

NO. C.31012/3/2020-TOUR/9
GOVERNMENT OF MIZORAM
TOURISM DEPARTMENT

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Aizawl the 28th August 2020

NOTIFICATION

In the interest of the public and for the Development of Tourism Industry in the State, the Governor of Mizoram is pleased to notify the “**Guidelines for Homestays in Mizoram**” as enclosed.

SD/-ESTHER LALRUATKIMI
Commissioner & Secretary
Govt. of Mizoram
Tourism Department

Memo. NO. C.31012/3/2020-TOUR/9 : **Aizawl the 28th August, 2020**

Copy to:

1. Secretary to Governor of Mizoram
2. PS to Chief Minister, Govt. of Mizoram
3. Speaker/ Dy. Speaker, Mizoram Legislative Assembly
4. All Ministers/Ministers of State, Govt. of Mizoram
5. All Members of Legislative Assembly, Mizoram
6. Sr.PPS to Chief Secretary, Govt. of Mizoram
7. All Administrative Heads/All Heads of Department
8. Controller, Printing & Stationery Department with 6 spare copies for publication in the Official Gazette.
9. Director, Tourism Department for information & necessary action.
10. All Tourist Lodges/Facilities under Tourism Department
11. Guard File.


(ZONUNTHARI)

Deputy Secretary to Govt. of Mizoram
Tourism Department

GUIDELINES FOR HOMESTAYS IN MIZORAM

1. Introduction

Tourism is currently the largest and fastest growing industry in the world. The industry has emerged as one of the leading sectors that have enhanced the contribution to Mizoram's economy. Mizoram has been witnessing a tremendous influx of international and domestic tourists that has added to foreign exchange earnings. Therefore, increased demand for accommodations coupled with need for elevated authentic experience has led to the concept of Homestay gaining importance.

Tourism Department, Government of Mizoram had introduced a new scheme under the erstwhile New Economic Development Policy (NEDP) for Homestays to supplement the demand of accommodations at various tourist destinations in the two districts of Champhai and Mamit. These Homestays provide standard facilities with minimal investment and encourage the locals to earn an extra income. Since then Tourism Department has been making a sustained effort to promote the concept of Homestays, it has also published information in this regard to the tourists through its website. Under the Scheme the Homestays are minimally regulated and treated as a non-commercial activity.

The guidelines set out herein provide a clear procedure for registration/classification/reclassification of the Homestays, mandatory facilities required in a Homestay, promotional activities available to the Homestay owners etc.

2. Eligibility

Eligible applicants are required to fulfil the following conditions to submit applications for the purpose of registration of Homestays:

1) The owner or promoter of the Homestay unit should be the owner of the property where the Homestay is functioning/ proposed to function.

2) The owner or promoter of the Homestay unit should be physically residing with his/her family in the same Homestay unit or within the premises/campus in close proximity.

3) Individuals or families who own a house of good quality located within the State and can make available, a maximum of 5 (five) rooms with toilet facilities exclusively for tourist accommodation, and who agree to provide basic minimum infrastructure standards and assured quality in service.

4) A Police Clearance certificate has been obtained from Local Police Station

5) At least one of the family members residing in Homestay units should be able to communicate in English.

5) The minimum floor area of each room in the Homestay should be at least 120 sq ft for double bedroom and at least 100 sq ft for single bedroom.

6) The minimum size of each bathroom in the Homestay should be 30 sq ft.

7) There should be an easy access from the road by a footpath/track to the Homestay and should be in good condition.

8) The proposed Homestay is registered as a hotel or commercial establishment under the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade) Rules 2020; and not enjoying any benefits under any of the State or Central Policy/Act/Guidelines.

3. Minimum Requirements : Application for Registration of Homestay Units

a) Any Homestay owner who fulfils the above eligibility conditions may submit an application for registration, to the Prescribed Authority as appointed by the Government under the Mizoram Registration of Tourist Trade Act 2020, specifying the category applied for, in a prescribed format in **Form 3** of the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade) Rules 2020 along with the application fee, registration fees and the required documents. The application fee and the registration fee payable for Gold Guest Class, Silver Guest Class and Bronze Guest Class categories shall be fixed by the Government from to time.

b) The registration fee should be paid by the applicant after approval of application to Prescribed Authority, Tourism Department, Government of Mizoram.

c) On receipt of application in the prescribed format along with the prescribed fees, Tourism Department shall provide an acknowledgement of having received the same, to the applicant.

d) The State Classification Committee may recommend registering a Homestay under Gold Guest Class or Silver or Bronze Guest Class. In case the Homestay owner has applied for a lower category, but the State Classification Committee recommends a higher category vice versa, the applicant is required to pay the registration fee applicable for such category. Only upon payment of registration fee applicable for the class or category allotted, the said Homestay shall be registered under relevant class or category.

4. Documents to be submitted along with the application

- a) Prescribed application form duly filled in.
- b) Proof of ownership (Affidavit in case of co-sharer of house/land).
- c) Location plan showing access to the building from the major roads (need not be to scale).

- d)** One hard copy and one soft copy of the photographs of the building, including interiors, showing types of facilities available, bathroom, living room, bedroom, parking etc.
- e)** Police clearance certificate from Local Police Station.
- f)** Check list details as per **Annexure E** of the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade) Rules 2020 (enclose a copy of the checklist duly certified that the facilities are available in the Homestay unit).
- g)** Certified Building Plans from the local body.
- h)** If approved earlier, a copy of the earlier Certificate of Registration issued by the Tourism Department (for renewal and duplicate application)

5. Registration/ Classification/Reclassification Procedure

a) Homestay units shall be registered as per the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade) Rules 2020 and classified as per the prescribed classification criteria of the State Government.

b) Once the Homestay unit applies for registration or classification or re-classification, it has to be ready for inspection by Government or any other agencies appointed by the State Government for the purpose. No requests for deferment of inspection shall be entertained.

c) Upon receipt of applications, the Government shall, through a private agency or Prescribed Authority appointed undertake physical verification of Homestay unit and evaluate the surrounding environment, hygiene, cleanliness, safety and security provided to the tourist, presence of facilities and services as per the checklist provided in **Annexure E** of the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade) Rules 2020. If found satisfactory with the facilities, the authority shall recommend to Tourism Department for the classification of the Homestay unit, taking into consideration the marking criteria provided at **Annexure F** as per the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade) Rules 2020. The checklist should be duly filled in and signed on all pages and submitted to Tourism Department with the application.

d) Based on the observations made by the private agency and the recommendations of the prescribed Authority, the Homestay unit will be certified under the prescribed classification norm and registered by Tourism Department.

e) Homestay units fulfilling all the essential conditions prescribed under these guidelines and meeting the required criteria in the checklist of facilities and quality of the accommodation provided, belonging to the Class A category, will be given the Gold Guest Class status and Class B category will be awarded the Silver Guest Class status and Class C the Bronze Guest Class.

f) All cases of classification would be finalised within 30 days of the application being made to the Director, Department of Tourism, complete in all respect.

g) The member of Homestay units should undergo the training programme conducted by Tourism Department or service providers as prescribed by the Tourism Department, after registration of their Homestays within the time prescribed by Tourism Department. Failure to attend the compulsory training programme would lead to cancellation of the Certificate of Registration.

h) Once the Certificate of Registration is obtained from the Tourism Department, the applicant is required to register the Homestay unit with the Local Council or Village Council.

6. Expiry of Certificate of Registration and Classification

a) Registration and Classification shall be valid for a period of 3 (three) years from the date of issue of orders of registration or in case of reclassification, from the date of expiry of the last classification, provided that an application has been received at least 3 months before the expiry of the last classification.

b) On expiry of 3 (years) from the date of issue of orders of registration, or in case of reclassification from the date of expiry of the last classification, the registration of the Homestay Units should be renewed on payment of renewal fee which shall be fixed by the Government from time to time before 60 days of expiry of registration

c) The renewal fee shall be payable by the applicant in the form of a Demand Draft (DD) in favour of Director, Tourism Department, Government of Mizoram, drawn on any nationalised bank or scheduled bank and payable at Aizawl or in cash.

d) In case the applicant has failed to pay the prescribed renewal fee within the specified time, Tourism Department shall have the right to take any action including cancellation of the registration/classification and take legal action against the Homestay owner.

7. Refusal and Cancellation of Registration

Tourism Department may, by an order in writing:

a) Refuse registration of a Homestay unit, if the applicant is convicted of any offence under any law providing for prevention of hoarding, smuggling, profiteering, or any adulteration of food or drug, under Chapter XIII and XIV of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 or

b) Remove the name of a Homestay unit from the register and cancel the Certificate of Registration, on any of the following grounds, namely:

- if the Homestay unit ceases to cater to the tourists;
- if the Applicant is convicted of any offence punishable under the relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 or under any law providing for the prevention of hoarding, smuggling, profiteering or adulteration of food and drugs or corruption or
- if the owner or the Homestay unit under question is blacklisted by Tourism Department;
- In case of overcharging, unhygienic conditions, misbehaviour, malpractices and failure to maintain required standards.
- If the applicant has failed to pay the renewal fee within the prescribed time limit.

- If the applicant fails to undergo the training programme organised by Tourism Department.
- Indulge or allow any such activity that adversely affects the privacy and rights of the neighbours and residents of the locality.

No application for registration shall be refused or certificate of registration be cancelled, unless the person applying for registration and the person whose certificate of registration is to be cancelled, has been afforded a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

After the cancellation of certificates of registration, Prescribed Authority shall direct forthwith, the removal of such unit from the register. Further, Prescribed Authority may, through written orders, blacklist such Homestay unit. The particulars of such blacklisted Homestay unit shall be notified to all travel, trade and concerned organizations.

8. General Terms and Conditions for Approval and Registration/Classification of Homestay Unit

a) All applications for the classification or reclassification must be complete in all respects including application form, application fee, prescribed clearances, NOCs, certificates, etc. The incomplete application is liable to be rejected.

b) In case of dissatisfaction with the decision on the classification, the unit may appeal to the Appellate Authority (Secretary, Tourism), Tourism Department, within 30 days of receiving the communication regarding classification / reclassification. If the applicant is still not satisfied with the decision of the Appellate Authority, appeal may be made to Revisional Authority and the decision of the Revisional Authority shall be final and binding.

c) If any dispute arises between the house owner and the tourists, the matter will be brought to the notice of the Tourism Department for resolution. The decision of Prescribed Authority, Tourism Department, shall be final and binding.

d) The classified Homestay units are expected to maintain required standards at all times. The State Classification Committee could inspect the same, at any time, without previous notice. Any serious deficiencies will be reported to Tourism Department, and Tourism Department is free to take any action including cancellation of the classification.

e) Any deficiencies/rectification pointed out by the State Classification Committee will have to be complied within the stipulated time, which will be allotted in consultation with the representatives of the establishment during inspection. Failure to do so will result in rejection of the application.

f) Any changes in the facilities of the unit shall be reported to the Tourism Department, within 30 days. If any such violation comes to the notice of the State Classification Committee, then the classification will stand withdrawn/terminated.

g) If the owner wishes to cancel the registration of the Homestay unit, he/she may apply to the Prescribed Authority, Tourism Department on a plain paper.

h) All the approved homestay units shall submit **Form 25** of the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade)Rules 2020 (registration book as maintained in hotels) with passport details to the police station, as is done by the hotels, while accommodating foreign nationals.

i) The owner shall maintain a register for letting out the rooms to the tourists, which can be inspected by the authorized officer. The register will have the same format as those presently used in the Hotels or Guesthouses as per the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade) Rules 2020.

j) The owner shall maintain a bill book with Homestay stamp pad for issuing the bills to the tourists.

k) Government of Mizoram reserves the right to modify the guidelines or terms and conditions from time to time, for the betterment and well-being of the industry.

l) CCTV surveillance at reception and corridors shall be installed and at least one female security personnel may be engaged

m) Homestay owners shall submit monthly visitor report in Form 26 of the Mizoram (Registration of Tourist Trade) Rules 2020 without fail to the Director, Tourism Department.

9. Code of Conduct of Homestay Owners

Tourism Department has framed certain guiding principles that should be followed by the Homestay owners. These are illustrated as a Code of Conduct and would include the following:

a) Every Homestay unit shall follow the prescribed guidelines in this regard, maintain the basic infrastructure and quality standards, as per the selected classification criteria, and adhere to the code.

b) The owner of Homestay shall charge the rates approved by the Tourism Department at the time of booking, from the tourists. Rates shall be revised once in two years, by the State Classification Committee, on application by the owner.

c) Every Homestay shall accurately describe the facilities provided in their establishment and the rates quoted for usage of the facilities, to the guests. Receipts are to be provided wherever required.

d) To allow guests to see the accommodation on arrival, prior to payment

e) To adhere to the payment terms agreed upon at the time of booking

f) To deal promptly and courteously with all enquiries, requests, reservations, correspondence and complaints from guests.

g) Maintain the Homestay unit in a good state of repair and cleanliness and fit for habitation of guests at all times, and comply with any rules respecting standards of health, hygiene and safety, including fire safety.

h) Maintain detailed particulars of guests in a register or computerized record in electronic form and provide fortnightly information of the guests to the municipal body concerned, and the police.

i) Every registered Homestay unit shall maintain the following books and register, approved by Tourism Department and upon demand or request by

the Tourism Department /Prescribed Authority, shall produce the following records namely:

- Complaint or suggestion book kept at the reception or lobby or living room of Homestay.
- Guest or tourist visitor register.
- Bill book duly numbered in triplicate.
- Receipt book duly numbered in duplicate for receipt of payments or advance.

10. Booking Procedures

a) Upon registration with Tourism Department, the Homestay owners may advertise their Homestay on their website or through online travel portal for booking in their own cost. It is the responsibility of the Homestay owners to take the guests' contact details, confirmed arrival and departure times etc.

b) Tourism Department would promote homestay units through its social media pages, website and its brochures. Individual homestay are encouraged to get them registered in the travel portal platforms such as OYO Room, AirBnB and other travel portals.

11. Display of information and documents to be maintained by the Homestay Owners

Every registered Homestay unit should display, at a conspicuous place, in respect of his Homestay, at the entrance of the Homestay or at the reception counter, on a notice board the following information, duly painted:

- a) Name of homestay/accommodation unit
- b) Registration certificate
- c) Rates approved by the Government
- d) Emergency contact numbers
- e) Emergency Exit Plan inside the rooms
- f) Classification of hotel/accommodation unit

12. Monitoring and Evaluation of Homestays

a) The State Government may conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of homestay unit through third party agent or through the Department; this would ensure consistent efforts to provide assured service standards, so that assured minimum standards are continued to be maintained in these Homestay units. Monitoring Committee may be notified by the Government. The panel may be drawn from various stakeholders and expert agencies involved in tourism and eco- tourism fields if found required.

13. Incentives and Concessions

In order to avail incentives, only Homestay units duly registered with the Tourism Department would be eligible for the following incentives:

- a) Use of Mizoram Tourism Brand for marketing
- b) Payment of electricity and water charges at domestic rates.
- c) The rate of property tax will be those prescribed by the appropriate authorities for residential purposes.
- d) Government would facilitate in getting loans from the financial institutions for the improvement of the existing houses for its conversion into Homestay.
- e) Tourism Department would arrange continuous training programmes for the Homestay owners in essential areas including staff proficiency, food handling, safety and hygiene.
- f) Tourism Department shall publish on its web site, free of charge, the list of all approved Homestay units and shall also print a brochure of the registered Homestay units and make it available in its tourism kiosks/ centres.
- h) Exposure through travel, trade fairs and B2B may also be arranged by the Government
- i) Annual Awards for homestay units shall also be arranged by the Government

14. Responsible Tourism:

As initiatives to promote 'responsible tourism', homestay unit owners and their guests are responsible for ensuring safety, privacy and dignity of the areas they are staying. Their clients are also expected to respect the local culture and practices of the areas. They are required to ensure safety, conservation and preservation of the State's flora and fauna from their clients.

15. Pledge on 'responsible tourism':

Guests under the care of concerned homestay unit owners are required to take a pledge on 'responsible tourism' while staying in their unit as below:

-----Responsible Travel Pledge-----

I pledge to be a responsible traveller

When I explore new places,
I will leave nothing but footprints
and take away only memories

I shall not harm,
what does not harm me

I shall travel clean and green
I shall respect the local culture,

And I shall promote sustainable tourism

16. The Mizoram Registration of Tourist Trade Act 2020 and its Rules.

Approved homestay unit owners are required to abide by the provisions of the **Mizoram Registration of Tourist Trade Act 2020 and its Rules** while performing tourist trade in this aspect.

17. Exemption

The Government, may, in whole or in part as the case may be, exempt any of the provisions contained in these guidelines to individuals or a group of individuals or firms or association

18. Penalty

Whoever contravenes any provision of the Mizoram Registration of Tourist Trade Act 2020 and its Rules shall be punished under the relevant laws under Central or State Government