

FOR ALL HELPERS TO READ

"I'm Ready to Retire": How to Become an Honorary Helper

Many helpers have done years of good service in Subud. Their work has included talking with and opening people interested in Subud, talking and testing with members, doing special latihans when necessary, supporting their center committee, and helping to coordinate kejiwaan (inner-directed) gatherings. Now, because they are getting older or are in poor health, these helpers may need to become less active and retire from performing these functions. Instead of withdrawing without recognition, we wish to acknowledge our appreciation for their years of active service with a letter and certificate.

If the need arises or if the honorary helper's health improves, and the honorary helper is willing, they may be re-appointed as an active helper (see procedure below).

Bapak has set the following guidelines concerning the designation of honorary helper in a letter (No. 4309/74) dated November 4, 1974.

“The term ‘honorary helper’ for a helper who is no longer active, only applies to someone who was formally very active in Subud and who has carried out [his or] her duties as a helper fully and conscientiously. The reason for [his or] her resignation would be because of old age or because [his or] her health does not allow [him or] her to carry out [his or] her functions any longer.

“It is a different matter for a helper who has never really been active; [his or] her resignation cannot then be placed in the category of ‘honorary helpers’ because the purpose of having that category is so that a helper may be recognized and honored for the services [he or] she has rendered to the development of the Subud brotherhood.”

Although many are aware of the procedures for requesting that someone be made an honorary helper, there are always new helpers who may not be familiar with them. Even for those who know, it may be helpful to have a reminder.

PROCEDURE:

First, a helper voluntarily decides to retire after years of active service. Normally, the local helpers, with the agreement of the helper applying, send a letter to the regional helpers with the reasons for the request and the recommendation that this helper be made an honorary helper. (In the case of isolated helpers, the regional helpers write the letter.) The regional helpers approve and forward the letter to the national helpers who then approve and forward the name and recommendation to the international helpers for approval. The changed status is recorded in the international office in Cilandak.

Although honorary helpers are no longer required to carry out the numerous helper duties, they are still welcome at helper gatherings and latihans. In most cases, the honorary helper would not return to active service, but would fill in when needed, for example timing a latihan. They may, if they wish, be re-appointed as helpers if they are prepared to be active again. However, being an honorary helper is not the same as the helper who asks to become inactive for a period of time or the helper who, through testing, is shown that being inactive at a certain time is the proper course. It is, instead, recognition of active service and a helper's retirement from that service.

Hopefully, this information is useful to you. Perhaps it will remind those who wish to retire that they can do so with honor and appreciation. We have prepared a letter and a certificate, and perhaps the local group would like to celebrate the event in a bigger way (an “honorary dinner”, for example).

From The National Helpers

Questions? Contact the National office and we'll point you to the relevant helpers.

425-643-1904 or e-mail subudusa@subudusa.org