

Chobo-Ji Social Action Policy

From a Zen perspective, social action means those activities we undertake in support of our Bodhisattva Vow to care for all beings, great and small, animate and inanimate.

Individual Sangha members, both lay and ordained, are encouraged to include social action as part their own personal practice, and to share their activities with the Sangha through articles in the newsletter, affinity group discussions, on the Chobo-Ji website, and through other means sangha members prefer.

Chobo-Ji is committed to learning from Sangha members and their activities; and will work to support this sharing, particularly through the oversight of a Social Action Committee (SAC) comprised of interested sangha members, and through an Engaged Buddhism/Compassionate Action Projects page on the CBJ website. The page will provide 1) news about projects (either Chobo-ji's projects or projects being carried out by sangha members), 2) contact information for people heading the project and 3) information about how to get involved or to support the project financially, with appropriate links.

There is no overall cap on Chobo-Ji social action. The SAC will vet all social action proposals, and project announcements submitted for inclusion on the web page, coming from within or outside the sangha. The Committee approves postings on the web page and is authorized to announce its support of the project/event and to encourage interested sangha members to learn more and to participate, using the following priority levels as general guidelines:

- **Level 1** (highest priority): Caring for own sangha members. Includes care committees for sangha members in need and raising our own level of functioning as a community.
- **Level 2:** Issues outside the immediate Sangha, but close to us either regionally, i.e., neighborhood, Seattle, Puget Sound, Pacific Northwest. Issues arising from our direct connection to a Buddhist organization, such as Buddhist Global Relief or Northwest Dharma Association).
- **Level 3:** (lowest priority): All other issues.

The SAC, in vetting social action proposals and website submissions, the SAC may refer some to the Board of Directors under conditions such as these:

- The proposal is potentially controversial.
- It's too expensive for the SAC budget.
- The proposal involves fiduciary responsibilities that are the Board's (such as using CBJ's nonprofit status to serve as an umbrella to receive tax-deductible donations on behalf of another organization or outside initiative).
- The proposal requests sangha-wide participation/approval or CBJ membership (e.g. FAN).

- The committee doesn't feel comfortable deciding on the proposal for whatever reason.

The SAC is not authorized to decide or announce that “Chobo-ji endorses” or “Chobo-ji is sponsoring” a particular project or event; that right is reserved for the Board of Directors. The SAC may, however, announce that “the Chobo-ji Social Action Committee supports/is sponsoring,” or “Chobo-ji members support,” a particular project or event.

Version history

November 15, 2015 – Approved by the Chobo-ji Board