

**BERKSHIRE  
KRIPALU  
COMMUNITY**

**POLICY MANUAL**

**Updated April 2010**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Purpose/Mission Statement**

The Berkshire Kripalu Community (BKC) is a membership-run, non-profit organization that supports the mission of the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health (Kripalu). Members are encouraged to deepen their understanding of the Kripalu philosophy by participating in personal growth programs while actively engaging in selfless service (seva) at Kripalu and in their community. Our motto is “Supporting Kripalu One Heart at a Time”.

Our purpose is to:

- Support members to live healthy, balanced lives
- Promote wellness through the practice of yoga and meditation
- Encourage personal growth
- Foster a sense of community
- Encourage selfless service at Kripalu and in the community

The BKC is organized and operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3). BKC is incorporated under the By-Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and acts in accordance with its Articles of Organization.

Based on the above organization status, membership dues are tax-deductible.

BKC has formed a strategic alliance with Kripalu whereby Kripalu, in reaching out to community, has allowed BKC to use its facilities, receive health services at a discount, and has invited BKC members to attend designated workshops at no cost. In return, BKC pays Kripalu a fee of \$20 for each annual BKC membership dues payment. This helps to cover Kripalu’s costs for the services it provides to BKC members.

“Seva” (volunteer service) provided to Kripalu by BKC members is perhaps the most valuable benefit Kripalu receives from the BKC. This volunteer service helps Kripalu to provide outstanding guest experiences at reasonable cost, and has proven to be the most effective way for BKC members to become an integral part of the Kripalu community.

### **B. Board of Directors/Elections**

The Board of Directors (Board) serves as volunteers and is elected by members at the July annual potluck dinner meeting. The Board meets a minimum of four times a year. The Board is responsible for developing and approving policies, and delegating the authority to implement these policies to Board members and other BKC volunteers.

The Executive Committee consists of the officers elected by the Board, past president and non-officer Board members. The Executive Committee oversees all volunteer positions and functional areas. The Board has formed operating committees for each of the

functional areas: Finance, Yoga, Membership, Rules and Regulations, By-Laws, Seva, Scholarship and Outreach. Non-Board members may volunteer to serve on any of the operating committees.

### **C. BKC Volunteer and Paid Positions**

The Board has established various volunteer and partially paid positions to assist the BKC in carrying out its organizational duties. Such positions are Panel of Advisors (provides technical, financial and legal advice), Membership Coordinator, Seva Coordinator, Yoga Class Coordinator, Membership and Financial Record Keeper, Web Manager, Outreach Coordinator and Potluck Coordinator.

### **D. Outreach Program**

Part of BKC's mission is to foster a sense of community by reaching out to the community and offering acts of loving kindness for organizations or institutions in need. Some of the projects BKC member volunteers are involved in are: (1) the "Free Community Lunch" at the Guthrie Center where meals contributed by Kripalu are served to those in need; (2) the "Prison Yoga Project" where yoga classes are provided to inmates in Pittsfield, (3) working as mentors and tutors at the Conte Community School, Redfield House which provides yoga classes to young mothers and (4) working as helpers at the Children's Center in Lenox.

The BKC Outreach Committee needs members to volunteer and to help create more outreach projects in the community. (Contact information for Community Outreach Chairperson can be found at [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org))

### **E. BKC Member Communications**

BKC has a website – [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org). It contains information about membership, BKC officers, community volunteer and seva opportunities, yoga schedule, monthly potlucks, Kripalu evening activities, BKC rules and regulations.

BKC uses an email system to send members important notifications, including change of venue for yoga classes. Kripalu also uses the BKC member email list to notify BKC members of special events at Kripalu when members are invited to participate for free or at a reduced cost. Members who would like to receive BKC emails should include their email address on the membership application or send the correct information to [bkcma40@yahoo.com](mailto:bkcma40@yahoo.com).

Members are responsible for updating the Membership Coordinator with their valid e-mail addresses.

## **II. MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

### **A. Initial and Renewal Membership Procedures and Dues**

Residents who live within 50 miles of Kripalu are eligible to become members of BKC. Membership is on a 12-month rolling basis. The annual dues are as follows:

Single membership	\$ 75.00
Family membership	\$105.00
Single Low Income*	\$ 60.00
Family Low Income*	\$ 80.00

Children over the age of 22 are required to purchase individual memberships. Membership dues are tax deductible.

\*BKC does not verify low-income status. A lower fee is accepted based on the honor system. A lower fee is generally paid by students, members on a limited income, and members who are unemployed.

Potential members must complete a Membership Application Form (downloadable from the [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org)) and either send it, together with payment, to the address indicated on the form, or process the transaction online through PayPal, for a small fee.

Members will receive a Renewal Notice by email, or postcard if email is not available, prior to the expiration of their annual membership. Membership will expire if payment is not received by the expiration date and they will be removed from the group email.

Members will receive a BKC identification badge within two weeks of receipt of a member's application and payment of dues. The badge indicates the member's name and the date membership expires. This badge **MUST** be worn whenever a member enters Kripalu premises. Kripalu reserves the right to not allow attendance without this badge.

A \$3 dollar fee is charged for a replacement ID membership badge.

From time to time it is necessary to reimburse a membership. In this case, at \$25 processing fee will be charged.

Membership in BKC may be denied if a former Kripalu employee or former Kripalu volunteer is not in good standing at Kripalu.

### **B. General Member Guidelines and Benefits**

**1. BKC Yoga Classes** – Members can attend four (4) evening yoga classes a week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday from 6:30-8:00 p.m. and Thursday from 6:00-7:30 p.m. In

addition, members can attend three (3) morning classes: Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00-10:30 a.m. and Saturday from 9:00-10:30 a.m. There is one (1) afternoon class at 4:15 p.m. on Sunday. Classes are held at Kripalu whenever possible and are taught by Kripalu-trained yoga teachers. Teachers are paid by the BKC from funds generated by annual dues and from the \$5 contribution made each time a member takes a yoga class. Refer to [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org) for the monthly schedule listing of teachers conducting the classes and for venues of classes held outside Kripalu. Check the BKC bulletin board, in the mailroom hallway at Kripalu, for the room assignment. Members are currently asked to contribute \$5.00 per class to offset BKC's expenses.

BKC Class Admission Coupons are available to all BKC members at a discounted price of \$36 per ten admission coupons. These coupons can be used in lieu of cash contributions. Coupon order forms can be found at all BKC yoga classes in the collection box and are available online. Coupons may also be purchased online for a small fee, through PayPal. Coupons are not valid for Saturday classes.

Children under the age of 16 may attend yoga classes as long as they are accompanied by a parent with a Family Membership and pay the required \$5 contribution.

**2. BKC Yoga Workshops** – Special workshops are conducted periodically by BKC teachers or invited guest teachers. The contribution to be paid varies according to the length of the workshop.

**3. Kripalu YogaDance™ Classes** – The noon YogaDance™ class, Sunday through Friday, is open to all BKC members. There is no BKC participation in Saturday YogaDance™ classes year-round and mid-week when the KYTA and other Conferences are held in October and December respectively. There is also no participation on the Monday of any three-day weekend. Members are required to wear their BKC nametag.

**4. Kripalu Evening Activities** – Most evening activities held at Kripalu from 7:30-9:00 p.m. are free to BKC members. The monthly schedule is posted on the website [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org). Or you can see the week's listing on the Kripalu bulletin board in the main lobby. Special ticketed events require an admission fee.

**5. Meals** – Members can purchase meals served in the Dining Hall for \$15.00 for lunch and \$18 for dinner.

**6. Wednesday Community Day** – Wednesday has been designated as community day. On this day BKC members may purchase lunch and/or dinner for \$10 each and are encouraged to attend Kirtan in the evening. On community Wednesdays, day guest passes are available for BKC members at a discounted cost of \$50.00. Kripalu reserves the right to suspend this privilege on any Wednesday during high-volume mid-week programs. BKC members will be e-mailed if a suspension is in effect.

**7. Health Services** – Members receive a discount of \$5.00 for a short service or \$10.00 for a long service. Inform the Health Services staff that you are a BKC member

when you make an appointment. This benefit is only available Monday through 3 p.m. on Friday, except on holidays. It is also not available July 1 through Labor Day.

**8. Day Guest Pass** – Members may purchase a day guest pass to attend daytime Retreat and Renewal guest classes from 8:30 a.m. through 4:15 p.m. at Kripalu and receive three meals, for the cost of \$75.00. Wednesday BKC guest passes are \$50. Day passes are limited. Blackout dates apply based on program guest attendance. Please call Kripalu to register in advance.

**9. Commuter Fees** – Members are eligible for a reduced commuter fee of \$45 per day when participating in a Kripalu program (members pay full tuition for the program). The commuter fee entitles you to breakfast, lunch and dinner, plus participation in any of the Retreat and Renewal activities, including the 4:15 yoga class. Members should inform Registrations that you are a BKC member when you call to register, so that you receive the discount at the time of registration.

### **C. Seva Member Benefits**

In addition to the “General Benefits” described above, members who offer eight (8) hours of seva (volunteer work) each month at Kripalu receive the following additional benefits:

- Purchase a meal on the day you do seva for \$4.00.
- Board Members and eligible board personnel may purchase either 2 or 4 or 6 discounted (\$4) meals per month (commensurate with number of seva hours performed). The current approved list resides at the Front Desk.
- Attend Kripalu guest classes during the day (YogaDance™, Meditation, Pranayama, and the afternoon yoga classes; use the whirlpool, sauna, and fitness center). There is no BKC participation in 4:15 yoga Saturday year-round. There is no BKC participation in Saturday YogaDance™ classes year-round and mid-week when the KYTA and other Conferences are held in October and December respectively. There is also no participation on the Monday of a three-day weekend.
- Due to very large program participant numbers Kripalu imposes certain restrictions on the use of their facilities and attendance in guest classes during the summer months and possibly during other periods during the year. Members will be notified of these restrictions by group email and on the website [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org).

### **D. Seva Instructions**

- **Help in finding a seva opportunity** – There are various ways a member can find a seva opportunity that fits his/her skills and time schedule:

- Look at the seva opportunities chart posted on the BKC bulletin board at Kripalu
  - Check [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org) for current seva opportunities
  - Contact BKC Seva Coordinator (Contact information is at [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org))
- **Credit Instructions/Information** – Members must turn in a completed and signed BKC Seva Hours Form to receive the seva benefits as described above. Obtain a form from the BKC Blank Seva Forms mailbox. Place the completed and signed form in the BKC Completed Seva Forms Mailbox. (BKC mailboxes are located in the mailroom hallway to the right of the Shadowbrook room). It is recommended that you complete this form after you have completed the 8 hours each month. However, members have the option of turning in a form at any time, with any number of hours. All Seva Hours Forms must be signed by the manager of the department in which the volunteers are working.

Hours worked in excess of 8 hours in any month are processed as follows: 8 hours are credited toward the month in which the hours are worked; hours in excess of 8 hours are carried over to the next month for a maximum of two months.

#### **E. Scholarship Program**

Once a year, BKC will award a “Reda Vilner Scholarship” in the amount of \$250 to any qualifying person serving their community in the spirit of selfless service, to be used towards the tuition for a Kripalu program. The BKC Board has the right to rescind this benefit when there are not sufficient revenues to fund such a benefit.

In addition, BKC offers one-year Membership Grants to qualifying at-risk people in our community.

#### **F. Potluck Suppers**

Potluck suppers are held on the second or third Saturday or Sunday night of each month (except December) starting from between 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. at a BKC member’s home. The suppers give BKC members a chance to meet new friends and to enjoy existing acquaintances. Members are asked to bring a potluck dish to feed 6-8 people and to indicate the ingredients of the dish. Information on potlucks is posted at [www.thebkc.org](http://www.thebkc.org) and monthly notifications are sent out via email.

### **III. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

#### **A. Guidelines for Being at Kripalu**

- Expected Behavior – BKC members are guests of Kripalu whenever they enter the building. This means members MUST abide by Kripalu’s and BKC’s rules as stated.
- Class Restrictions – BKC members may not attend any daytime guest yoga classes unless they are doing at least eight (8) hours of seva per month. Seva members may not attend guest classes where restrictions have been imposed.
- Membership Identification Badges – Members MUST wear a BKC membership ID badge at all times inside the building and when attending a Kripalu activity or a BKC guest class.
- Cell Phone – Cell phone use is restricted within and around the Kripalu building. Please see detailed guidelines on Kripalu notice boards.
- Parking – BKC members are requested to park in the new lower parking lots; allowing guests to have more spaces available closer to the building.

## **B. Grievance and Appeal Process**

The BKC board has adopted a “zero tolerance” policy. Upon notification from Kripalu that a member has violated its rules and is no longer allowed in Kripalu’s building, BKC will notify the member that his/her BKC membership has been terminated.

Upon notification from Kripalu that a member has not followed one of the rules or guidelines stated in this Policy Manual, the BKC Membership Coordinator will contact the member to discuss the incident and give a warning. Should a second incident occur, the member’s BKC membership may be terminated. The member has the right to appeal to the BKC Board. A member may be expelled with or without cause from the organization by vote of 75% of the Board of Directors, following a hearing and due notice of the vote.

## **C. Guests at BKC Yoga Classes**

Members may bring a guest to a one-time BKC yoga class for the purpose of determining whether the guest would like to become a member. On occasion, a guest or family member visiting the home of the BKC member may be invited to a class. Guests are expected to pay the \$5.00 contribution.

## **D. Kripalu Staff at BKC Yoga Classes**

Kripalu staff may only attend the morning BKC classes held on Tuesday and Thursday.