

Dhamma Mahāvana
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Walking area of Dhamma Mahāvana

Dhamma Mahāvana, meaning ‘The Great Forest of Dhamma’, is situated on a large forested property with groves of oak, pine, cedar, and manzanita in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, at an elevation of 2,800 feet. Located four hours from the San Francisco Bay Area, about five hours from Los Angeles and 30 minutes south of Yosemite National Park, the Centre is in the Sierra foothills south of Yosemite.

While the Centre property spreads across 109 acres in the rural mountain community of North Fork, a smaller area is marked off for use during courses. The Dhamma hall, which can seat 128 students, sits on a hill at the back of the property. Various types of residences house students. Sometimes tents are used, particularly in summer. Currently there are indoor sleeping accommodations for 60 female and 53 male students, plus space for ten male and ten female servers.

The Centre was established in 1991 and offers about twenty 10-day courses, two Satipaṭṭhāna courses, one 20-day course, three children’s or teenagers’ courses, and several 3-day old student courses each year.

Garden carts are used to help transport students' luggage from the parking lot to the student residences. Scenic trails lead students from the dining area to the residential areas and the meditation hall.

The next phase of development, expected to begin in late 2005, is the construction of a pagoda with at least 60 cells and a second meditation hall for 40 students. With the completion of the pagoda, 30-day courses will be offered. Of three new residential buildings at Dhamma Mahāvana, two will be used for male students and the third will be used for females. Each building has one bathroom equipped for handicapped accessibility.