



missionary ventures  canada

Team Member Handbook

"Carrying the **WORD** to the world through *personal involvement*."

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MISSIONARY VENTURES CANADA

HISTORY

The work began in 1983 when the first teams were sent to Guatemala to assist those living in the squatter camps that had sprung up after the devastating earthquake of 1976. Building on the success of the Guatemalan outreach program, Missionary Ventures has grown into a powerful expression of God's love, now serving persons in more than 40 countries around the world.

Missionary Ventures Canada is a non-profit, interdenominational missions organization that channels resources for the development of churches and ministries to people in need in countries all over the world. We enable the indigenous Christian leaders to establish these ministries in their local communities. One of the ways we enable them is by sending short-term mission teams to work alongside the indigenous Pastors and churches to help in various ways with their ministry."

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personal involvement."

PURPOSE

Embracing the lost and hurting world with the love of Jesus is just as vital as it is to share the message of Jesus. As Jesus spread His hands and was hung on the cross so we spread out hands, one with the love and the other with The Message, to give ourselves over to the hurting world.

The **purpose** of MVC is to be a friend, a helper, and a partner to the indigenous Christian leaders, a church planter, and a facilitator of outreaches of love and compassion.

The **foundational blocks** of MVC's philosophy are that of the two Biblical mandates - The Great Commission and the Great Commandment - are to be personally fulfilled, carried out, and obeyed by every Christian.

MVC's overall **goal** is to help Christian leaders and ministries become self-supporting and reliant directly on the Lord for their provision and guidance. In terms of management, it is important to understand that MVC's philosophy is local responsibility, but always with outside accountability. This principle is to always recognize the management of the person closest to the program of ministry.

MVC's **objective** is to cultivate personal involvement in missions, to facilitate the development of responsible local Christian leadership, and to assist these leaders to develop schools, clinics, churches, orphanages, renutrition centres, and other ministries.

THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT OF FAITH AND ACTION

We stand on the Bible as the divinely inspired Word of God. We believe there is one God, eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We proclaim that a Christian is a person who has come into Salvation and Lordship of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, born of virgin birth, lived a sinless life, performed miracles, died a vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, bodily rose from the dead, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and will personally return in power and glory. We rely on the convicting, guiding, empowering, equipping, indwelling presence and work of the Holy Spirit to bring us into a holy life and a ministry within the church and witness to the world. We teach that Christians will be resurrected along with the lost, yet saved unto the resurrection of life while they that are lost will be resurrected unto eternal judgment. We see the church as the assembly, the community and the fellowship of all Christians.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Documents

- You must have a valid PASSPORT that is not within 6 months of expiry prior to your return otherwise you MUST obtain a new passport.
- Some countries require travel Visa's - We will notify you if this is the case. The cost of each Visa is at the expense of each team member and is not generally included in your trip cost.
- You must have OUT OF COUNTRY MEDICAL INSURANCE coverage. Please send a copy to the MVC office that clearly outlines the policy #, group #, name and carrier and contact information in case of emergency. Check out your place of employment because many employers supply this. Medical insurance can be purchased through MVC as well.
- Cancellation insurance is optional. Contact the MVC office immediately if you would like to purchase this. It must be purchased at the same time the team application is submitted.

Flights and Ground Transportation

Missionary Ventures Canada takes the headache of travel arrangements away from the team. We arrange your flight to and from the country you are going to, as well as any in country flights if required. MVC also arranges all ground transportation within the country. Note: There may be entry or exit tax. This will be outlined in a travel addendum.

Accommodation & Meals

The group will normally be staying in small hotels or mission houses. Meals may be within the hotels or on site. Please see the addendum for details. Either way, the water provided to you will be safe for you to drink and the food will be prepared in the safest manner. You will need to be flexible in this area because we cannot cater to everyone's food preference. It is a good idea to pack a few "meal replacement bars" and some healthy snacks so if you absolutely dislike a meal there is an alternative for you.

Emergency Contacts & Phone Cards

If your family has an emergency and needs to get a hold of you, we advise that they contact the Missionary Ventures office at (519) 824 - 9380 MON - FRI, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. If the emergency is after hours, you may call Sue McDougall (Trips Coordinator) at (519) 546 - 1717. If you cannot reach anyone at these numbers you may call Missionary Ventures USA at (407) 859 - 7322. We advise all team members to purchase international phone cards once you arrive in the country if you plan on making phone calls. The MV staff telephones are not available for international calls.

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

So you've made the commitment to go on a SHORT TERM MISSIONS TRIP. Your heart may be pounding and your head swimming - relax - GOD IS STILL IN CONTROL and you can do this!

Your **spiritual preparation** is essential to your missions trip experience. It will be the most valuable contribution you can make to your team both before and during the missions trip. Taking time for God in prayer and reading His WORD keeps our eyes focused on the whole reason for the mission trip - GOD!

Begin by committing to pray! Please pray for...

- God's will be to accomplished in your life and on the field
- Your team leader (he/she has a big task before them)
- Your fellow team members
- The hosting Field-Coordinator (missionary in the country)
- Team unity
- Your ministry project (what the team will be doing in the country)
- Indigenous people to whom you will minister
- Health and safety
- THANKSGIVING FOR WHAT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED!

Prayer Partners

Missionary Ventures Canada supplies each team leader with prayer cards to distribute to each team member (usually 3 per team member). We strongly encourage each team member to complete these cards personally and give them to individuals who understand the importance of prayer - possibly an intercessory prayer group.

Devotions

Reading God's word provides guidance, comfort and nourishment for our spirit. God transforms us by the power of his word! God's holy word stirs up faith! The principles provide guidance and answers to every issue of life. To develop a Godly character, you must spend time with God in prayer and in His word. Listen to His voice!
THE VOICE OF ONE WHO LOVES YOU AND BELIEVES IN YOU!



PHYSICAL PREPARATION

Physical Expectations

One of the biggest fears for team members is whether they can handle the physical demands of a short-term missions trip experience. It is true that each type of team has the potential to be demanding on you physically. A construction team involves physical labour. A ministry team may involve walking and carrying food, clothing, & crafts, etc. You may be working in a hot room without air conditioning. This is just an overview of what may be required of you physically. Be prepared! Start exercising now!

Immunization

Immunization is a must. Medications required for each country vary depending on the location within the country and the time of year you are traveling. We recommend that you visit your public health clinic. The health unit will have current information. However everyone on every team must be inoculated against:

- Hepatitis A & B
- Tetanus

Other vaccinations may be required. Please see the addendum sheet for more information.

Medical Precautions

- Because a short-term missions trip is just that - SHORT, we strongly encourage team members to take an antibiotic daily during the entire missions trip to help prevent illness. Request a prescription for CIPRO 500 or SEPTRA from your doctor and take one daily on the trip.
- If you question your physical ability to join a missions trip - see your doctor and discuss this with him/her.
- If you are over the age of 65, we strongly advise the approval of your physician. We do have seniors in their 70's and 80's who join teams but they know their limitations.
- Pack a copy of your medical history, list your allergies & blood type. If you have food allergies, please inform your team leader so we can inform the field staff.
- Consider bringing Gravol, Pepto-bismol, Imodium and sleeping pills if you think you may need them. For long flights (anything more than 6 hours) we strongly recommend that you take a sleeping pill when you get onto the plane. This way you can sleep and feel well rested when you arrive.
- Pack all current medications in your carry-on. Due to the airport restrictions (of liquids and gels, etc) be sure you are updated on the restrictions of the airlines with which you will be traveling. If you are unsure as to which airline, check www.aa.com as it is fairly generic.

PACKING

Luggage

The golden rule for packing is "When in doubt leave it out!"

Missionary Ventures Canada highly recommends that team members use two large, lightweight bags in which to pack. Lightweight bags allow team members to fill them to capacity with items to bring into the country. (See "Items for Blessing"). Your carry-on should measure about 9" x 16" x 22" (23cm x 41cm x 57cm). Please pack all your personal luggage in a carry-on bag to maximize the amount of items to leave behind.

The weight limit for each checked bag must NOT exceed 50 lbs (23 KG). **It all depends on the airlines.**

Please ensure that all luggage is tagged with your name, address and phone number. Bring quarters & loonies for luggage carts in the airport.

Clothing

You must dress modestly to remain culturally sensitive and be a good witness. We are guests in a foreign country. Attention to this detail will avoid a negative reflection on the Lord. Women must wear skirts or dresses to church and on home visits.

LADIES - Do NOT bring the following:

- Miniskirts (skirts should be below the knee)
- Midriff tops or short tops showing belly
- Off the shoulder tops
- Tight knit pants or cropped pants including hipsters
- No body piercings - one ear piercing set only please
- No tank tops. All tops should have short sleeves
- No sleeveless dresses

MEN - Do NOT bring the following:

- Clothing that advertises heavy rock bands or alcohol
- Bicycle pants or cutoffs
- Fish net or cutoff shorts
- Tank tops or T-shirts that are cut down the sides
- Pants that hang down below the hips
- Military looking clothes of any kind
- No piercings of any kind - ears included

BOTH - Do NOT bring the following:

- No flashy coloured hair
- Do no bring expensive jewelry (rings, necklaces etc)
- Do not wear expensive watches

CHECKLIST

- Passport (leave a copy at home & another copy in your carry-on)
- Bible, devotional material, journal or notebook and pen
- Women must wear dresses to church and home visits
- Running shoes & sandals (no heels ladies)
- Jacket (waterproof or water repellant) or poncho
- Hat and sunglasses (baseball or sunhat is acceptable)
- Long pants or capri's for women. Shorts must be knee length
- Toiletries (travel size) soap, shampoo, deodorant (airlines allow 3 oz bottles of liquids and gels - must be in original, marked containers and placed in a ziplock bag)
- Toilet paper & kleenex (cannot guarantee places always have it)
- Towel & washcloth
- Hairbrush/ comb
- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Antibiotic wipes or antiseptic gel
- Flashlight and batteries
- Camera or video camera (remember chargers and batteries too!)
- Alarm clock
- Sunscreen & insect repellant (high deet concentration recommended)
- Enough socks & underwear for duration of the trip
- Swimsuit - one piece (no bikinis or speedo's)
- Flipflops for the showers (never go barefoot)
- Modest clothing (not too much -- you can wear things twice!)
- Modest PJ's
- Money belt to wear under clothing
- Earplugs (you will learn to love these)
- Snacks for between meals
- MEDICINE (see page 8)

NOTE: Consider leaving these items as BLESSING ITEMS at the end of your trip. Thank you!

HOW TO BE A BLESSING

Gifts for the People

Have your families or churches help collect these items. They may be new or used but in good shape. Your team leader has the final word on what must be packed. This will be determined by the type of team you are on: Construction teams may need to bring tools. Ministry teams would need ministry items. Medical teams would need to gather medicine. The items listed below are extra items to collect.

Items to consider collecting are:

Bibles, Sunday School material & Christian resource material

School Supplies

pencils, pens, crayons, sharpeners, erasers, paint brushes
 file folders, notepads, stickers, highlighters
 exercise books
 calculators
 scissors, staplers & staples, calculators
 loose leaf paper, construction paper, 3 ring paper
 masking tape, scotch tape, glue
 computers
 skipping ropes, learning toys, sports balls
 pens, crayons, chalk, chalk board brushes, markers

Clothing

ladies clothing (all types and sizes) shoes too
 mens clothing (all types and sizes) shoes too
 children's and infant clothing (all sizes and ages) shoes too

Miscellaneous

toiletries - soap, shampoo, deodorant, razors, etc
 mirrors, brushes, combs, toothbrushes, toothpaste
 sewing kits, blankets, towels
 dishes (plastic), cutlery

Gifts for the Field Coordinator and Family

It is always a joy for our missionaries to receive a blessing from the team that they are hosting. This is entirely up to you. You as a team can consider giving them a monetary gift, purchase something they need or bring individual gifts. Our Field Coordinators are full-time Career Missionaries who are completely self supported. Most of our staff have families who live and work with them on the field. The greatest gift you can bring them is a SERVANTS HEART! PRAYERFULLY CONSIDER THIS.

BEHAVIOUR Policy

Line of Authority

As you are already aware - you have a Team Leader. It is very important that each team member submits to the authority of your Team Leader. They have been trained and accredited to do their job, so they know what MISSIONARY VENTURES CANADA expects from the team. As well it is important to note that everyone, including team leaders, must come under the authority of the MV FIELD COORDINATOR. They live with the indigenous people to whom you will be ministering, so they know what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. Be a blessing and not a burden. Pray for the leader of your team and those on the field.

Conduct

As a member of a missions team, you are expected to maintain the highest level of integrity, honesty and morality. This means that you will behave in a mature manner following Godly principles at all times.

- Be an encouragement. No complaining or gossiping
- Show respect to fellow team members
- Be flexible with everything that happens - schedule, meals, etc
- Be kind and gentle in speech
- Give your best to your team
- Participate in prayer & devotions and your work schedule
- Follow through on your responsibilities, be willing to learn & stretch
- Ask permission before taking pictures
- If you are rooming with fellow team members, turn off the lights
- No romantic involvement with anyone during the trip
- Stay with the group at all times, even if you are 50, get permission

Absolutely NO:

- Illegal drugs
- Consumption of alcohol of any kind during the trip (this means at the airport, in flight or while in the country, including on your day off and coming back)
- Smoking
- Purchase of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco
- Profanity
- Secular music
- Fighting

IMPORTANT: Missionary Ventures Canada reserves the right to send a team member home at their expense if you are unwilling to comply with the above.



Relationships

Be loving and patient with your team members. When you are tired and “out of sorts”, keep quiet and give it to the Lord. Accept His correction. Relationships are too important to injure through thoughtless words and attitudes. If you have a complaint or conflict that cannot be resolved, please bring it in confidence to the Team Leader.

NOTES

Respect the Culture

- Remember that you are a guest of another country. You are the outsider looking in. Be respectful of another persons culture and customs.
- Listen intently to the Field Coordinator hosting your team. Their valuable experience can save you time and anguish.
- Ask questions.
- Don't give money or gifts to anyone. Consult your team leader or field coordinator as to how this can be best done.
- Ask permission before taking pictures of people
- Learn a few greetings in the foreign language; greet nationals in their own language.
- Be polite and discreet. We do not want to do anything to offend or disrespect any nationals and the relationships that have been formed.
- Remember that most non-western cultures have a different perspective of time.



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