercy of his spiritual master in order to do anything. The disciple's only desire is to satisfy the spiritual master. Whatever the *guru* orders, the disciple must carry out, including the order to give initiation and accept disciples, with a sense of duty as a service to his spiritual master. But he himself always feels unqualified to execute such a serious responsibility. The more one feels unqualified the more he receives the mercy of the *guru*; and that enables him to become qualified.

2.2.2 Vedic View

In the Vedic society a disciple does not usually give initiation when his spiritual master is present. A disciple naturally feels unqualified to take up such a serious responsibility, especially when his *guru* is present; and his natural tendency is to bring the fruits of his preaching to his *guru*. (Since one is not supposed to canvas for his *guru* in ISKCON, it is expected that one should direct the candidates for initiation to Śrīla Prabhupāda and all those who are initiating now.)

There are instances when disciples gave initiation before their *guru's* physical departure:

1. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura mentioned in *Jaiva-dharma* how Paramahansa Premadāsa Bābājī took his disciple Vaiṣṇava Dāsa to his spiritual master, Pradyumna Brahmācārī.

2. Rāmacandra Kavirāja, a disciple of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, gave initiation when Śrīnivāsa Ācārya was present on the planet.

There are many such instances in the scriptures about disciples giving initiation in the presence of *guru*, but that was done only when the disciples were extremely qualified and spiritual masters ordered them to do so. *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* states:

gurorgurau sannihite guruvad vīttimācāret

“If the spiritual master of the spiritual master is present, then he should be treated as the *guru*.” (Hbv. 1.59)

This statement proves that acceptance of disciples in the presence of one’s spiritual master has been approved by the scriptures.

In the scriptures there is no specific instruction about a disciple not giving initiation when his *guru* is present. About transgression of etiquette, we found only one verse in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*:

varṇottame ‘tha ca gurau satī ya viśruto ‘pa ca svadesato ‘tha vanyatra nedarṁ karyam śubhārthina

“When a superior *guru* (with aforementioned qualities) is present at home or abroad, a person born in a lower caste should not try to bestow his mercy in the form of giving *mantra* if he desires his own good.” (Hbv. 1.37)

But this initiation is based on the consideration of *varṇa*. Regarding this statement, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura mentioned in his *Amṛta-pravaha-bhāṣya* of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

“Knowledge about Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate objective of all living entities. Regarding how one can become qualified to give that knowledge it has been concluded that irrespective of one’s position as a *brāhmaṇa* or *śūdra*, householder or *sannyāsī*, one can become a *guru* as long as he is well conversant with the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa. The consideration of *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* is for those Vaiṣṇavas who are concerned about social customs; i.e. for those who want to make a little spiritual progress by following customary social regulations. But those who want to acquire pure devotion after understanding the significance of *vaidhī* and *ragānuga-bhakti*, should accept a qualified spiritual master without considering his *varṇa* and *āśrama*.” (Cc. Madhya 8.127)

In Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings also it is clear that the main qualification of a *guru* is his Kṛṣṇa consciousness. All Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* have been very emphatic about this point.

Although not much has been said about this etiquette, yet it is known to everyone that transgression of etiquette, i.e. to disregard the position of a senior, is deemed to be a great offense. In Vedic culture the position of the spiritual master is considered to be the highest and transgression of etiquette in this relation was always considered to be extremely dangerous.

There are some unusual instances where disciples gave initiation in the presence of *guru* under some special circumstances. We did not research on what those special circumstances were.

2.2.3 Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Views

Śrīla Prabhupāda was very emphatic that a disciple should not initiate in the presence of his *guru*. He told many of his disciples that even though they may be qualified, they should not give initiation as long as the spiritual master is present, because that is the etiquette. He emphatically told that to HH.Jayapatākā Mahārāja. The day Śrīla Prabhupāda gave *sannyāsa* to HH.Bhakti Cāru Swami, he told him, “Now that you are a *sannyāsī*, you can give initiation. But as long as the spiritual master is alive one doesn’t give initiation. That is the etiquette.”

He wrote to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Swami,

“Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bona fide *guru*, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bona fide Spiritual Master and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness very widely, that will make me and Kṛṣṇa very happy.”

In other letters, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote:

The first thing, I warn Acyutānanda, do not try to initiate. You are not in a proper position now to initiate anyone. Besides that, the etiquette is that so long the Spiritual Master is present, all prospective disciples should be brought to him. (Letter to Acyutānanda and Jayagovinda, 08-21-1968)

Anyone following the order of Lord Caitanya under the guidance of His bonafide representative, can become a spiritual master and I wish that in my absence all my disciples become the bona fide spiritual master to spread Kṛṣṇa Consciousness throughout the whole world. (Letter to Madhusūdana, 11-02-1967)

So far as your taking initiation from Brahmānanda Mahārāja, I have no objection, but it is the etiquette that in the presence of one’s Spiritual Master, one does not accept disciples. In this connection, Swami Brahmānanda may write me and I will instruct him. (Letter to John Milner, 03-24-1971)

Siddhasvarūpa does not want to take disciples, neither he should have disciples while I am alive. That is the process. (Letter to Sudevī, 09-15-1972)

From Mādhavānanda I have heard that there is some worship of yourself by the other devotees. Of course it is proper to offer obeisances to a Vaiṣṇava, but not in the presence of the spiritual master. After the departure of the spiritual master, it will come to that stage, but now wait. Otherwise it will create factions. (Letter to Hamsaduta, 10-01-1974)

Don't become premature *ācārya*. First of all follow the orders of *ācārya*, and you become mature. Then it is better to become *ācārya*. Because we are interested in preparing *ācārya*, but the etiquette is, at least for the period the *guru* is present, one should not become *ācārya*. Even if he is complete he should not, because the etiquette is, if somebody comes for becoming initiated, it is the duty of such person to bring that prospective candidate to his *ācārya*. Not that "Now people are coming to me, so I can become *ācārya*." That is *avamanya*. *Navamanyeta karhicit*. Don't transgress this etiquette. *Navamanyeta*. That will be falldown. Just like during the lifetime of our guru Mahārāja, all our Godbrothers now who are acting as *ācārya*, they did not do so. That is not etiquette. *Ācāryam maṁ vijāniyat na avaman...* That is insult. So if you insult your *ācārya*, then you are finished. *Yasya prasādād bhāgavat-prasādo yasya aprasādāt na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*—finished. If you displease your *ācārya*, then you are finished. (Cc. 1.13 Lecture, Māyāpur, 04-06-1975)

From these quotations it is clear that Śrīla Prabhupāda did not want his disciples to initiate, no matter how qualified they may be, as long as their spiritual master was present. One may question, however, whether these instructions are applicable only to founder-*ācāryas* like Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is a fact that the founder-*ācārya* is the *guru* of all members of his institution, and no one gives initiation when he is present, and even after his disappearance the members of the institution become connected to him through *śikṣa* relationship. But here there is no reason to believe that these instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda were meant only for a founder-*ācārya*. The etiquette he mentioned here is a common Vaiṣṇava etiquette. It is prudent to assume that Śrīla Prabhupāda was speaking as the Founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, and that he is restricting all disciples of all *gurus* in ISKCON from initiating in the presence of their spiritual masters.

Even though in the past spiritual masters have given disciples permission to initiate in their presence, Śrīla Prabhupāda emphatically forbids it as a manner of general etiquette. We see only two places where Śrīla Prabhupāda may have indicated otherwise.¹

ISKCON is a unique institution in the history of Vaiṣṇavism. We must assume that as Founder-*ācārya*, Śrīla Prabhupāda had the vision to set down a law—a law suitable for that unique institution, a law we would transgress at our peril.

A disciple's only duty is to worship and serve his spiritual master. His mind should not be agitated over how he may become a *guru*. A devotee who sincerely wants to make spiritual advancement should try to become a disciple, not a spiritual master.

2.2.4 Notes

By 1975, all of those who have passed all of the above examinations will be specifically empowered to initiate and increase the number of the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness population. (Letter to Kīrtanānanda, 01-12-1969)

I want that all of my spiritual sons and daughters will inherit this title of Bhaktivedānta, so that the family transcendental diploma will continue through the generations. Those possessing the title of Bhaktivedānta will be allowed to initiate disciples. Maybe by 1975, all of my disciples will be allowed to initiate and increase the numbers of the generations. That is my program. (Letter to Hamsaduta, 3rd December, 1968)

These quotes raise further questions: In 1968, did Śrīla Prabhupāda expect to leave the planet before 1975? Or was he thinking of creating *ṛtvik-gurus* who would initiate on his behalf by 1975? Whatever the answer may be, when 1975 arrived, Śrīla Prabhupāda took no steps to give his disciples the responsibility of accepting their own disciples. Indeed, his statements on this issue in 1975 (Letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa and lecture in Māyāpur) leave no doubt that His Divine Grace gave no authorization for disciples to initiate as long as he remained on the planet. In logic, later statements supersede earlier ones in importance.

2.3 ISKCON's Position Statement on the Environment

Fostering a more simple and natural way of life is one of the founding principles of ISKCON. The members of the Society are therefore committed to helping solve the planet's environmental problems. These include water pollution, air pollution, toxic waste, nuclear and chemical accidents, destruction of wildlife, and desertification.

The environmental crisis is a product of a society that has become overly dependent upon destructive industrial technology. This dependency is rooted in reductionist science, which has removed God and the soul from the forefront of human concern. When people forget that nature is the property of God, they are driven to exploit it unlimitedly for their own material gratification.

2.4 Official Position Statement on ISKCON's Relationship with Hinduism

“The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), also known as the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, was founded by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. ISKCON follows the teachings of the Vedas and the Vedic scriptures, including *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Bhāgavata Purāna*; it teaches and practices Vaiṣṇavism, or devotion to God in the supreme personal aspect of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. ISKCON receives these teachings through the preceptorial line known as the *Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya sampradāya*. This well-established traditional line descends through the respected teacher Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (AD 1486-1534), the full incarnation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose philosophy and practices unify the teachings of all four major Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas: Śrī Madhvācārya, Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī, and Śrī Nimbarkācārya.

“ISKCON embraces the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa as a primary practice and accepts the concepts of transmigration, *karma*, vegetarianism (*ahimsā*), worship of the Deity (*śrī vighraha*), and the preceptor-disciple (*guru-śiṣya*) relationship. Initiated members vow to refrain from gambling, illicit sex, intoxicants (including coffee, tea, and cigarettes), and non-vegetarian food.

“In this way ISKCON faithfully continues the core traditions of the Hindu faith. ISKCON's teachings are non-sectarian and non-denominational, for they are not limited to any particular historical religion. Vaiṣṇavism inculcates the essential and universal principle of all religion. That principle, called *sanātana-dharma* in Sanskrit, denotes the natural and eternal activity of all living beings—loving devotional service to the one Supreme Personality of Godhead.”(91)

3 Sample Recommendation Forms for Initiations

3.1 First Initiation

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS
Founder-ācārya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Center:

Date:

Official Recommendation for First Initiation

To (Name of guru):

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

It is my pleasure to recommend (name of candidate)

for first initiation by you. I find that he/she has fulfilled the necessary qualifications for initiation to the best of my understanding. Specifically, for the last twelve months he/she has been engaged in favorable devotional service, has chanted sixteen rounds of *japa* daily, and has adhered to the four regulative principles. He/she is sufficiently knowledgeable in the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the structure and purpose of ISKCON for initiation, as evidenced by passing an examination as prescribed under ISKCON Law. The candidate has accepted your shelter for at least six months. These qualifications have either been observed by me personally or I have heard of them from sources I know to be reliable.

Your servant,

Name

Title

3.2 Second Initiation

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS
Founder-ācārya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Center:

Date:

Official Recommendation for Second Initiation

To (Name of guru):

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

It is my pleasure to recommend (name of candidate)

for second initiation by you. I find that he/she has fulfilled the necessary qualifications for this initiation to the best of my understanding. Specifically, for the last twelve months he/she has been engaged in favorable devotional service, has chanted sixteen rounds of *jāpa* daily, and has adhered to the four regulative principles. It has been more than one year since he/she received first initiation. These qualifications have either been observed by me personally or I have heard of them from sources I know to be reliable.

Your servant,

Name

Title

4 Sample Letter of Censure

A letter of Censure may be worded as follows:

“Dear _____ Mahārāja/Prabhu,

Please understand that an ISKCON devotee is a member of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s family and as such has the duty to act in a befitting Kṛṣṇa conscious manner demonstrating concern for your own and others spiritual welfare and for the well-being of ISKCON. Due to the reasons stated below you have been censured. A censure expresses disapproval of your conduct. A censure is an official note of caution. Please take due notice thereof and rectify the situation.

[insert reasons for censure]

[name and signature(s) of censuring authority]”