

# SDIC THRESHOLD & ONBOARDING MANUAL

## Entering the Community Field

### Purpose

The purpose of onboarding is not recruitment.

The purpose of onboarding is discernment.

Not everyone who is interested in community is ready for community.

Not everyone who desires stewardship is prepared to practice stewardship.

We welcome people with open hearts and clear boundaries.

The health of the community, the land, and future generations depends upon thoughtful entry.

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## Core Principle

Belonging is not granted.

Belonging is revealed.

Trust develops through time, participation, consistency, and lived experience.

No one enters as a resident immediately.

Everyone enters through relationship.

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## What We Look For

We are not looking for perfection.

We are looking for:

- Honesty
- Responsibility
- Emotional regulation
- Respect for agreements
- Follow-through

- Simplicity
- Stewardship mindset
- Ability to participate in shared life

Character matters more than personality.

Actions matter more than intentions.

Consistency matters more than enthusiasm.

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## What We Are Not

A SDIC community is not:

- An emergency housing program
- A rescue center
- An escape from responsibility
- A free-for-all experiment
- A place where money buys belonging
- A place where spiritual language replaces accountability

Need alone does not equal readiness.

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## The Six Stages of Entry

### Stage 1: Initial Connection

A person expresses interest.

This may occur through:

- Website
- Social media
- Referral
- Community event
- Volunteer opportunity

The purpose is simple connection.

No promises are made.

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## Stage 2: Discernment Conversation

A conversation is held with one or more stewards.

Topics may include:

- Personal goals
- Community expectations
- Previous community experience
- Skills and interests
- Current life circumstances

This is a conversation, not an interview.

Both sides are discerning.

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## Stage 3: Visitor Status

Visitors may attend events or stay for a limited period.

Visits should have:

- Clear purpose
- Defined beginning
- Defined ending
- Clear expectations

Visitors remain visitors.

No residency decisions are made during the visit.

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## Stage 4: Shared Life Observation

Character is revealed through shared life.

We observe:

- Participation
- Communication
- Cleanliness
- Responsibility
- Follow-through
- Relationship to conflict
- Respect for land and resources

This stage matters more than conversation.

Reality reveals what words cannot.

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## Stage 5: Reflection

After observation, stewards meet.

Possible outcomes:

- Not aligned
- Not at this time
- Continue relationship
- Invite deeper participation

Clarity is kindness.

Vagueness creates confusion.

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## Stage 6: Steward Candidate

The individual enters a probationary period.

During this time they learn:

- Community culture
- Stewardship principles
- Land care practices
- Communication agreements
- Community responsibilities

Trust continues to develop through action.

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# Steward Candidate Expectations

Steward Candidates:

- Participate in community projects
- Respect community agreements
- Maintain their personal space
- Contribute according to ability
- Attend stewardship circles when invited

Steward Candidates are not yet Resident Stewards.

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# Resident Steward Recognition

Residency is not claimed.

Residency is recognized.

Recognition may occur when:

- Trust has developed
- Agreements have been honored
- Contributions have been consistent
- The individual demonstrates stewardship values

Resident Stewards may participate in governance and sponsor future applicants.

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# Sponsorship Principle

Whenever possible, new applicants should have a community sponsor.

Sponsors help:

- Answer questions
- Support onboarding
- Explain community culture
- Encourage healthy integration

Sponsors are guides, not managers.

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# Exit and Reentry

Sometimes people leave.

Sometimes people return.

Departure does not equal failure.

Communities function best when arrivals and departures are handled with honesty, gratitude, and respect.

The gate remains conscious in both directions.

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# Closing Principle

We do not open the gate simply because someone wishes to enter.

We open the gate when it serves life.

We do not close the gate from fear.

We close the gate when protection is love.

We build community by tending conditions, not collecting people.