

Mindful & Spiritual Segment of Wellness Tourism

(Mindful & Spiritual Retreats / Centres)

General Criteria for Registration

OBJECTIVE :

Sri Lanka possesses substantial potential to emerge as a globally competitive hub for both Medical and Wellness Tourism. The country is committed to providing high-quality, safe, and ethically delivered services that adhere to international standards. To achieve this, Sri Lanka aims to regulate, monitor, and facilitate the supply side effectively, promoting professional conduct while safeguarding consumer rights. These efforts will not only enhance Sri Lanka's reputation as a trusted medical and wellness destination but also support the sustainable growth and diversification of its tourism product.

This scheme outlines the general criteria for the **Mindful and Spiritual Segment of Wellness Tourism**, enabling the service providers to obtain registration from the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.

See **Appendix A** (Relevant Indicative Types of Mindful & Spiritual Wellness Experiences)

****Notes:**

- Ayurveda-based wellness experiences in Wellness Retreats and Wellness Centres where the terminology 'Ayurveda' is specifically mentioned and 'Ayurveda' wellness modalities are offered, such service providers are not covered under these criteria. Ayurveda wellness experiences shall be aligned with the requirements and guidelines issued by the Department of Ayurveda, and relevant approval from the Department of Ayurveda must be obtained before SLTDA registration.
- All facilities, including accommodation, will conform to specifications as per this criteria applicable exclusively to Mindful & Spiritual Centres and Retreats.

DEFINITIONS :

- **Mindful & Spiritual Centre:** A Mindful & Spiritual Centre is a stand-alone facility that primarily provides multiple wellness modalities. These centres usually offer yoga, meditation, nutrition counselling, spiritual and more by the qualified instructors/facilitators according to the wellness experience offered. These centres operate without on-site accommodation facilities.
- **Mindful & Spiritual Retreat:** A Mindful and Spiritual Retreat is a facility where the primary purpose of a visit is to participate in in-depth wellness experiences delivered through structured programs, typically combined with on-site accommodation. These retreats usually involve longer stays, often with a minimum stay requirement, and offer comprehensive programs focused on physical, mental, and spiritual rejuvenation, with a strong emphasis on lifestyle transformation.

GENERAL CRITERIA :

1. COMPOUND

1.1 Location/Site

- 1.1.1 Location shall maintain a serene, clean, distraction-free environment conducive to healing and relaxation.
- 1.1.2 The site shall be well laid out and maintained in the manner befitting the facility of local/international standards.
- 1.1.3 The landscaping, where applicable, shall complement the natural environment.

1.2 Built Environment

- 1.2.1 The building(s) shall be purpose-built or an existing building(s) that is appropriately converted for the purpose.
- 1.2.2 Construction/development of the facility shall comply with all local building regulations.
- 1.2.3 Design shall integrate eco-friendly materials and practices and shall be in harmony with the environment and provide the desired levels of comfort, serenity and tranquillity. (e.g., natural lighting, ventilation, sustainable construction)
- 1.2.4 All areas of the facility, whether guest or staff areas, shall be always kept hygienically clean and orderly.
- 1.2.5 The reception (with a desk/counter) area shall be separated from the service area.
- 1.2.6 The reception area shall have sufficient and comfortable seats for clients.
- 1.2.7 Adequate parking/provisions for parking shall be provided for guests.

1.3 Wellness Ambience (Indoor/Outdoor)

- 1.3.1 Silent, distraction-free, approved location to deliver a wellness experience.
- 1.3.2 Mats, props, mirrors, and sound systems shall be provided where needed
- 1.3.3 The spaces of the facility shall be well-ventilated.
- 1.3.4 The lighting shall be appropriate in each area of the facility.
- 1.3.5 In areas where water is used for the wellness services/treatments, the floor should be made of a non-slippery, easy-to-clean material
- 1.3.6 Client facilities and décor must be adequate and appropriate
- 1.3.7 Hydration stations shall be available adequately.
- 1.3.8 There shall be a separate casual toilet unit available in good ventilation with water closet (W.C.) units, wash basins, mirrors, sanitary bins with paper bags, soap trays, toilet paper with holders, bidets or hand bidets.
- 1.3.9 Changing rooms (where necessary) with lockers, showers, and toilets (gender-separated or private).

1.4 Treatment Rooms/Studios (if applicable)

- 1.4.1 The treatment rooms shall be provided with adequate ventilation, natural or mechanical, to ensure acceptable indoor air quality.

1.4.2 The ventilation provided shall be effective in removing the smells and odours from the treatment rooms.

1.4.3 The internal height of the treatment room should also reflect the sense of spaciousness (minimum height shall be 2.7m).

1.4.4 An emergency exit path must be displayed inside the door of each treatment room.

1.4.5 The treatment rooms shall maintain an appropriate level of privacy for the client, and shall not be hidden and shall have doors which cannot be locked.

1.4.6 The changing rooms shall be easily accessible.

1.5 Bedrooms and Bathrooms (if applicable)

1.5.1 Spacious, clean, well-ventilated and maintained bedrooms shall be available.

- The minimum size of a single bedroom shall be at least 100 square feet.
- The minimum size of a double bedroom shall not be less than 120 square feet
- If a shared room facility is provided (more than 4 pax per room), the floor area in bedrooms or dormitory accommodation should not be less than 5 square metres per person.

1.5.2 Each bedroom shall be equipped with clean, comfortable beds with good mattresses, clean mattress covers, pillows and pillowcases

1.5.3 Each bedroom shall be equipped with a communication system for contacting service staff. (This may be a caller bell system, internal guest room phones system, mobile app integration system, voice-activated assistance system, or displaying a WhatsApp contactable point, etc.)

1.5.4 Well-ventilated bedrooms (natural/mechanical) with air conditioning/fans or heating system (where applicable) shall be provided in good working order.

1.5.5 Doors shall be lockable from inside and outside, and windows from inside.

1.5.6 It is recommended that every bedroom be provided with High-quality fresh linen, a dressing table/mirror, a luggage stand, a waste-paper basket, a drinking water facility, and a mosquito net where needed.

1.5.7 Safety locker facilities or provisions should be available for the security visitors' personal belongings.

1.5.8 Bathrooms shall be at least 24 square feet.

1.5.9 Bathrooms should have mandatory utilities: W.C, Wash basin, Mirror, shower and towel railing.

1.5.10 Bathrooms uphold good levels of hygienic and sanitary working order.

1.5.11 Hot water and cold water facilities will be available at the bathrooms.

1.5.12 If a shared bathroom facility is available, the premises shall contain at least one bathroom for every six persons.

2. SERVICE DELIVERY

2.1 Client Orientation, Awareness and Education

2.1.1 Provide an orientation or welcome session outlining the wellness program, schedule, and etiquette.

2.1.2 Multilingual printed/electronic materials should be made available to provide updated visitor information, as necessary.

2.2 Ethical Practices

2.2.1 Avoid making exaggerated or misleading claims, such as suggesting that a treatment can ‘cure all illnesses.’

2.2.2 Visitors must provide written consent before participating in therapies, treatments or wellness programmes.

2.2.3 Confidentiality of visitors’ health information shall be maintained.

2.2.4 All healing/recuperation practices that involve human touch or are practised within proximity shall follow ethical boundaries with consent from the client and be gender sensitive.

2.2.5 Adequate and reasonable measures to secure the privacy of visitors before, during or after their time at the facility.

2.3 Authenticity and Cultural Integrity

2.3.1 All service offerings shall reflect genuine practices rooted in Sri Lankan or internationally recognised traditions (e.g. Meditation, Yoga, Energy healing etc.).

2.3.2 Cultural and spiritual components shall be promoted and conducted respectfully and, where applicable, in collaboration with local communities or spiritual institutions.

2.3.3 The centre/retreat shall clearly state its wellness tradition/philosophy (if applicable)

2.4 Programme/Activity Requirements

2.4.1 Wellness programmes shall be delivered through well-structured and organised sessions by clearly defining the daily schedule and code of conduct for participants.

2.4.2 Wellness programmes with prices shall be available where applicable.

2.4.3 The qualified and experienced facilitators shall deliver the instructions.

2.4.4 Guest reservations, arrivals and registration procedures shall be in place.

2.4.5 Billing and payment procedures shall be in place.

2.4.6 Guest feedback procedures shall be in place.

2.5 Programme/Activity Delivery

2.5.1 The services shall only be provided during operating hours within the facility and according to applicable business regulations.

2.5.2 A consultation shall be conducted before wellness services/treatments by the management of the facility or by a trained industry/health care professional.

2.5.3 Clients shall be informed of the procedures/treatments/techniques and agree to such before the service offering.

2.5.4 A post-activity/treatment consultation is also recommended (A consultation may be waived for repeat clients having the same treatment).

2.5.5 A complete menu/instructional material of services shall be displayed in the facility. (The menu shall include detailed pricing, any supplementary charges that may be chargeable, treatment duration, and a cancellation policy.)

2.5.6 The facility shall have SOPs concerning the services provided and shall make them available for staff use and training.

- 2.5.7 Top management shall ensure that all staff are knowledgeable in procedures to be taken when dealing with guest misconduct.
- 2.5.8 Service duration integrity– sessions last the full stated time.
- 2.5.9 Encourage journaling, self-reflection, or feedback forms for clients.
- 2.5.10 Mindful & Spiritual experiences offered, shall be conducted at the approved location or at a pre-arranged designated location approved by the management of the centre/retreat fulfilling the requirements of the approved location.
- 2.5.11 The mobile camping criteria issued by the SLTDA will apply to the activities conducted with mobile camping accommodation.
(Link:https://www.slttda.gov.lk/storage/common_media/1%20Final%20Guideline%20m.%20Camping%20Mobile%20camping.pdf)

2.6 Guest Experience and Stay Programmes

- 2.6.1 Minimum stay requirement shall be communicated to the guest in advance.
(for Mindful & Spiritual Retreats)
- 2.6.2 Pre-arrival questionnaire to prepare a personalised plan.
- 2.6.3 Post-stay guidance and follow-up recommendations.
- 2.6.4 Overall service standards of the facility shall be maintained at a high level to achieve very good visitor satisfaction ratings.

2.7 Products and Consumables (if applicable)

- 2.7.1 Products used in the provision of services/treatments and/or retailing shall be standardised & certified. If the entity uses its own products, it is mandatory to have written undertaking certifying those products have been tested for application etc
- 2.7.2 Products used in the provision of services/treatments shall be biodegradable.
- 2.7.3 All products shall be stored under the appropriate storage conditions and as recommended by the product manufacturer/supplier.
- 2.7.4 Products used in the facility shall be subject to an inventory control system following good business practices and specified product use-by-dates.
- 2.7.5 All packaging materials shall be minimal and biodegradable or able to be reused or recycled.
- 2.7.6 The linen must be of high quality, and fresh linen must be provided for each guest.

3. FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

3.1 Facilities/Provisions for Differently-abled Persons

- 3.1.1 The Centre/Retreat shall provide facilities for differently abled persons, to comply with the regulations stipulated in the "Protection of the Rights of Persons with disabilities" Act (Gazette Notification No. 1, 467/15 of 17th October 2006) in all areas of the retreat, including bedrooms, public areas and public washrooms.
- 3.1.2 In the event that the requirement specified in 3.1.1 cannot be fulfilled due to limitations arising from terrain or other unavoidable constraints, the Centre/Retreat shall disclose such limitations to guests prior to their arrival (through the website/social media platforms/OTAs

etc./or any other appropriate means). Written consent acknowledging these constraints shall be obtained from the relevant clients in advance.

3.2 Food and Nutrition (if applicable)

3.2.1 Meals shall be prioritised with fresh, seasonal, and organic ingredients.

3.2.2 Meals shall be aligned with guest preferences and wellness goals.

3.2.3 Dietary needs and restrictions (vegan, gluten-free, diabetic, etc.) shall be considered and labelled clearly.

3.2.4 All meals shall be properly labelled.

3.2.5 A declaration shall be obtained from the guest regarding any allergies or dietary restrictions before offering meals.

3.2.6 Alcohol and tobacco shall be restricted within the service area.

3.3 Dining and Kitchen (if applicable)

3.3.1 A set place for dining arranged to accommodate the in-house guests.

3.3.2 Menu cards shall be readily available for guests.

3.3.3 Adequate kitchen or cooking facilities must be provided for the number of rooms, along with the requirements for a functional kitchen as per standard requirements.

3.3.4 Proper storage facilities for cold and dry rations.

3.3.5 If kitchen/cooking facilities are not available, there must be an alternative way to provide food for the guests, and this must be well-communicated.

3.4 Pool/s (if applicable)

3.4.1 Where a swimming pool is available, Depth markings and internationally accepted safety signs shall be permanently displayed at the swimming pool.

3.4.2 Where a swimming pool is available, the water quality shall be maintained according to internationally accepted standards within the following parameters. PH 7.4 to 7.6, Residual Chlorine minimum 0.5 ppm (1.0 ppm is recommended). The quality of water shall be checked and recorded at least twice a day.

3.4.3 All natural swimming pools and salt water pools must ensure continuous water flow throughout the facility to prevent stagnant areas. Pumping systems may be used to achieve and maintain this circulation. In cases where continuous water flow is not feasible due to the facility's design, provisions must be in place to allow for the complete drainage, thorough cleaning, sanitisation, and refilling of the facility at intervals frequent enough to ensure compliance with the water quality standards outlined in **APPENDIX B** (see Appendix B).

4. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

4.1 Staffing and Staffing Facilities

4.1.1 The professional staff (doctors, therapists, instructors, trainers, teachers, guides, healers, etc.) must hold relevant and verifiable certifications of qualifications or previous relevant experience.

4.1.2 Facilities shall maintain records of professional staff credentials and provide such information at the time of institutional registration.

4.1.3 All staff shall have completed a premises orientation programme upon commencement of employment.

4.1.4 Staff working in the facility shall be in good general health, with no communicable diseases, and staff medical fitness shall be checked periodically.

4.1.5 All staff shall participate in an ongoing periodic assessable in-house training program to ensure maintenance and development of knowledge and standards & records to be maintained.

4.1.6 No person under the age of 18 years or as stipulated by labour laws shall be employed in the facility.

4.1.7 All staff shall be suitably groomed and attired following the professionally accepted level of hygiene and the company's SOPs.

4.1.8 The staff shall be provided with separate lockers, adequate changing facilities.

4.2 Hygiene, Safety and Security

4.2.1 There shall be an emergency response plan/safety manual in the case of an emergency during the service.

4.2.2 Mechanism for regular sanitisation of treatment rooms, mats, linens, and public areas.

4.2.3 Availability of first-aid kits and trained first aid responders on-site, including at least one staff member trained in CPR.

4.2.4 Medical backup contacts (nearby hospitals/clinics) shall be established if a medical officer is not available on the premises.

4.2.5 Emergency evacuation system, including fire exits, shall be available.

4.2.6 Secure lock & key facilities to keep guests' valuables shall be available.

4.2.7 Garbage should be sorted in lidded bins until they are removed regularly.

4.2.8 Degradable and recyclable waste should be disposed of separately in a proper manner.

4.2.9 Adequate measures shall be placed to avoid cross-infection.

4.2.10 Facilities for the sterilisation of reusable items in the facility shall be available.

4.2.11 Adequate fire detection/protection systems shall be provided, and firefighting equipment shall be in a good state.

4.2.12 All main drain covers, vacuum inlets and other suction ports of spas must be provided with suitable anti-entrapment

4.2.13 Dispose of Bio-hazardous material according to the applicable standards and laws

4.2.14 Adequate security and safety arrangements should be made available at the compound—deployment of security guards or the option to be available.

4.2.15 Should maintain a guest register with details including name, address, Passport /NIC number, date of arrival/departure, etc., for reference.

4.2.16 A comprehensive testing program for the quality of the water shall be in place, and records must be maintained of all such tests. The tests shall clearly list the activities to be carried out daily, weekly and monthly. The parameters to be monitored shall include: (a). pH, (b). Free available chlorine (c). Total dissolved solids and (d). Turbidity, and (e). Bacterial analysis shall be conducted yearly.

4.2.17 All on-site transportation equipment shall be maintained in safe and proper working condition at all times. Regular inspection and maintenance records must be maintained and kept at the facility. In cases where valid fitness certificates are required, they must be obtained and renewed annually, in accordance with applicable regulations.

4.2.18 The facility and its premises shall be kept free from biological nuisances such as dangerous reptiles and insects.

4.2.19 Cautionary and safety notices regarding the use of facilities must be clearly displayed.

4.3 Housekeeping

4.3.1 A well-ventilated linen room with adequate storage facilities shall be available, providing sufficient stocks of bedroom linen, restaurant linen, and staff uniforms.

4.3.2 The washing process (either in-house or outsourced) of the linen and staff uniforms shall be capable of removing all odours and traces of used products effectively.

4.3.3 The housekeeping shall keep the premises clean, tidy and hygienic at all times.

4.4 Maintenance and Usage of Equipment

4.4.1 Each area of the facility shall be equipped with suitable and appropriate tools and operational equipment necessary for the efficient and professional delivery of services.

4.4.2 All specialised equipment shall be used and maintained following the supplier's manual and kept in good operational condition.

4.4.3 Any equipment used by clients shall have instructions for its safe usage displayed.

4.4.4 Mats, props, mirrors, and sound systems shall be available where needed.

4.4.5 All tools and equipment are regularly cleaned, disinfected, and maintained.

4.4.6 Electrical appliances checked for safety compliance.

4.5 Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

4.5.1 Use of biodegradable, organic, and locally sourced materials where possible (e.g., herbal products, linens).

4.5.2 Waste segregation and recycling must be implemented.

4.5.3 Water conservation measures (e.g., low-flow showers, greywater systems) should be encouraged.

4.5.4 Notifying guests of environmental awareness through proper signage, leaflets (containing advice, instructions and guidelines) and other methods.

4.5.5 Garbage should be sorted in lidded bins until they are removed regularly.

4.5.6 Degradable and recyclable waste should be disposed of separately in a proper manner.

4.5.7 A liquid waste treatment and disposal system shall be in place.

4.5.8 Usage of Renewable energy resources and/ energy conservation measures shall be introduced.

4.6 Premises Management

4.6.1 Top management shall have and adhere to a professional code of conduct in keeping with standard practices applicable to the overall management of the wellness facility.

4.6.2 Top management of the wellness facility shall appoint a Manager to ensure that the services fulfil the agreed quality levels described in this standard.

4.6.3 The number of staff appropriate to and in keeping with the commonly accepted business practices shall be employed.

4.6.4 Appropriate organisational structure shall be made available

4.6.5 Documentation on human resources, such as personal files, job descriptions, staff agreements, staff remuneration policy, etc., shall be made available.

4.6.6 Every facility shall obtain a certificate/license as applicable to operate from the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, and a copy shall be displayed in a conspicuous place.

APPENDIX :

APPENDIX – A

INDICATIVE TYPES OF MINDFUL & SPIRITUAL WELLNESS EXPERIENCES

NOTE: The mindful and spiritual wellness experiences, treatments, and programmes listed below are provided solely as indicative examples.

1. Mindfulness, Spirituality and Inner Peace

- Meditation (guided or self-practice)
- Buddhist and other religious spiritual practices
- Temple rituals (including blessings, chanting, etc.)
- Silent retreats
- Spiritual counselling (intuitive guiding)

2. Movement Therapies and Body Practices

- Yoga (group, private, and teacher training)
- Angampora (indigenous martial art)
- Tai Chi and other country-of-origin martial arts
- Dance therapy/Zumba
- Music therapy
- Pilates
- Hot or cold-water baths

3. Energy and Healing Practices

- Reiki and other types of healing, viz Karuna, Angelic, Pranic, etc.
- Crystal healing
- Chakra balancing & alignment
- Sound healing (Singing bowls/Tibetan, Gongs, Tuning forks, Chants/mantras, Didgeridoos, sound bath, classic music therapy etc.)
- Palm reading & astrology
- Subliminal/therapeutic music

4. Eco-Wellness and Nature-Based Healing

- Forest walks/bathing (Shinrin-yoku style)
- Beach healing rituals
- Tea-country retreats
- Sleep tourism
- Slow tourism and Cittaslow lifestyles
- Hot mineral spring bath (Balneotherapy)
- Nature immersion and organic farming experiences

5. Wellness Cuisine and Nutrition

- Wellness-based dietetics
- Farm-to-table or organic cuisine experiences

6. Expressive and Creative Therapies

- Expressive arts (painting, dance, writing)
- Mandala creation or mindful colouring

7. Social and Cultural Wellness

- Community-based wellness programs
- Volunteering or service retreats
- Pet therapy
- Village immersion experiences
- Digital Detox: Escaping technology as part of healing
- Wellness Education: Short courses on wellness lifestyle awareness and education for visitors.

APPENDIX – B

A. Water quality standards for natural water pools (Table 1 and Table 2)

Table 1: Physio-chemical water quality parameters for natural pools

Parameter	Acceptable levels
pH	7-8.5 (ideal 8.3-8.5)
Total Alkalinity	80-120 ppm
Total Phosphorous	<0.03 ppm
Total Nitrogen	<0.4 ppm
Dissolved Oxygen	5.0-8.0 ppm
Calcium Hardness	150-400 ppm
Electrical Conductivity	< 1000 μ S/cm

Table 2: Biological water quality requirements for natural pools

Parameter	Frequency	Acceptable levels	Critical levels
Total Coliform (TC)	Monthly or as necessary	≤ 500 MPN/100m1	≤ 1600 MPN/100m1

Faecal Coliform (FC)	Monthly or as necessary	<100MPN/100ml	≤400 MPN/100ml
Faecal Streptococci (an alternative to FC)	Monthly or as necessary	≤40 MPN/100ml	≤200 MPN/100ml
pH	Monthly or as necessary	8-9	<4, >12
Colour	Annually or as necessary	No abnormal change in colour	NE

NB: NE – None Established

MPN – Most Probable Number

B. Water quality standards for saltwater pools (Table 3 and Table 4)

Table 3: Physico-chemical water quality parameters for saltwater pools

Parameter	Acceptable limits
PH	7.4 to 7.6
Total Alkalinity	80-120 ppm
Calcium Hardness	200-400 ppm
Free Chlorine	2-4 ppm
Combined chlorine	<0.4 ppm
Cyanuric acid	20–50 ppm (for outdoor pools)
Temperature	78–82°F
Total dissolved solids (TDS)	500–2500 ppm

Table 4: Biological water quality parameters for saltwater pools

Parameter	Frequency	Acceptable levels
Total Coliform (TC)	Monthly or as necessary	<1.1 MPN/100ml
Faecal Coliform (FC)	Monthly or as necessary	<1.1 MPN/100ml
Faecal Streptococci	Monthly or as necessary	<1.1 MPN/100ml

END