

# **Standards for Harinama (First) Initiation**

## **ISKCON Harrisburg**

In order to protect the spiritual life of all initiates, and to ensure our strong and continued growth as a movement, aspiring ISKCON Harrisburg devotees must meet the requirements below in order to receive recommendation for initiation.

- Chant daily at least 16 rounds of the Hare Krishna Maha Mantra on beads and follow the 4 regulative principles for 6 months before seeking formal shelter of a spiritual master and then 6 months before receiving initiation.
- Submit satisfactorily completed monthly progress tracker until initiation is received.
- Co-operate with Temple authorities and accept GBC as the ultimate managing authority.
- Answer the Pre-Initiation Exam set by GBC.
- Attend the ISKCON Disciples Course and complete training on Vaisnava Etiquette and Lifestyle.
- Attend temple weekly Sunday program regularly (atleast twice a month if geographically remote) and auspicious festival days such as Janamastami, Gaura Purnima, Nityananda Appearance Day, Balarama Appearance Day, Radhastami, Govardhan Puja, Srila Prabhupada's Appearance and Disappearance Day, Nrsimha Caturdasi, Gita Jayanti etc.
- Render regular service to ISKCON (ideally 2 hours a week). For example outreach related activities, services in the mood of humility (cooking, cleaning the kitchen/serving prasadam), perform service at Sunday feast and major festivals.
- Observe fasting on ekadashi and appearance and disappearance days of Acaryas and festivals such as Janamastami, Gaura Purnima, Nityananda Appearance Day, Balarama Appearance Day, Radhastami, Govardhan Puja, Srila Prabhupada's Appearance and Disappearance Day, Nrsimha Caturdasi, Gita Jayanti etc.
- Spousal consent for married candidates and parental consent for minor candidates is required.

In addition to the above requirements, the candidates are strongly encouraged to follow the following standards (exceptions will be considered on a one-on-one basis):-

- Rise early in the morning before sunrise.
- Study daily and develop a basic understanding of Srila Prabhupada's books.
- Maintain at least a simple altar at home for offering bhoga and performing simple regulated worship.
- Offer items only permissible for offering to the Lord.

# Standards for Brahmin (Second) Initiation

## ISKCON Harrisburg

Brahmin initiation is given to enhance spiritual development, and it is incumbent upon the initiate to behave in accordance with the standards of living and devotional activities expected of brahmanas. In keeping with the instructions of Srila Prabhupada, there is expectation that a brahmana will be a teacher of the scriptures and will engage in service to the temple Deity. Please note that a formal letter of recommendation from the local authorities is required for receiving 2<sup>nd</sup> initiation.

A candidate for Brahmin initiation must meet the following standards:

- For at least one year after first initiation, continues fulfilling all requirements for first initiation.
- Co-operate with Temple authorities and accept GBC as the ultimate managing authority.
- Fits into and represents ISKCON's organisational structure; i.e., GBC to Regional Governing Bodies (and similar local councils), Temple Presidents, etc.
- Exemplifies religious principles to the public, representing ISKCON and Srila Prabhupada.
- Demonstrates the qualities of a brahmana ([BG 18.42](#)) and a tendency to continually improve in those qualities.
- Practices the threefold austerity of the mode of goodness, as described in [BG 17.14-16](#).
- Continually develops good relationships with other devotees.
- Has read significant portions of, and is conversant with the contents of, the following books by Srila Prabhupada: Bhagavad-gita As It Is, Srimad Bhagavatam (at least the first two cantos), Caitanya Caritamrta (at least Adi Lila), Nectar of Devotion (at least first 19 chapters), Nectar of Instruction and Sri Isopanisad and has completed the Bhakti Sastri Course (Discuss individual cases with Temple President).
- Perform Brahminical service on a regular basis for at least one year
  - Either by assisting in serving the Deities through the Deity Department (for example, doing transfers of bhoga, dressing Srila Prabhupada or cleaning Pujari Area, doing Srila Prabhupada's aarti and Tulasi aarti).
  - OR by regular engagement in temple outreach activities.
- Commit to perform more services after receiving Brahminical initiation.
- Complete reading of Srimad Bhagavatam and Chaitanya Charitamrita within 3 years.