

Guidelines for GUESTHOUSE

1. Definitions

A “Guesthouse” refers to any premises where lodging and sleeping facilities, and breakfast, are provided against payment.

“Architect” has the same meaning as in the Professional Architects Council Act 2011.

Central Business Area (CBA) means the central activity zone of a town or village.

2. Location

Except for existing ones and those located in CBA, Guesthouses shall not be allowed in residential areas.

3. Layout and Design

(a) Every Guesthouse shall consist of -

- (i) a lobby/reception area;
- (ii) a kitchen;
- (iii) a dining area and or restaurant ;
- (iv) toilet facilities;
- (v) common areas;
- (vi) guest rooms;
- (vii) facilities for the physically-challenged;
- (viii) parking spaces;
- (ix) delivery entrance [optional];and
- (x) staff changing room/mess room.

(b) **Design/Architecture/Features**

- (i) The facility shall blend into the built and natural environment, making use of local vegetation and including the screening of parking lots. As far as practicable the use of endemic and drought-resistant plants shall be encouraged with a view to enhance the biodiversity. At least 20% of the site shall be landscaped where practicable;

- (ii) The facility shall be architect-designed to reflect a good standard by its character and style. It shall be representative of local architecture as far as possible reflecting the authenticity of the destination;
- (iii) The external facade of the guesthouse should be clean, neat and have an appealing finish at all times;
- (iv) Plans shall be in accordance with provisions of the Planning Policy Guidance; and
- (v) The furniture, furnishings and décor shall be of good quality and of a design and style which reflects and complements the character of the premises.

4. Clearances/Licences/Permits

The following clearances/permits are prerequisites for the issue of a Tourist Accomodation Certificate for Guesthouse

- (a) fire certificate issued by Mauritius Fire And Rescue Service;
- (b) health clearance issued by ministry of health and quality of life;
- (c) building and land use permit from local authorities;
- (d) planning clearance in the case where state land is involved; and
- (e) any other clearances/permits as the case may be.

5. Reception/Lounge/Welcoming Area

Every licensee shall -

- (a) provide 24 hours reception service;
- (b) provide seating facilities for guests;
- (c) make available telephone facilities on a 24-hour basis, unless direct dial in-room facilities are provided. Such telephone facilities may include payphones, house phones or mobile handsets;
- (d) ensure that incoming telephone calls to residents are handled in a professional manner;
- (e) ensure that a responsible person is available at all times to offer assistance to guests;

- (f) ensure that prices are inclusive of VAT and inform prospective guests clearly of what is included in the prices quoted for accommodation including meals, refreshments and service charge and taxes;
- (g) ensure free internet connectivity at all times;
- (h) provide wake-up call service ;
- (i) put in place efficient check-in and check-out procedures for the handling of guests ;
- (j) prepare accurate bills in advance of guests' departure;
- (k) display the room price list (room rates per night) in at least Mauritian rupees;
- (l) provide a luggage room for departing guests (optional);
- (m) make available at the reception; -
 - (i) a map of Mauritius;
 - (ii) a guide of Mauritius;
 - (iii) a telephone directory;
 - (iv) a list of the addresses and telephone numbers of nearby restaurants, bars, cinemas, taxis, car hire services, travel agents, supermarkets, shops, chemist shops, local medical practitioners, airport and nearest hospitals, etc.;
 - (v) the addresses and telephone numbers of the Tourism Authority and emergency services such as the ambulance, service of the Police and Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service; and
 - (vi) daily newspapers/magazines for guests (optional).

6. Common Toilet Facilities

There shall be at least one common toilet for male and one for female, near the reception area and with the following facilities -

- (a) wash hand basin with a continuous supply of water;
- (b) soap dispenser ;
- (c) automatic hand dryer or disposable paper towels;
- (d) mirror with lighting;
- (e) an effective system of natural or mechanical ventilation;
- (f) sanitary bin with lid in female toilet; and
- (g) toilet rolls holder with toilet paper.

7. Guest Rooms

(a) Number of Bedrooms

- i. Except for existing ones, the minimum number of bedrooms shall be eight (8) and the maximum number of bedrooms shall be twenty-four (24) with attached bathroom.

(b) Size of Bedroom

- i. Bedroom area shall be adequate for moving around and using all equipment and furniture in a free, comfortable and safe manner, and shall not be less than -
 - (i) Single room – 10 square metres excluding bathroom
 - (ii) Double room – 12 square metres excluding bathroom
 - (iii) Family room – 14 square metres excluding bathroom

Note: At least one side of each bedroom shall be of minimum of 3 meters in length

(c) Privacy

- (i) all guest rooms shall have separate and independent entrance;
- (ii) the management/owner shall have a master key or duplicate to all rooms in order to service rooms and for emergencies;
- (iii) peepholes, shall be provided for all guest rooms; and
- (iv) all guest rooms shall be clearly numbered or named.

(d) Decoration

- (i) there shall be harmonised interior decoration;
- (ii) the guesthouse shall have well finished, good quality wall coverings and paint work;
- (iii) wall and ceiling coverings shall be well applied; and
- (iv) the guesthouse shall use pictures, paintings etc. where appropriate and best suited to the style, design and overall theme of the establishment.

(e) Flooring

- (i) bedrooms shall have fully fitted carpets or hard flooring with slip-resistant rugs or mats placed by the bedside; and
- (ii) wooden flooring, if any, shall be in good condition, along with slip-resistant rugs or mats placed by the bedside.

(f) Bed and bedding

- (i) all beddings and linen shall be changed upon any new guest arrival or on request and shall be clean and in sufficient quantity.
- (ii) each bed shall have either -
Option 1- two sheets, two blankets and a bedspread or,
Option 2 - a duvet with duvet cover and one or two sheets;
- (iii) there shall be at least two pillows. If feather pillows or duvets are provided, a non- allergenic alternative shall be available on request;
There shall be an environmental policy inviting guests to choose not to change bed linen every two days, or upon guests' request Clean and fresh additional bedding and pillows shall be well protected and provided in guest rooms, The minimum bed sizes shall be -
 - 1. Single: 190x90centimetres
 - 2. Double: 190x160 centimetres
- (iv) family room: i. No bunk beds are allowed.
 - ii. Maximum number of additional beds: 1
 - iii. Maximum number of persons per room: 4
- (v) all mattresses shall be of at least semi-orthopaedic standard and be provided with mattress protectors.

(g) Furniture and Fittings

- (i) there shall be furniture of good quality and in good condition showing harmonisation in terms of style, design and colour;
- (ii) the size and amount of furnishing shall be in proportion with the space available;
- (iii) there shall be well-positioned lights, giving adequate levels of illumination with quality light fittings;
- (iv) there shall be window/balcony allowing natural light and ventilation into the room;
- (v) blackout curtain (or equivalent material) completely excluding natural/external light;

- (vi) there shall be one bedside table on each side of the bed, although twin beds may share one;
- (vii) there shall be a dressing table or equivalent, with a mirror;
- (viii) there shall be a chair;
- (ix) there shall be a wardrobe or clothes hanging space with at least (7) seven hangers and additional hangers shall be provided upon request (wire hangers are not acceptable); and
- (x) there shall be at least one full length mirror in either the room or bathroom.

(h) Bedroom Accessories

- i. 'Do Not Disturb' & 'Please Make Up Room' Door Knob Cards (or an alternate mode) shall be provided;
 - ii. an international plug adapter shall be made available on request; and
 - iii. there shall be a television of a minimum size of 28" with remote control in each bedroom.
- (i) all bedrooms shall be equipped with a four-digits digital safe.
- (j) tea/coffee-making facilities including one kettle, cups and drinking glasses shall be made available at all times.
- (k) there shall be a telephone in each bedroom.
- (l) rooms shall also be equipped with the following –
- (i) air conditioning;
 - (ii) anti-mosquito implement;
 - (iii) a waste paper basket;
 - (iv) an ashtray, if smoking is permitted;
 - (v) sufficient, conveniently situated power sockets to allow for the safe use of electrical equipment;
 - (vi) there shall be displayed in every bedroom clear fire instructions, emergency evacuation notice or diagram and protocol for cyclone, tsunami and flood; and
- (m) relevant documents shall be provided to guests such as "Code of Conduct for Guests" and any other document as may be required by the Tourism Authority.

8. Guest Bathroom

- (a) all rooms shall have attached toilets and bathrooms
- (b) general requirements -
 - (i) each bathroom shall have a minimum floor area of 4.5 square metres with a continuous supply of hot and cold water;
 - (ii) bathrooms shall include toilet, wash hand basin and a bathtub or shower cubicle;
 - (iii) all bathrooms shall be adequately lit and shall be kept in hygienic conditions at all times and shall have an effective system of direct or mechanical ventilation;
 - (iv) each bathroom shall have one cloth hook, a liquid soap dispenser, bath mat, a waste basket, a sanitary bin with cover or a pedal operated covered bin, a mirror with a light above, a towel rail or equivalent, a clean hand towel, toilet rolls holder with toilet paper, a hair dryer on request and power sockets for shaver and hair dryer;
 - (v) each bathroom shall have sanitary ware and fittings together with non-skid tiles flooring or other appropriate non- skid material;
 - (vi) each bathroom wall shall be covered with tiles or impervious material of at least 1.8 m; and
 - (vii) each bathroom shall have shelving or facility for holding toiletries.

9. Dining Area

- (a) the dining area shall be of a minimum size of 1.5 square metres per cover.
- (b) tables shall be covered with a textile table cloth that shall be free from stains.
- (c) the establishment shall provide a minimum continental breakfast (content including but not limited to: cold fruit juice/hot tea/hot coffee/cold and hot milk/fresh bread/yoghurt/dairy butter/jam/marmalade/local fruit/cereals) or as per request of clients.
- (d) dinner, if served, shall consist of at least -
 - i. Three courses accompanied with bread and butter;

- ii A choice of two main courses (unless previously agreed with the guests) served with two vegetables;
 - iii A vegetarian meal shall be made available on request;
 - iv. A typed menu shall be made available at the reception.
- (e) good stainless steel quality cutlery, crockery, glassware (not chipped or cracked) and napkins shall be made available. ; and
- (f) cutlery, crockery, glassware, linen and equipment shall be clean and in good condition.

10. Kitchen

- (a) for guesthouse up to 10 rooms, the kitchen shall be of a minimum size of 10 square metres. for each additional room, a minimum of 0.5 square metre kitchen floor area shall be provided when lunch/dinner are served;
- (b) adequate ventilation shall be ensured at all times;
- (c) there shall be separate food preparation areas for meat, fish, poultry, vegetable/salad preparation and pastries;
- (d) work tops shall be in stainless steel. There shall be a minimum of two sinks with hot and cold running water. all shall be kept in good and clean condition;
- (e) separate compartments for different types of perishables and non-perishables (including dry goods/cold storage & food/non-food items) shall be made available and maintained in hygienic condition;
- (f) there shall be a scullery separate from the food preparation area and kitchen and equipped with cold and hot water;
- (g) storage areas shall be regularly cleaned and maintained;
- (h) the refrigeration storage area shall be separate from the cooking area;
- (i) no item shall be stored on the floor;
- (j) the receiving area shall be separate from the cooking area and deliveries shall not be carried out during meals service;
- (k) food, whether raw or prepared shall be kept in clean and covered containers;
- (l) there shall be non-skid tiles on all floors;
- (m) all electrical cabling shall be placed in ducts which have been duly sealed with clear silicone between the wall and the duct to prevent insect, sand or dirt from accumulating at the back of the ducts;

- (n) the grease trap shall be located outside and shall be maintained in a clean state at all times;
- (o) paintwork above the tiles shall be of a light colour, smooth, non-absorbent and easily cleanable;
- (p) hand wash facilities shall be provided in the kitchen with at least a liquid soap dispenser, paper towels and hot and cold running water;
- (q) all hot food preparation areas shall be equipped with a stainless steel hood;
- (r) there shall be two adjacent stainless steel sinks fitted with hot and cold running water and self-draining boards; and
- (s) all food contact surfaces shall be in stainless steel and any shelving under the table shall be a minimum of thirty-two (32) centimetres above floor level to prevent splashing and for ease of cleaning.

11. Laundry Services

- (a) the guesthouse shall provide laundry and pressing services, upon request;
- (b) laundry bags shall be provided to guests either in guest rooms with a notice of the days the service is available; and
- (c) laundry rates, inclusive of taxes if any, shall be clearly displayed in the rooms.

12. Staffing

Minimum Personnel Requirements

Staff members shall be multi-skilled, undergo regular orientation training and be appropriately trained or skilled in their area of work.

The Guesthouse shall be staffed by at least -

1. one front office staff/receptionist/supervisor;
2. one gardener/handyman;
3. cleaner or maid ;
4. at least one assistant cook holding national certificate 3 (NC3) or equivalent; and
5. a security staff (watchman)

(b) Staff Requirements

- (i) staff shall be well-groomed at all times, and wear uniform with name tag;
- (ii) staff shall be medically fit and examined regularly, in line with statutory health regulations;
- (iii) a designated staff member shall be available for emergencies on a 24-hour basis;
- (iv) staff involved in food preparation, production and service shall be holders of valid food handling certificate; and
- (v) a designated staff shall handle complaints promptly and professionally.

13. Smoking and Non-smoking Zone

“Smoking” and “Non-smoking” zones shall be clearly indicated.

14. Facilities for physically challenged people

- (i) all guesthouses shall provide for at least one (1) room designed for physically challenged persons. information regarding the accessibility features of the guesthouse shall be communicated through the different advertising medium;
- (ii) at check-in, any person with disabilities shall be flagged in the system, so that in the event of an emergency, special action can be taken to locate and evacuate these guests; and
- (iii) staff shall be briefed and trained in the handling of persons with disabilities.

15. Noise

The Guesthouse shall comply with requirements of the Environment Protection Act

Air conditioning unit, compressors, pumps, extractors and all noise generating equipment shall be housed in sound attenuating structures so that noise emanating therefrom be within permissible limits.

16. Other Requirements

(a) Water Supply

- (i) a continuous supply of potable water and water storage tank shall be provided and necessary measures shall be taken for the protection of the water from contamination;
- (ii) water tank shall be kept clean at all times and be disinfected at least every six months; and
- (iii) at least a week's supply of safe drinking water in premises shall be provided.

(b) Cleaning

- (i) cleaning schedule shall be in place and fully operational; and
- (ii) timely records of the schedule of cleaning shall be kept.

(c) Waste Collection and Storage

Food refuse and garbage shall be disposed of in impervious garbage receptacles with tight-fitting lids and shall be animal- and pest-proof. Same shall be emptied at least once daily and cleaned and disinfected regularly.

(d) Drainage

- (i) storm water shall be channelled through the drainage system of the building; and
- (ii) adequate provision shall be made for drainage of water from floods, storm water, roof water and torrential rain water.

Drains shall be maintained in good condition at all times

(e) Sewerage

Waste water shall be connected to the sewage disposal of the locality where applicable. Where there is no sewage system it shall be connected to a septic

tank of an approved size and soakage pit or any other approved sewage disposal system.

(f) Pest Control

- i. pest control procedures shall be in place (including systems to control stray/domestic animals, presence of insects, etc.);
- ii. pest control measures shall be available at all times;
- iii. the management shall produce a pest control certificate issued by a company registered with the ministry of health and quality of life; and
- iv. fumigation shall be carried out at least twice a year or whenever required.

17. Ventilation and Lighting

- (a) bedrooms, common areas and dining area shall have at least one window with clear glass to provide natural light and ventilation; and
- (b) all bathrooms and kitchen shall have an effective system of direct or mechanical ventilation.

18. Parking slots

- (a) parking requirements in the central business area shall be to the satisfaction of the traffic management and road safety unit (TMRSU);
- (b) except in CBA, there shall be one (1) parking slot for every three (3) rooms;
- (c) parking slot shall be 2.5 by 5.0 metres and shall be clearly demarcated and landscaped; and
- (d) offsite parking may be considered if accompanied by relevant authorisation.

19. Safety and Security Requirements

(a) Fire Safety Requirements

Management shall ensure strict adherence to the following -

- (i) compliance with all fire safety requirements as imposed by the Mauritius fire and rescue service and be holder of a valid fire clearance/fire certificate for the building in which the guesthouse is being operated;

- (ii) submission of a fire and evacuation plan approved by the Mauritius fire and rescue service on application for tourist accommodation certificate;
- (iii) submission of a maintenance certificate for all fire fighting equipment and fire alarm approved by the Mauritius fire and rescue service. Installation of smoke and ventilation fan in accordance with ISO 21927-3: 2006;
- (iv) installation of smoke detectors complying with BS EN 54-20-2006;
- (v) the location of the fire exit shall be clearly indicated and displayed;
- (vi) all staff shall be familiar with the operation office fighting equipment and their use; and
- (vii) statutory fire safety notices shall be conspicuously displayed.

(b) Swimming Pool Safety Requirements

- (i) swimming pool shall be clearly marked to indicate depth, which shall not be more than 1.5 metres;
- (ii) the areas around the pool should be of non-skid material;
- (iii) pool fixtures and fittings e.g. in-pool lights, external lights, grilles, handrails, steps, covers, filters must be securely fitted and checked on a monthly basis to ensure they are in good working order;
- (iv) if a lifeguard is not provided, prominent and permanent signage should be present around the pool to advise guests that there is “No Lifeguard On Duty”;
- (v) if a lifeguard is provided, and shall be trained in lifesaving techniques, CPR and first aid as per existing regulations.;
- (vi) the pool shall be managed in accordance with the pool manufacturer’s instructions. In the absence of a manual, there should be a written policy on the management of the pool including cleaning and backwashing;

- (vii) regular purification of the pool water, with appropriate chemicals, shall be made;
- (viii) the pool water shall be clear with the bottom of the pool visible at all times;
- (ix) regular visual checks of the pool shall be made before opening and during use;
- (x) there should be a documented policy on when and how the pool filters should be backwashed; and
- (xi) the filters should be technically inspected at least once per year

(c) First Aid

First Aid kit shall be provided and at least one staff, trained in First Aid techniques and emergency handling available at all times.

(d) Safety & Security Measures.

- (i) the licensee shall comply with the safety & security requirements of the tourism authority;
- (ii) well positioned directional signage to emergency exits, bedrooms, reception and other facilities shall be put in place;
- (iii) corridors, staircases and other public areas shall be free from any obstruction; and
- (iv) emergency lighting system for evacuation shall be made available.

(e) all electrical installation shall be carried out by a qualified technician;

(f) electrical and gas equipment shall be according to the manufacturer's instructions and in good working order;

(g) a stand-by generator capable of generating power to provide a minimal lighting system to all rooms and public areas and for refrigeration purposes shall be provided;

(h) a registered medical practitioner or nursing officer shall be available at all times, on call; and

(i) maintenance service shall be provided at all times

20. NPF/NPS

All staff shall be registered for National Pension Fund/National Pension Scheme (NPF/NPS) and Tourism Employees Welfare Fund (TEWF).

21. Documents for Inspection

The following documents shall be made available for inspection:

- (a) guests register in hard or digital format;
- (b) tourist accommodation certificate for guesthouse;
- (c) operating fee receipt;
- (d) insurance policy;
- (e) pest control documents;
- (f) camera recording;
- (g) key or electronic card key audit trail or register
- (h) visitor's book

22. Records

The Licensee shall -

- a. keep a record of every transaction in English and in digital format or otherwise which he makes in relation to his business. The following shall be recorded - full name of persons, address, NIC / passport details, age of the persons, gender, contact number, date of transaction, type of currency used, receipt number, among others;
- b. keep every record relating to his business for a period of not less than 7 years and same shall be made available to officers of the Tourism Authority or Statistics Mauritius, upon request.

23. Customer Satisfaction

- (a) customer satisfaction shall be measured through regular surveys and the use of follow-up electronic questionnaires after all guest departures; and
- (b) corrective action taken shall be documented.

24. Sustainability

(a) Responsible Tourism

The Licensee shall -

- (i) comply with all environmental, health and safety related legislation and regulations and with local zoning or protected heritage area requirements;
- (ii) have a written Code of Practice and Environmental Policy; and
- (iii) put in place an Environmental Management System (EMS) that reflects the scale and location of the building and considers environmental, socio-cultural, quality, health, and safety issues.

(b) Community

- (i) information and interpretation pamphlets and audio visual or digital device about the local community, natural features, surroundings, local culture, and heritage shall be provided to guests;
- (ii) explanation of appropriate behaviour with the community shall be provided;
- (iii) the management shall not be gender biased. Exploitation of minors is strictly prohibited.
- (iv) the guesthouse shall demonstrate basic fair trade employment practices including capacity building, transparency and family orientation;
- (v) the guesthouse activities shall not have a negative impact on the local basic services, such as water, energy and sanitation; and
- (vi) the guesthouse shall use, as far as practicable, local arts and craft, design, decoration while respecting the intellectual property rights of the local population. Guesthouse above 20 rooms shall provide, as far as practicable, an appropriate space for the promotion and sales of local arts and craft.

(c) Energy Conservation

- (i) at least 50% of the energy requirement for the facility shall be generated by Solar Panels and/or Photovoltaic All appliances shall be 'energy-rated A' (e.g. Energy-Star) for low energy consumption;
- (ii) lighting shall be provided by low consumption fixtures (CFL or LED); and
- (iii) a 'visitor energy-use awareness program' shall be implemented.

(d) Water Conservation

- (i) the guesthouse shall encourage drip method for irrigation and water flow restrictors to reduce flow to 10 l/min of taps and showerheads in the facility;
- (ii) the guesthouse shall consider rain water harvesting for cleaning of site premises, toilet flushing and irrigation; and
- (iii) the guesthouse shall use water saving devices, taps with sensors and automatic shut-off valves.

(e) Waste Management

- (i) the guesthouse shall actively reduce packaging and carry out composting and use refillable amenity dispensers;
- (ii) biodegradable waste shall be composted;
- (iii) domestic solid waste shall be regularly collected in bins or waste handling receptacles and disposed of as per the recommendations and to the satisfaction of the local authority;
- (iv) guests shall be informed about the recycling policy; and
- (v) all cleaning products and pesticides shall be certified bio products, as far as practicable.

(f) Purchasing

- (i) the Guesthouse shall be encouraged to implement the following-
 1. purchase products with longer life span;
 2. purchase products that can be recycled and/or reused;
 3. purchase in bulk;

4. reduce packaging; and
 5. have at least 50% of signed purchase agreements with local suppliers for the purchase of goods and/or services.
- (ii) the Guesthouse shall demonstrate that at least 50% (by volume) of materials brought to the facility are bulk purchased;
- (iii) the Guesthouse shall demonstrate that at least 50% of the local suppliers and service companies (e.g. accountants, engineering firm, tour operator) have an environmental policy and shall demonstrate environmental responsibility; and
- (iv) at least 40% of all foods and beverages served at the facility shall be certified organic or known to be organic (i.e. grown locally with no pesticides) and at least 30% of all foods and beverages served at the facility shall be grown or produced locally.

25. Marketing

- (a) the Guesthouse shall eliminate print material as far as practicable. It shall dedicate 60% of its marketing budget to low impact paperless, e-marketing mechanisms and website promotion; and
- (b) all marketing and promotional materials shall be accurate.

Ministry of Tourism
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