

# Sewa Sankalpa

(Pledge for Service)

#sankalpa4sewa

#pledge4sewa

--- FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY ---

*Frequently Asked Questions*

## **Q1. What is the plan? What are we trying to do?**

A:

- 1) We reach out to 1,000+ 'Dharma and Sewa' based community organization across 50+ cities in the US
- 2) We help them create a support plan for their own community (How? – explained further)
- 3) All these organizations release a '*Sewa Sankalp*'
- 4) Sewa helps create large scale impact of the efforts of community organizations, get endorsements from influential personalities for the '*Sewa Sankalp*'
- 5) All the community organizations who release these '*Sewa Sankalpa*' would be listed on the endorsement page

## **Q2. Why is Sewa undertaking this activity?**

A: Sewa, a Hindu faith-based organization, believes in सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः । (May all be happy, may all be free from illness). To practice our value of 'working for the wellness of all' we will reach out to our communities that need support in multiple ways. To amplify the reach and impact, such an activity would require Sewa to be working together with other community organizations.

## **Q3. What type of community organizations are we reaching out to?**

A: All community organizations engaged in either Dharmic or Sewa work.

Dharmic instances:

- Temple organizations (including Jain, Sikh, Buddhist, Hindu temples, etc.) come under the Dharmic category.
- Formal and informal organizations such as Satsangs, Bhajan Groups and Pravachan (Gita) Groups

'Sewa' instances:

There are countless more organizations involved in *sewa* activity. Many cultural and linguistic centered organizations have *sewa* as part of their mission, and many non-profit organizations are purely in *sewa* work.

## **Q4. What is the big picture behind this activity?**

A: To create meaningful, relevant impact in our communities, thereby inculcating a positive perception of Hindu/ Indo-American community.

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## **Q5. How is this activity going to help improve / create positive perception?**

A:

- 1) Desired key outcome: *'1,000+ Coalition Dharmic and Sewa Partner organizations step up to serve the community in this time of dire need.'*
- 2) This positive message gets amplified by 1000+ organizations
- 3) Increased level of collaborations among community organizations to serve better.
- 4) Collective services and resources offered will have wider impact.

## **Q6. What are the other outcomes expected from this activity?**

A:

- Increases confidence amongst the Dharmic and Sewa organizations to face the current challenges.
- Prepare community organizations to offer help in such situations through helpline and local resources.

## **Q7. What is in it for Sewa International?**

A: Helping communities in times of distress is part of Sewa's mission. So, it is natural for Sewa to reach out to the community this time too.

## **Q8. How are we helping community organizations prepare to serve their own community?**

A: Sewa has very good experience of collaborating with local organizations during past challenges. We have a current model (last three weeks) in place that has worked well in Houston, TX. Based on this and experience of many Sewa Chapters, we have created a template that we can empower other community organizations to take actions.

## **Q9. What is our proposition to community organizations?**

A:

- Reach out to the community to reassure them that help is available, through phone calls, email, social media, webinars and through community organization's website.
- Setup local helpline ((using Google voice is easy and free) or leverage Sewa International's Helpline numbers.
- Explore and decide areas of help that can be offered
  - o Providing Non-Medical help
  - o Conducting webinars for the community on health aspects, parenting, WFH, immigration etc.
  - o Finding help for the elderly people for home delivery or for any other needs
  - o Creating support system for students in general and international students in particular
  - o Compiling and providing useful information on local resources – list of local grocery stores who provide home delivery, list of local doctors, attorneys, etc.

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- Forming groups of local doctors, lawyers, counsellors who can offer help to the community members, when needed.

More areas can be identified based on local needs

- Leverage Sewa International's resources, if needed, for sharing with its community members. Sewa International is conducting regular webinars on various topics and has published lot of resources through its social media channels.

**Q10. Why should community organizations duplicate what Sewa has done? Why is Sewa not doing it on its own?**

A: Our effort is to reach out to create a multiplier effect. Community organizations have their own network of members who feel comfortable reaching out to them first, hence it is more effective.

**Q11. So, in these efforts Sewa would not want any recognition?**

A: Sewa is only interested in helping out the larger community.

**Q12. What if the community organization says, "We have been providing all the help to our community, we are covering more areas that mentioned earlier"**

A: "That is wonderful to hear, we really appreciate your efforts and maybe we can also learn something from you, would you like to share your efforts with Sewa and other organizations?"

**Q13. What do we need from the community organizations?**

A: Beside setting up the helpline (in any form they are comfortable), we would like them to release a 'Sewa Sankalpa'

**Q14. Why 'Sewa Sankalpa', What is it?**

A: While community organizations are working at their level and offering support to the community members, it is also important to recognize this yeoman work of the community organizations at the national level.

Sewa has created 'Sewa Sankalpa' (pledge for service) that talks about the pledge ('Sankalp') of helping community members. Following is the essence of this 'Sewa Sankalpa':

*As a responsible community organization, we hereby take a pledge (sankalpa) that:*

- 1. We will urge our community members to follow safety measures, take all precautions, and observe utmost restraint (sanyam) in personal lives to protect the health of our family and community.*
- 2. Our community organization will encourage and foster co-operation (sahakar) amongst members to create a support system for the wellbeing of all.*

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3. *Our community organization will collaborate (sahayog) with other organizations in this fight against COVID-19.*

**Q15. Are we giving draft of the ‘Sewa Sankalp’ to them, is it ready with us?**

A: Yes, we will share the ‘Sewa Sankalp’

**Q16. How would this ‘Sewa Sankalpa’ be released, how would that be used by Sewa?**

A: Sewa would publish names of all the organizations that release ‘Sewa Sankalp’ on the endorsement page where influential people would endorse it.

**Q17. What if a community organization wants to change the wording of the ‘Sewa Sankalp’**

A: They can change without materially changing intention, and release. We can still include their name in our endorsement list. But we shall not be able to change the wording on our website as it is already endorsed by others.

**Q18. What do we mean by ‘releasing’ the ‘Sewa Sankalpa’?**

A: Each organization would sign this ‘Sewa Sankalpa’ and publish as it deems appropriate on – social media, website, etc. or may decide to send to its members through email.

**Q19. How many organizations are expected to sign up the ‘Sewa Sankalpa’?**

A: Sewa is reaching out to 1,000+ organizations across 50+ cities in the US

**Q20. If some community organizations want to know more about our work in other parts of the country, whom should I contact?**

A: You should reach out to national team, write to [sankalpa4sewa@sewausa.org](mailto:sankalpa4sewa@sewausa.org) or call 708-872-7392

**Q21. What if there are other types of organizations who are helping Sewa International, do they become partners in this activity?**

A: All the organizations who want to help and partner with Sewa are welcome. We have categories of Service, Media and Corporate partners apart from Community organizations.

**Q22. So, what are the asks from the community organization?**

A:

1. Sign and releases the ‘Sewa Sankalpa’
2. Reach out to its community members to reassure them that help is available
3. Sets-up Helpline or publicize Sewa International helpline numbers to its members
4. Nominate 2 contact points from its side to collaborate with Sewa team
5. Regularly share information with its community members

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**Q23. How is Sewa International supporting community organizations, what is Sewa giving to community organizations?**

A: Sewa is offering the following support:

1. Sewa's helpline
2. Complete guidelines for setting up community's own helpline
3. Sewa's webinar resources
4. Weekly updates and resources that can be shared with community members

**Q24. How does an organization sign the 'Sewa Sankalpa'**

A: Community organization clicks on the URL [www.sewause.org/sewasankalpa](http://www.sewause.org/sewasankalpa) and signs. We also give the PDF version of the 'Sewa Sankalpa' that an organization can use for sharing through various media.

**Q25. Can I share this document with community organization?**

A: NOT AT ALL. This is only for internal communication. There is a separate document that you may share with community organizations