

Youth Hostel Manual

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS A YOUTH HOSTEL

1. Youth hostel is a HOME AWAY FROM HOME. Youth Hostels are not like hotels, impersonal places, which guests merely pay stay charges. In a Youth Hostel, one never feels a stranger, there are Managers ever prepared to listen to the problems of young guests, advise them, help them and make them feel home among friends. In return, the young travelers are expected to help the Managers, to keep the Hostel clean and also help, in house keeping. They offer wholesome, rejuvenating and fruitful opportunities to youth to fulfill their desire to see, to appreciate and learn out of doors. They also offer fun, friendship and warm welcome to all those who travel on their own steam. Youth Hostels thus promote youth travel, providing inexpensive hostelling facilities to young persons on their educational excursions to historical and cultural centers intended to foster feelings of better understanding of each other, gain knowledge about the diversities of the country and encounter natural beauties and past history.
2. In many countries there are privately owned Hostels, Government-run Hostels, Hostels owned by societies and organizations; but they all conform to the norms of the International Youth Hostel Federation.
3. Youth Hostel is based on the principle of community accommodation in the form of dormitories -separate for ladies and gents, a dining hall with self service, a common room or lounge where hostellers meet, discuss and get to know each other. It is a place of forming friendship, recreation and informal education.
4. In many countries these Hostels are open to youth and members of the Youth Hostel Associations. A limit is also laid down in some countries. In India accommodation in Youth Hostels jointly owned by Central and State Government, is given to Students and Youth on priority basis, though it has been open to all irrespective of age but they have to abide by the rules laid down for stay. This liberal attitude, encouraging people of all walks of life and different age groups, is to popularize the Youth Hostel Movement.
5. Some of the salient features of the Government owned Youth Hostel are: -
 - a. It is a non-religious, non-political and non-commercial Unit without discrimination to race, color, sex, caste, creed, or social background.
 - b. Overnight charges are kept to the minimum so that the youth with limited means can avail the facility.
 - c. It is functioning as per the norms, rules and regulations laid down by the Government of India from time to time.
 - d. It promotes youth travel and youth activity programmes.
 - e. It should not be used for political party meetings and social functions like marriages.

It is managed by a Hostel Management Committee constituted by the State/Union Territory as per the guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India.
