

# Sangha safety/security guidelines

*This document offers essential guidance to help Sanghas create safe, welcoming, and well-organized spaces—both in person and online.*

## 1. Getting Started

**Safeguarding:** All Sanghas are asked to read and follow the safeguarding documents available at [PVUK](#) website.

**Starting a Sangha:** Please refer to the guidelines for starting a Sangha, available from both [PVUK](#) website and [Plumline](#).

**Registering Your Sangha:** For details on registering your Sangha, see the guidance on the [PVUK website](#). If you have any questions, send an email to [Plum Village UK uk sangha co-ordinator](mailto:PlumVillageUK.uk.sangha.co-ordinator)

**Growing Your Sangha:** Guidance on how to grow your Sangha is also available on the [PVUK website](#). Likewise there is guidance available for facilitators, see [Plumline](#) website.

**Using Zoom for Online Meetings:** Please follow the best practices for online meetings outlined on the [Plumline website](#).

## 2. Welcoming and Onboarding

### Onboarding Process

Each Sangha is encouraged to create a short leaflet that includes:

- A brief history of the Sangha
- Dates and times of meetings
- Key contact information
- References to related resources (PVUK, Plumline, PVApp, etc.)

This can serve both as an onboarding guide for newcomers and a publicity tool at events.

### Facilitator Training

As well as the guidance on Plumline, there are occasional workshops for facilitators organised by Plum Village UK.

### Safe Positions for Meditating

New members may feel they need to stay very still during meditation, even if it causes discomfort. Facilitators should reassure them that comfort is most important—they can shift position if needed.

## Psychological Safety in Meditation

The practice may also sometimes feel overwhelming. As a Sangha, we can support each other by sharing trauma-informed practices and resources. Overwhelm can arise for both new and experienced practitioners. These practices can support us both during Sangha gatherings and in our personal practice at home. In this way, we create a safe and caring space, and we strengthen resilience for ourselves and our community.

Trauma can deeply affect our nervous system, leaving us feeling unsettled or dysregulated. In those moments, sitting still with a quiet mind might not feel possible - or may even create more discomfort than ease. That's okay. Mindfulness doesn't have to look only like sitting meditation. We can also find peace, ease, and freedom through other practices - like walking, gentle movement, or choosing a different anchor for our attention.

[EMBRACE Sangha](#) has created resources to support a trauma-informed approach to mindfulness.

We recommend that all Sangha facilitators watch the Trauma-Informed Training offered by EMBRACE Sangha, which you can find [here](#).

## 3. Venue Protocols

### If Meeting in a Private Home

The host may wish to inform newcomers in advance about:

- Parking arrangements
- Accessibility
- Presence of pets or other relevant details

### If Meeting in a Hired Hall

Ensure new attendees are aware of any venue-specific procedures, e.g. fire exits. If contributions toward venue hire are invited, it's useful to appoint one person to manage the money pot or card machine.

## 4. Online Communication Practices

### Sending Group Emails

When sending emails to the Sangha mailing list, always use **BCC (blind carbon copy)** to protect everyone's email privacy. This helps reduce the risk of exposing addresses in case of a security breach.

## Email Address for Public Listings

Each Sangha should create a **dedicated email address** (not linked to an individual's personal account) for use on the PVUK and Plumline websites. Ensure this account has **two-factor authentication (2FA)** enabled.

## Online Communication Guidance: WhatsApp Groups and Newsletters

Some Sanghas use tools to communicate with their members, however some people may not have access to the chosen tool. For example, some may choose not to use Facebook or WhatsApp for ethical reasons. There are other tools such as [Signal](#) worth considering.

## 5. Data and Account Security

### Membership List

If a membership list is maintained, **do not** distribute the list via email. It should:

- Be stored securely in a cloud service (e.g. Google Drive)
- Be protected with a strong password and 2FA
- Be accessible to only one designated person

### Event Booking Accounts

If using an online system for booking events:

- Decide who needs access to the account
- Use strong, unique passwords
- Consider who should see lists of event attendees

## 6. Facilitating and Online Meetings

### Facilitating

Refer to the guidelines on the [Plumline](#) website and/or read the [Manual of practice](#) and [Bell Guide](#) on PVUK website. It is good practice to :

- Have multiple trained facilitators and rotate facilitators regularly
- Be cautious when choosing video clips - verify sources to avoid AI-generated misinformation

### Online Meetings : Tech Hosting

It is essential to appoint a **separate tech host** to:

- Admit participants
- Remove any unauthorized attendees (including AI bots or spammers)
- Monitor chat and screen sharing