

MCC – Short Term Mission Trip Frequently Asked Questions

Q So I need a passport?

A A passport is required by the United States government for entry into the DR. Minors traveling alone, traveling with only one parent, or a third party must present written authorization by the absent parent(s) or legal guardian. This authorization must be notarized.

Q Do I need shots?

A You will need to contact your PCP regarding health questions. MCC requires you to have an updated tetanus, hepatitis and malaria pills.

Q Will I be able to call home?

A There is no public phones at the MGM compound. However, an emergency number is provided in your travel packet. The team will go into town one evening to make phone calls to home. Your call is timed and you will pay with local currency-phone cards do not work. A 10 minute phone call costs approximately \$3-\$5 American dollars.

Q What are the living conditions like in the MGM Compound?

A

- *There is dormitory style housing for 150 people. There are separate living quarters for the men and women. Each dorm area includes bunk beds, showers and toilets.
- *There is a large cafeteria/meeting area. Hot nutritious meals are prepared especially for the Americans. The food and working areas are sanitized many times throughout the day to ensure every one stays healthy.
- *As a precaution, use hand sanitizer often throughout the day and always before eating.
- *Filtered bottled water and ice are provided. Do not drink the tap water or use it to brush your teeth.
- *Conserve water by taking short “Dominican” style showers. Sanitary/septic systems in the DR do not accept toilet paper. Please dispose of all paper products in the waste containers provided.
- *There is an open air chapel on the second floor of the center. We ask that you keep the chapel area quiet for pray and meditation. Please be considerate to those around you.
- *On the second floor of the compound there are several “apartments”. These living areas are privately owned.

House rules will be reviewed upon arrival. In Summary:

- Respect others and the MGM Compound
- Refer all questions or concerns to Mission Leader (Tracey Haire) or Pastor Todd
- Do Not leave the compound without permission from Mission Leader or Pastor Todd
- DO NOT ride or drive a motorcycle or scooter for any reason

Q What is a typical daily schedule?

A 6:30 am Wake-up call
7:15 Devotions
8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Missions
12:00 Lunch
1:00 Missions
5:30 Dinner
7:00 Church service (not every night)
11:00 pm Lights out

Times are subject to change based on circumstances

-Everyone is to attend morning devotions and evening services. If rest is needed you will be able to take a day off during the week.

-Bring your Bible, journal and pen to devotions and church

-Everyone is asked to take a ½ day or full day off to rest, this would also be a good time to journal, meditate and spend some time with God.

Q Is there a dress code?

A We must remember that we are visitors in a foreign country. In many villages the people are accustomed to seeing our group in their American attire and have no problems with our appearance. In some cases, the local churches and villages we visit for missions may take offense to our clothing. For all church services and missions to villages we require modest clothing. The following is what is accepted and what is not:

Men: long dress pants, with collared shirt and dress shoes for church services. All other times, t-shirt and shorts or jeans are acceptable. No tanks, shirts cut up the sides or shirtless.

Women: dresses or skirts below knee with top that have sleeves covering the shoulders for church service. All other times, Capri's, long shorts or skirts with t-shirts or tops with sleeves. No tank tops, cami tops or strapless. No short shorts or minis.

Q Can I leave the MGM Compound? Or leave the group while visiting a village or working in field?

A Do not leave the center without talking to the Mission Leader or Pastor Todd. There are people coming and going for a variety of reasons all day long. If you have a specific need we will gladly do what we can do to help – just let us know.

As far as when we are in the Mission field, we would prefer you not to leave the group. There are times when we can walk around in small groups, but you must let the Mission Leader or Pastor Todd know before you go. If we say no, please respect that answer, there may be reasons unknown to you at the time.

Q What can I expect to see outside the MGM Compound?

A Agriculture is the main source of employment in the DR. Public education is offered in only the largest cities to a small portion of the population. In rural areas only private education is available. Most families cannot afford to send their children to school, which is why the literacy

rate is low. Over 45% of the population cannot read or write. Lack of government, infrastructure (water filtration, sewage, good paying jobs, educational opportunities) all play a part in the extreme poverty you will see in the DR and especially in Haiti. Haitians in the DR face additional racial prejudices. They are considered the lower class and have very few options for education or work. Most Haitians can only find work in the sugar cane fields, even if they were fortunate enough to be educated. So, why do they come to the DR? At its worst, the living conditions and minimal work opportunities are more hopeful than staying in Haiti. The town of Hato Mayor is just a few miles from the compound and we will be ministering to them as well as one of these local villages. We are not only meeting the physical needs of those we come into contact with but we are offering a spiritual renewal, one that will last to eternity.

Q Can I bring things to give away or donate?

A Yes – as long as it fits into your luggage within the weight guidelines. Distribution of candy, clothes, etc. is done in an organized fashion to ensure the safety of the team and the local people. Many times items are left with the local Pastors to distribute to those in need. If you would like to give an item away it must be done in private and right as we are leaving. Please let the team leaders know of your intent, and be patient as to when the best time will be and if it can even be done. If one too many see what you are doing it will cause a “mob” effect. Items that are good to give away: small toys, dolls, matchbox cars, bubbles, baseballs, stuffed animals, school supplies, baby clothes and shoes and ball caps.

Q Why can't I give my e-mail address and telephone number to the interpreters/locals?

A Giving your personal information may give them the wrong impression. Often they feel this is an invitation to call you collect and often. Your information will most likely be passed to others adding to the number of phone calls you will receive. The interpreter's purpose is to translate information to us and for us, all the while seeing your faith in action. (This is explained more in our Code of Conduct)

Q Should I tip? Who should I tip? And how much should I tip?

A At the end of the week we will have a collection for the cooks and the cleaning ladies. The average is \$10. After working closely with an interpreter, some have asked if they can offer them a tip. You can, but know that they are paid by MCC; the average tip is \$5-\$10.

Q Is there a time for fellowship with team members? And will there be a quiet place for personal devotions?

A During the evening there is plenty of time to get together with team members. There always seems to be a game of cards, LCR, pass the pig or group discussions going on somewhere. Please be wary of your personality type and those of others. If you are an introvert, shy or quiet, this is a time to be engaged. Don't wait for people to come to you, step out. If you are an extrovert, forward or talkative, be careful not to wear people out. Be still and listen. Not only are we reaching out to those outside the compound but we are also building a community within. If it is quiet you are looking for the upstairs chapel area is to be a quiet place. If you need a more comfortable area, the living room of the missions house, Rob and Melissa's place, is to be used for prayer and meditation.