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mission team handbook: guatemala
Lifeline Christian Mission | Lifeline.org

Welcome Mission Team Member!

Thank you for considering a short-term mission trip with Lifeline Christian Mission. We look forward to serving with you to glorify God.

Preparation begins in your heart long before you arrive at your destination. Get ready, God is going to minister both in you and through you.

We will be praying for you and your group, as you begin to seek God's will and prepare for your short-term mission trip.

Serving Christ,

Keith Dimbath, VP of Missionary Development

Christi Dimbath, Director of Missionary Development

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Preparing for Your Trip

- To schedule a mission trip or check availability, contact Cathi Lester at cathi.lester@lifeline.org or 614-749-0108. Schedule trip dates early as the schedule fills up quickly.
- All **first time team leaders** to Lifeline must communicate with Keith Dimbath, Vice President of Missionary Development, at keith.dimbath@lifeline.org or 614-794-0108, to ensure Lifeline's goals and Team Leader goals harmonize.
- Apply for **passports** early; allow a minimum of 8 weeks for processing. **NOTE:** Those who hold a current passport: **it must be valid at least 6 months** after entry into the country.
- **Minimum age limit:** 12 years old for international trips. Team Leaders may set their own, more restrictive limits.
- We invite you to visit our website, www.Lifeline.org, to learn more about Lifeline Christian Mission.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where will we sleep?

- Accommodations will be at a retreat center in Guatemala city. Men's and women's cabins equipped with bunk beds, showers, sinks and modern restrooms.
- Bedding and towels are provided unless otherwise instructed.

What will we eat and drink?

- Lifeline will provide safe drinking water.
- Breakfast will be at the retreat center. Lunches will be prepared by ladies from the local church, a sack lunch or at a local restaurant. Suppers will be at the retreat center or at local restaurants.
- **Allergies:** Please inform Lifeline in advance as to the nature and severity of any food allergies. Those with more severe allergies, such as gluten or dairy allergies should bring

their own food products to supplement the meals we provide. There is a good possibility of cross contamination (gluten/wheat).

What is my financial contribution?

- Your contribution includes airfare, exit taxes, short-term medical insurance, ground transportation in country, translators, most meals and accommodations in the mission field, some service project costs and program support. Trip contributions are **non-refundable**.
- Once trip dates are confirmed, your team leader will receive a **contract** indicating contribution due dates.
- Lifeline accepts checks and all major credit cards. Applicable fees will apply to credit card transactions.
- If donating by check, the team leader will collect all trip contributions and will send **one check** to Lifeline at each contribution due date.
- **NOTE:** In order for contribution to be tax deductible, do not include team member's name on the Memo line.

Cancellation procedures:

We understand that from time to time a **team member may need to cancel their trip**. Please be advised of the following procedures:

Refunding trip donations: Due to the nature of tax-deductible donations, per IRS policy, Lifeline Christian Mission (LCM) is unable to refund donations made for trip purposes.

Refunding commercial airline ticket: LCM will cancel their tickets and the person will then own said ticket voucher for future use, per airline terms. The person who cancels retains the value of their cancelled ticket in the form of the ticket voucher, not refunded cash.

Rescheduling the cancelling party's trip: LCM will honor the cancelling party's desire to return to Guatemala on a future LCM trip with said ticket, with the trip participant incurring an additional cost of the change fee (up to \$250, as determined by airline), provided the cancelling party travels to Guatemala within one year of the **original ticketing date**. LCM will keep all funds donated for the purpose of the trip, and the traveler will not have to pay another deposit.

Under unique and unusual sets of circumstances, ***Lifeline Christian Mission may need to cancel a trip*** due to political unrest, natural disaster, etc. Should this be necessary, please be advised of the following procedures:

Refunding trip donations: Due to the nature of tax-deductible donations, per IRS policy, Lifeline Christian Mission is unable to refund donations made for trip purposes.

Rescheduling trips: Lifeline Christian Mission will make every effort to reschedule any cancelled trips, in which case team members will not be asked to make any other trip donations. LCM will bring whoever cancelled to Guatemala, using the ticket voucher, within one year of the ticketing date (assuming that is the airline's terms). LCM will keep all funds donated for the purpose of the trip, and the traveler will not have to make another deposit donation.

Refunding commercial airline ticket: If a traveler is unable to make the rescheduled trip date work with his/her schedule, LCM will cancel their ticket and the person will then own said ticket voucher for future use, per airline terms. The person retains the value of their cancelled ticket in the form of the ticket voucher, not refunded cash.

Additional Expenses *not* included in your contribution to Lifeline:

- **Passport and immunization expense.**
- **Flight interruption costs**, such as hotel, meals, tips, etc., during travel to/from the mission or expenses incurred as a result of canceled flights, delays or missed flights for any reason.
- Money for snacks, meals, souvenirs, checked baggage fees and airline tips during travel.
- You may be asked to purchase one meal at a restaurant while in the field.

What should we wear?

Bring seasonally appropriate, modest clothing. Think conservative and comfortable. We want to be sensitive to the local culture, customs and expectations. It can get cool in the evenings.

- Bring enough clothing for the entire trip. Laundry services are not available.
- Do not bring clothing with alcoholic beverage logos, secular band logos or anything that would negatively impact Christian witness

Men:

- Men may wear shorts or jeans for work. No holes in jeans/shorts or exposed underwear. Please no tank tops, muscle shirts or low armhole tanks.
- **Men at church services, Home visits, Bible Studies, etc.:** Men should wear slacks (khakis or jeans) and a collared shirt. No shorts, sleeveless shirts or flip-flops. Nice shoes or sneakers are acceptable.

Ladies:

- Ladies may wear skirts, slacks, jeans or capri length pants (mid-calf length) for work, recreation and shopping. No holes in jeans/capris/etc.
- **Shorts and culottes are not permitted** at any time during the trip except in the dorms or under skirt for work projects. Sleeveless shirts may be worn for work projects. Please no tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, low necklines, low arm holes, exposed underwear, bras or bare midriiffs.
- **Yoga pants, leggings or other tight pants** may **only** be worn under a long tunic top (covers the hips).
- **Ladies at church services, home visits, Bible studies, prayer meeting, etc.:** Dresses, skirts (at least knee length) or nice pants. No sleeveless tops for church services.
- For safety, please keep jewelry to a minimum. Best not to be “flashy.” J

Shoes (both men & women)

- Comfortable walking/work shoes, such as sneakers or work boots for working and walking. Nice shoes for church services.
- Flip flops/shower shoes for in dorms and shower. Flip-flops and sandals are not permitted at the worksites. Never go barefoot.

What is the average temperature?

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
66	67	70	72	72	72	70	71	70	69

What should we bring?

- Airline ticketing information (will be sent to the team leader)
- Bible
- Clothing & shoes (modest apparel; see above for guidelines);
- Devotion (schedule will be in Final Packet)
- Earplugs – there might be a snorer in your dorm J
- Flashlight
- Insect repellent. (Aerosol containers must be packed in checked luggage, per federal aviation regulations.)
- Money:
 - Tips and food at airports on travel days
 - Offering for approximately 1- 2 church services
 - Souvenirs on shopping day in the mission field (Average spent - \$25-\$75)

NOTE: Please bring currency that is clean, no tears or marks. If possible, bring a variety of denominations.

- Passport
- Copy of the first two pages of passport (picture pages)
- Personal medications (pack in carry-on bag)
- Photo ID, such as driver's license (optional)
- Sleepwear
- Snacks for your personal use (optional).
- Sunglasses & sunscreen
- Toiletries (toothbrush, shampoo, etc.)
- Water bottle

Guatemala uses the same electricity as the U.S. No adapter needed.

****Tattoos must be covered at all times.**

**Alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, tobacco, illegal drugs are not permitted at any time during the trip.

What documents are needed?

- **Online application form:** Your team leader has a link to this form. All team members MUST complete ASAP (including returning mission team participants).
- **Passport:** A passport is required. Apply early. **Passport must be valid for at least 6 months after entry into Guatemala.**
- **Copy of passport:** Give a copy of the first two pages (photo pages) to your team leader to be sent to Lifeline.
 - Bring an additional copy of the photo pages to Guatemala with you. Pack passport copy separate from passport.

Parental Consent

- All minors (under age 18) not accompanied by both parents, must have a signed, notarized parental authorization. This document must include parental permission to leave the country and designate an adult on the team to act on behalf of the parents in case of emergency or sickness/accident.

Are immunizations/medications required to travel?

If you have medication you must take regularly or over the counter medications that you prefer, be certain to pack it in your carry-on bag.

There are no immunizations required by Lifeline, the U.S. government or the country of Guatemala. You should consult your personal physician to determine recommendations for your personal health needs.

Recommendations:

The following immunizations should be up to date:

- **Tetanus/Diphtheria:**
- **Measles/Mumps/Rubella**
- **Poliovirus Vaccine**

Oral vaccine for Typhoid: *Optional*

Traveler's Diarrhea (TD) In general, the CDC does not recommend taking antibiotics to prevent TD.

Hepatitis A Vaccine (permanent): *Recommended* for frequent international travelers and health care workers.

Hepatitis B Vaccine: *Recommended for healthcare workers*

What will we do?

- An orientation and review of the schedule will be among your first activities after arriving on the mission field.
- Be flexible! Schedules often change on the mission field.
- **Devotions** - All team members will share a devotion of their choice for one of the daily team devotion times. On larger teams you may be paired with a teammate. Contact your team leader if you need assistance. The devotion schedule will be included in a Final Packet.
- A **Final Information Packet** will be emailed to you approximately 10-14 days prior to your departure. Included will be an activity schedule, devotion schedule, last minute information, etc. If you do not have email access, check with your team leader.
- The focus of the trip is evangelism. There may be opportunities for activities such as VBS/Kids Camp program, sports ministry, home visits, ministry with the Lifeline house churches and some hands on service projects. Teaching opportunities may also be available.

Your team may participate in some of the following ministries:

- **VBS/Kids Camp type program**

If you would like to present a VBS, please contact christi.dimbath@lifeline.org or keith.dimbath@lifeline.org prior to your trip dates.

VBS will be held on one day for approximately 2 hours. Be prepared for approximately 50-100 children, ages 4-14. Come prepared with **crafts, recreation** and a **snack** for the children.

Crafts:

- You must bring all materials needed for the craft (i.e. crayons, glue, paper, scissors, yarn, etc.).

- Crafts should be prepared in advance of going to the mission field (cut out, ready to assemble, individually bagged, etc.). Also, have a few completed "models" of the craft available.

Recreation:

- Plan something simple such as playing ball, relays, parachute, etc. All sports equipment/supplies must be brought with you.

Snacks:

- Healthy, simple snacks. These may be brought with you or purchased in Guatemala City.

- **Preaching**

There may be one opportunity for a trained pastor to bring a message at one of our Christian churches. An outline of the message should be submitted to Keith Dimbath, keith.dimbath@lifeline.org at least two weeks prior to departure date. Although the message will be presented through a translator, the length of the message need not be altered.

- **Teaching**

There are sometimes opportunities for team members to present an encouraging message for a Ladies or Men's Bible study. The devotion will be presented through a translator.

- **Health/Hygiene Related Teaching**

Qualified individuals may have an opportunity to teach subjects such as nutrition, family planning, hygiene, dental hygiene, child and Infant care, avoiding diseases, etc. Please contact us ahead of time if you are prepared and willing to teach. All teaching materials, tools, supplies, etc. must be brought with you.

Mission Procedures & Guidelines

Conduct should honor and glorify Christ. You will be serving as missionaries, representing Jesus Christ, Lifeline Christian Mission and your local church or organization.

- Be flexible!
- Be on time.
- No guys in girl's rooms. No girls in guy's rooms.
- Ladies may wear shorts/PJ's *inside* sleeping room only.
- Men must wear a shirt whenever leaving their room.
- Lifeline will provide bottled water for drinking and brushing teeth.
- Wear shoes at all times (even in sleeping rooms as much as possible).
- Tattoos must be worn at all times except inside the sleeping cabins. They are viewed negatively in Guatemala.
- For safety, do not invite others to the mission campus, into the vehicles or discuss travel schedules, where you are staying, activities, plans, etc. with anyone you may meet.
- No one should ever go off alone.
- Keep jewelry to a minimum so as not to draw attention to yourself.
- Never flash large amounts of money. Only take what you need for that occasion.
- **Currency:** Do not exchange money at the airport or on the street with moneychangers. If needed, we will exchange money for you. **NOTE:** Please bring currency that is clean, no tears or marks. If possible, bring a variety of denominations.
- When you arrive at the retreat center, we will send an email to the contacts listed on your online application informing them of your arrival.
- Personal cell phones may be used for cameras, alarm clock, etc. Phone calls, texts, etc. may be made during free time only, not during the scheduled work day, devotions, meal times, team meetings, ministry times, etc. Avoid using cell phones or other electronic in public areas. Cell phones are a common target for pickpockets/thieves.
- Internet may be available at the retreat center. However, we recommend that you keep internet use to a minimum so that you & your team mates get the full benefit and blessing of the trip.

**** Gift giving:** Giving money or gifts directly to people undermines the sharing of the gospel of Christ and harms the objectives of the program. No cash gifts given to anyone.

- Non-Christians and members of Christian faith backgrounds other than Christian Church/Church of Christ are welcome but must abide by Lifeline's procedures, respect

Lifeline's doctrinal position and do nothing to act contrary to or against the mission beliefs. Our primary objective is to evangelize or enhance the evangelistic work of the church/mission.

- Lifeline reserves the right to refuse participation to those with high-risk health problems or have conducted themselves in an improper manner on a past trip. All participants must be physically and emotionally able to share in the scheduled activities.

Important Phone Numbers

Make note of these phone numbers before travel date.

- **U.S. phone numbers**
 - Lifeline Christian Mission (U.S.): 614-794-0108
(Monday – Friday 9am – 5 pm EDT)
 - Cathi Lester: 614-794-0108
(Monday – Friday 9am – 5 pm EDT)
614-949-8879 (after 5:00 p.m. & weekends)

Travel Information

Travel to the mission field will be via commercial airlines. Lifeline Christian Mission will schedule all airline reservations.

- Contribution deadlines and flight itineraries and terms/conditions of the airline will be sent to your team leader.
- Your Team Leader will receive airline flight itinerary and t-shirts approximately 2 weeks before travel.
- If you do not have a team leader check with Lifeline's Travel Manager, Cathi Lester at cathi.lester@lifeline.org or 614-794-0108.

At the airport

- Each person is permitted two checked bags (50 lbs. each). The airlines will charge a fee for each bag. There are also airline fees for overweight and excess luggage. Lifeline

does not reimburse or pay baggage fees, excess baggage or overweight bags. Check with the airlines or Cathi Lester prior to packing.

- Only one carry-on and one personal item (purse, camera bag, etc.) permitted per person.
- Pack all essential items, personal medicines, and at least one or two changes of clothing in carry-on bag in case some luggage does not arrive on same flight.
- Not all airlines allow us to pre-assign seats, so you may not all sit together. Be flexible.
- For easier identification in baggage claim areas, consider using large, colored tags or ribbons for each bag.
- Keep passports easily accessible on the final flight into Guatemala. The immigration forms for each team member require information from the passport.
- Additional information concerning the entry process into Guatemala will be included in the Final Packet which you will receive approximately 10 days before trip date.
- **If you have flight problems in the US/Canada, please call:**
 - Lifeline Ohio office: phone 614-794-0108
 - Cathi Lester (in Ohio): 614-794-0108 (work) or
after 5 p.m. & weekends: 614-949-8879

Insurance

Most U.S. health care insurance plans do not cover medical care or emergencies outside of the United States. Therefore, Lifeline Christian Mission provides short-term mission trip insurance for you while on your trip.

If you become ill or have an accident during your trip (while travelling outside of the U.S.) which would require you to seek medical attention you must do the following:

1. Pay the bill and get a receipt for the payment.
2. Upon return home, contact the insurance company and obtain a claim form.
3. Submit claim to insurance company.
4. Reimbursement may take up to several months.

If you have difficulty obtaining payment, contact Lifeline's office (Cathi Lester). Coverage period terminates upon return from mission trip.

Lifeline is not responsible for loss suffered due to illness, accident, injury or theft which may occur at any time in relation to your mission trip.

Common Words & Phrases

Thank you	Gracias (<i>GRAH-syas</i>)
You're welcome	De nada (<i>deh NAH-dah</i>)
Yes / No	Si / No
Please	Por favor (<i>pohr-fah-VOHR</i>)
Sorry	Lo siento (<i>loh SYEHN-toh</i>)
OK	OK (<i>OH-keh</i>)
Hello. How are you?	¿Hola. Cómo está?

My name is _____. **Me llamo** _____. (*Meh YAH-mah*)

What's your name? **¿Cómo se llama?** (*KOH-moh she YEH-mah*)

I don't speak Spanish. **No hablo español.**
(*noh AH-bloh ehs-pah-NYOHL*)

I don't understand. **No entiendo.** (*NOH ehn-TYEHN-doh*)

Team Leader's Responsibilities

Provide each team member with:

- **Link** to Lifeline's **Online Application Form**. This form is mandatory for **every participant** for **every trip** taken with Lifeline. You will receive the link to these online forms to share with your team.
- Distribute **Mission Trip Handbook** and review with team members.

Parental Consent

- All minors (under age 18) not accompanied by both parents, **MUST** have a signed, notarized parental authorization. This document must include parental permission to leave the country and designate an adult on the team to act on behalf of the parents in case of emergency or sickness/accident. If needed, contact Cathi Lester at 614-794-0108 or cathi.lester@lifeline.org.

Prepare team members for ministry opportunities in the field such as teaching, presenting a devotional, etc. **NOTE:** If you are combined with other teams, upon request, Cathi (cathi.lester@lifeline.org) can provide you with email addresses of all team leaders so you can discuss and divide the responsibilities.

Oversee pre-field team building, team members' adherence to mission procedures in the field and spiritual oversight.

Debrief team upon returning home to help team members assimilate back into their own culture.

Collect trip contributions and send to Lifeline by the due dates.

- Once trip dates are confirmed, the team leader will receive a voucher indicating contribution amount due dates.
- Lifeline requests that the sending organization (church, campus ministry, college, etc.) be responsible to collect/receive money from the participants, and then send **one tax** to Lifeline at each contribution deadline.
- **NOTE:** In order for contribution to be tax deductible, do not include team member's name on the Memo line.
- **Late Fee:** After the due date, please add \$50 **late fee** per person, per contribution due date.

Contribution Deadlines & Required Forms to be submitted by team leader:

- **Non-refundable deposit:** Due at time of booking trip -\$100.00 per person
- **Contribution #1 and Information Forms:** In order for airline tickets to be secured, all online forms and requested paperwork must be completed and received by Lifeline with the first contribution (Due approximately 140 days prior to trip/travel date).
 - **Copy of participant's passport:** Copy the first two pages (picture page) and mail to Lifeline. **Team members who do not have a passport at the time they sign up for the trip, still need to complete the online forms by the indicated due date and can submit the passport copy to their team leader when it comes in.*

The team leader is responsible to collect and send the passport copies to Lifeline's Westerville office.

- List of team member's names (**complete names as they appear on passport**). Tickets will not be secured for a participant until all forms are on file. Delays may result in higher ticket prices.
- **Contribution #2: Balance due** 60 days prior to trip/travel date. If received after the due date, please add \$50 **late fee** per person.

Anyone wishing to add to the group after the Contribution #1 deadline may do so on a space available basis, subject to any increase in airline ticket cost imposed by the airlines. Full contribution will be due immediately at booking.

- Lifeline includes one **t-shirt** per person and asks team members to wear it on travel days.
- **Coordinate** the collection of all ministry items needed for the trip.
- Submit to Lifeline a list of purchased and/or donated ministry items you will be taking to the mission field. Lifeline must report Gifts in Kind (donated items) to the IRS. Team Leaders may present this information to Lifeline's office in Ohio in advance or to the Lifeline Coordinator in the mission field.

Lifeline's Responsibilities

- **Arranges** all airline travel, in-field transportation, meals, projects and schedules while on the field.
- Provides the **Mission Trip Handbook** which includes information to help you and your team prepare for your mission trip.
- A **Final Information Packet** will be emailed to each team member (approximately 10 to 14 days prior to trip date). This will include a daily activity schedule, devotion schedule and other helpful information. The flight itinerary will be emailed to Team Leader separately.
- **Arranges for short-term medical insurance coverage** for all team members. Information on filing claims is available upon request. Team member is responsible for filing claims.
- **Coordinates** all in-field activities, schedules and work projects.

- **Conducts** an in-field orientation to the mission, community, facilities, staff, projects, culture, and ministries.

Questions?

Travel related questions: Contact Cathi Lester at (cathi.lester@lifeline.org) or 614-794-0108.

Field related questions: Contact Keith or Christi Dimbath at keith.dimbath@lifeline.org; christi.dimbath@lifeline.org or 614-794-0108.

