



# Participants Handbook

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## **General Information**

Prior to acceptance to volunteer with an Always On Mission Team, the following forms need to be submitted at least 90 days prior to your departure date:

- ❖ **Volunteer Application Form**— all volunteers are required to complete the application. Our Director of Missions will review the application. Acceptance of your application is at the discretion of Always On Mission.
- ❖ **Background check** - All volunteers are required to fill out a background check to travel with Always On Mission (No exceptions). This form will be made available to you electronically by our recruiting team in advance and must be completed. If there are questions or concerns about your background check, you will be contacted.
- ❖ **Release of Liability Form** – this form needs be signed and submitted before departure.
- ❖ **A copy of your passport** – your passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond your anticipated return date.
- ❖ **All Fees** - must be paid by check or money order by set times and dates. The fee will cover the following:
  - airfare
  - lodging
  - transportation to and from the airport
  - food - three meals per day will be provided
  - clean drinking water
  - translation services
  - travel insurance

You are also responsible for the following:

- ❖ A negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of departure date
- ❖ At this time, all team members must be full vaccinated for COVID-19.
- ❖ Your own meals in the airports
- ❖ Registration with the US Embassy before your departure is strongly recommended.
- ❖ You can see recommended vaccines by accessing the CDC website at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

## Personal Conduct

- ❖ Dress code - Dress modestly, and attempt to gain understanding of what is acceptable and not acceptable to the people you will be working with so that you can comply with their standards of appropriate attire.
  - **NO** miniskirts, **NO** shorts, **NO** sleeveless shirts or low cut shirts. Sleeping attire should also be modest and conservative, including nothing revealing. Our desire is to represent the God we serve well and appropriately.
- ❖ Alcohol, tobacco, drugs and foul language - There will be no consumption of alcoholic beverages or the use of drugs during your stay. Any infraction in this area is grounds for immediate dismissal, at your own expense. Please refrain from use of foul language or language that might be misinterpreted negatively.
- ❖ Male and Female boundaries - everyone must use exercise judgement when interacting with opposite sex volunteers, nationals.
- ❖ Please refrain from any activity that could be construed as a romantic interest toward a national. Certain activities that seem acceptable in your own culture may be inappropriate in others.
- ❖ Correction - There may come a time where the team leader will provide correction or feedback to you. Please keep an open mind and be willing to receive it. It will always be done humbly and in love.
- ❖ Cultural Sensitivity - This is a process that requires awareness and commitment on your part. It is not an end product that occurs after pre-trip meetings but is an active process of learning and practicing over time. When you work with different ethnic and cultural groups, you may practice cultural sensitivity by...
  - Developing a cultural awareness that includes recognizing the value of the people's diversity. It also includes an honest assessment of one's biases and stereotypes. Acquiring knowledge of the culture you will be visiting during your trip. It is important to understand other cultures including their norms, values worldviews, and the practicality of their everyday life.
  - Developing your cross-cultural skills. Do not assume that ethnic and cultural differences are insignificant.
  - Develop your skills through interaction and experience in the field.
  - Following directions - Please do not question the leader when given instructions. There may be times when we will need to react quickly to keep the entire group safe.
  - Taking pictures is a great way to capture memories of the trip, however, you must ask permission and remain sensitive to the foreign nationals and respect their privacy.
  - Never give money to a foreign national. If the Lord wants you to bless someone discuss it with you team leader.
  - This is a time to disconnect from technology, please refrain from cellular phone use during the outreaches and group devotionals.
- ❖ Sleeping arrangements - Women and men will be sleeping in different areas, there may be an exception for married couples at the discretion of the team leaders.
- ❖ Undressing - Please change in the bathroom.

## Eat and drink safely

Unclean food and water can cause travelers' diarrhea and other diseases. Reduce your risk by sticking to safe food and water habits.

- ❖ **Eat** - Food that is cooked
  - Only fruits and vegetables you have washed in clean water or peeled yourself
- ❖ **Don't Eat**
  - Food from street vendors
  - Raw or soft-cooked (runny) eggs
  - Raw or undercooked (rare) meat or fish
  - Unwashed or unpeeled raw fruits and vegetables
  - Unpasteurized dairy products
- ❖ **Drink**
  - Bottled water that is sealed
  - Water that has been disinfected
  - Ice made with bottled or disinfected water
  - Carbonated drinks
  - Hot coffee or tea
- ❖ **Don't Drink**
  - Tap or well water
  - Ice made with tap or well water
  - Drinks made with tap or well water (such as reconstituted juice)
  - Unpasteurized milk

## Take Medicine

Talk with your doctor about taking prescription or over-the-counter drugs with you on your trip in case you get sick.

- ❖ You may want to ask your doctor for Ciprofloxacin an antibiotic used to treat a number of bacterial infections as well as traveler's diarrhea.

## Information on doing mission work or disaster relief

A natural disaster may contaminate food and water sources. Make sure to eat and drink only things that have come from a reliable source.

## Prevent bug bites

Bugs (like mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas) can spread a number of diseases. Many of these diseases cannot be prevented with a vaccine or medicine. You can reduce your risk by taking steps to prevent bug bites.

### ❖ What can I do to prevent bug bites?

- Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats.
- Use an appropriate insect repellent (see below).
- Use permethrin-treated clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents).
- Do **not** use permethrin directly on skin.
- Use a bed net if the area where you are sleeping is exposed to the outdoors.

### ❖ What type of insect repellent should I use?

- **For PROTECTION AGAINST TICKS AND MOSQUITOES:** Use a repellent that contains 20% or more **DEET** for protection that lasts up to several hours.
- **FOR PROTECTION AGAINST MOSQUITOES ONLY:** Products with one of the following active ingredients can also help prevent mosquito bites. Higher percentages of active ingredient provide longer protection.
  - ✓ DEET
  - ✓ Picaridin (also known as KBR 3023, Bayrepel, and icaridin)
  - ✓ Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or PMD
  - ✓ IR3535
  - ✓ Always use insect repellent as directed.

### ❖ What should I do if I am bitten by bugs?

- Cleanse the area with soap and water.
- Avoid scratching bug bites and apply hydrocortisone cream or calamine lotion to reduce the itching.
- Check your entire body for ticks after outdoor activity. Be sure to remove ticks properly.

## Reduce your exposure to germs

Follow these tips to avoid getting sick or spreading illness to others while traveling:

- ❖ Wash your hands often, especially before eating.
- ❖ If soap and water aren't available, clean hands with hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol).
- ❖ Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. If you need to touch your face, make sure your hands are clean.
- ❖ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- ❖ Try to avoid contact with people who are sick.
- ❖ If you are sick, stay in your housing area, unless you need medical care.

## Stay safe outdoors

Take these steps to stay safe and healthy during your trip.

- ❖ Stay alert to changing weather conditions and adjust your plans if conditions become unsafe.
- ❖ Prepare for activities by wearing the right clothes and packing protective items, such as bug spray, sunscreen, and a basic first aid kit.
- ❖ Consider learning basic first aid and CPR before travel. Bring a travel health kit with items appropriate for your activities.
- ❖ Heat-related illness, such as heat stroke, can be deadly. Eat and drink regularly, wear loose and lightweight clothing, and limit physical activity during high temperatures.
  - If you are outside for many hours in heat, eat salty snacks and drink water to stay hydrated and replace salt lost through sweating.
- ❖ Protect yourself from UV radiation: use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15, wear protective clothing, and seek shade during the hottest time of day (10 a.m.–4 p.m.).
- ❖ Be especially careful during summer months and at high elevation. Because sunlight reflects off snow, sand, and water, sun exposure may be increased.
- ❖ Very cold temperatures can be dangerous. Dress in layers and cover heads, hands, and feet properly if you are visiting a cold location.
- ❖ **Stay safe around water**
  - Swim only in designated swimming areas.
  - Do not swim in freshwater in developing areas or where sanitation is poor.
  - Avoid swallowing water when swimming. Untreated water can carry germs that make you sick.

## Maintain Personal Security

Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would at home, and always stay alert and aware of your surroundings.

- ❖ **Before you leave**
  - Research your destination(s), including local laws, customs, and culture.
  - Monitor travel warnings and alerts and read travel [tips](#) from the US Department of State.
  - Enroll in the **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)**.
  - Leave a copy of your itinerary, contact information, credit cards, and passport with someone at home.
  - Pack as light as possible and leave at home any item you could not replace.
- ❖ **While at your destination(s)**
  - Carry contact information for the nearest US embassy or consulate.
  - Carry a photocopy of your passport and entry stamp; leave the actual passport securely in your hotel.
  - Follow all local laws and social customs.
  - Do not wear expensive clothing or jewelry.

### Important Note

Carry contact information for a person who can be notified in an emergency.

## Healthy Travel Packing List

### **Pack items for your health and safety.**

You may not be able to purchase and pack all of these items; you need to decide which items are most important for you. Also keep in mind this list is general and may not include all the items you need. Remember to pack extras of important health supplies and medications in case of travel delays.

- Bug Spray
- Sun Block
- Flip Flops
- Mosquito Net
- Hand Sanitizer
- Wipes
- Flashlight
- Bible
- Raincoat/Poncho
- Toiletries 3 ounces or less
- N-95 Respirator
- Goggles – Eye Protection
- Hat – The sun is hot
- Trash bag for dirty laundry
- Clothing for warm humid weather
- Sweater or sweatshirt, it can be chilly in the morning
- Work Gloves
- Boots or Hiking Shoes
- Water Bottle
- Snacks – Cliff bars, tuna fish, peanut butter etc.
- Personal Medications (team leader brings a first aid kit)
- Journal and writing Instrument
- Money for shopping and airport meals
- Passport (cannot expire within 6 months of travel)- put a copy in your backpack and carry-on
- Vaccination Record
- Tetanus shot - mandatory
- Hepatitis shots – optional
- Malaria Pills – optional
- Typhoid – optional

**EVERYTHING MUST FIT INTO YOUR CARRY-ON BAG!**