



## Information for Mission Teams

Serving on a mission trip is such a life changing experience and we know that you will greatly enjoy your time here with us. Guatemala is a beautiful country with some of the most open hearted people in Central America. While much of the landscape is breathtaking, there are many areas stricken with poverty and despair. Your service here is greatly needed and appreciated.

Our goal here at Hands of Hope International is to partner with you to ensure you are able to make the most of your trip. We will connect you with particular areas that need assistance in multiple ways that you feel called to help. Your team will provide an important role in sharing the love and hope of Jesus Christ.

The purpose is simple, but the impact is huge! We want to help meet needs - to build relationships - for an opportunity to share the gospel. The core of our efforts is to make sure that everyone is introduced to who Jesus is by serving one another.

Below is some basic information that will help your team pray and prepare.

### Fun Facts about Guatemala:

- Guatemala City is the largest city in Central America
- Produces some of the most amazing coffee in the world
- Has 37 volcanoes with 3 currently active (Fuego, Pacaya and Santiagutio)
- Almost 25% of Guatemalans live on less than \$1.25 a day

### 'LHL' Mountain Retreat Center:

- Team Lodging is hosted at the ‘Live Him Loud’ Retreat Center on the beautiful mountain side of San Bartolome. The center consists of two lower level bunk rooms (that can comfortably sleep up to 18 people each) with separate bathrooms, a spacious open main room for group activities/dining/training/etc and a commercial sized kitchen. Whether you are looking out of the window from the main room or the rooftop, you will have amazing views of the mountains, volcanoes and you can even see the city of Antigua. This facility is great for any size group and is very conveniently located near several outreach areas. We are thankful for our friends and ministry partners at Live Him Loud Ministries for allowing us to host teams at this location.

### **Mission Trip Cost:**

An overall 7-8 day mission trip usually will average around \$1,200 per person (does not include Outreach). We have listed some examples of the costs below.

#### **Airline Tickets:**

- Airfare is the most expensive part of the trip. It can average between \$650 - \$900 per round-trip ticket. Some airlines will offer group discounted rates. **\*Groups are responsible for purchasing their own airfare.**

#### **Lodging and Meals:**

- \$25 per person / per night -- includes lodging, 3 meals per day, transportation to and from the airport to Retreat Center. *We will provide the food for your teams but you will be required to cook your own meals each day. When needed, we can help prepare meals on the days that your team is conducting outreach all day.*
- \$10 per person / per night -- includes lodging only at the Retreat Center. *Teams would provide their own food and transportation. We can help coordinate if needed. This option is recommended for local organizations only.*

All lodging costs are donations that help cover the expenses for: bedding, towel usage, laundry access and clean drinking water. *The use of the facility is free.*

#### **International Travel:**

- Passports are required for International travel to any country here in Central America. The paperwork to apply for your Passport can be downloaded online or obtained at your local courthouse. The process usually takes up to 6-8 weeks before you receive it in the mail. Please submit your paperwork early to accommodate for any delays. Check with your local Passport Agency for pricing.

- Travelers are currently required to present a *Negative Covid Test Result* within 72 hours of arrival to enter Guatemala and return to the United States. Most local medical facilities in the US are able to perform the test. You have the option to provide a **PCR** or **Antigen** test result. When traveling to Guatemala, please ensure that your printout contains one of those two **wordings** for the type of test performed. *We will help coordinate your test location here in Guatemala.*
  - Covid testing in the US averages \$150 for PCR test / \$50 for Antigen “Rapid” test.
  - Additional cost of \$40 for an Antigen “Rapid” test here in Guatemala for return to the USA.

*\*Currently, a record of covid vaccination is accepted for entry if the second dose has been administered at least 2 weeks before arriving but a test is still required to return to the US.*

### **Outreach Opportunities:**

Outreaches are at the heart of what we do here in Guatemala. Our goal is to meet the needs of people and build relationships with them so ultimately we will have the opportunity to share the gospel. Here are some different opportunities that your group can participate in. Additional information can be sent to give more detail on the outreaches.

- Stove Installations - \$225 per stove (includes installation labor)
- Food Distribution - \$25 a bag (feeds a family for up to one week)
- Water Filter System - \$45 per system
- Pack ‘Journey Bags’ - \$10 per bag (White Flag Program for those in need)
- Feed the Homeless - \$75 per night
- Provide Single/Bunk Bed - \$180/Single : \$225/Bunk (includes mattresses, sheets and pillow)
- Children Activity Outreach - \$200 (inflatables, cotton candy, games, etc)
- Build a Home - \$4,000-\$6,500 (builds a 2-3 room house)

*\*Average transportation cost per outreach day is around \$100 depending on time and distance traveled.*

While the ministries and Retreat Center continue to grow, so does the list of tasks and chores with the building and property. At no obligation to you and your group, there are construction needs, gardening and clean up that you could help with while on campus. Depending on time and scheduling, your group can participate in projects on campus or assist the neighboring area with different things like picking up trash, small home needs, etc. Just let us know if this is something that you would be interested in doing so we can prepare what is needed.

### **Trip to Antigua:**

- Each group will enjoy a fun day of tourism at Antigua. There are several places to visit here including the “Market”, historical buildings and fine dining. Each person will need some additional spending money for lunch and souvenirs. This cost will differ between groups but averages around \$150 per person.

### **Sample Itinerary:**

Schedules are always able to be adjusted that will meet the needs of each group. Here is a *sample layout* of what a typical 7-8 day trip would look like.

- Day One - Travel Day
- Day Two - Tour San Bartolome / Team Prep Day
- Day Three - Outreach Day
- Day Four - Outreach Day / On-site
- Day Five - Preparation to Leave (team to get covid test completed)
- Day Six - Free Day in Antigua
- Day Seven - Travel Day

We also recommend for group leaders to have Morning and Evening Devotions prepared for the group to participate in. The rooftop offers a great place to have these devos along with a campfire, music, etc.

### **Travel Safety Tips:**

- Always travel in groups of 3 or more.
- Have dedicated chaperones for each group
- Team Coordinator should have a letterhead from church explaining the purpose for group’s travel and also provide an itinerary to each team member
- Each team member should bring a colored copy of their Passport when traveling within the country (all original Passports will be kept in a lock box at Retreat Center)
- Remember to keep personal items like wallet, cell phones, excessive jewelry, etc safe and out of public view when traveling

Thank you for your interest in serving alongside us here in Guatemala. We hope that you find this information very useful and pray for you as you plan and prepare a trip. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any additional questions that you may have.

Blessings,  
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