

## Volunteer's Check Service Trips with HIM

**Hearts In Motion has made a number of requirements. Returning volunteers in particular, please note changes in highlighted sections.**

**The following information is in regard to short term mission trips, longer term trips see other applicable information.**

### **Forms and Deposit**

All volunteers who are planning to travel on a mission/service trip with Hearts In Motion are REQUIRED to complete:

- **Trip Participant Sign Up Information Form**
- **Liability Release Form**
- **Covid 19 Trip Risk Assessment Form**
- **Health Care Provider Information**—Health Care Professions only

All medical and **allied health personnel** are required to upload, email or fax their Professional License.

A \$600 initial deposit is required. This will go towards the total trip fee.

### **Trip Donation, Sponsorships, Cancellations and Reimbursements**

**The donation for the trip will depend on which mission/service trip you decide to volunteer on. As of January 2023, a 10 day trip fee is \$1250 and a 7 day trip fee is \$1050. This fee covers room and board, in-country transportation, emergency medical insurance, and ongoing program expenses.**

Payment can be made via a check or money order or if you're planning on paying with your credit card, please make sure you go through the Hearts In Motion website or call our office 219-924-2446. If paying through the website, click on Serve, Make Payment and follow the steps. Please note name and trip date in the note section.

If you anticipate sending out letters to subsidize the cost of your trip, you will find a general HIM Financial Support letter under FAQs which could be used along with a personalized cover letter. Please let us know as soon as possible and before you begin your fundraising activities. If your fundraiser generates more than the amount of the trip, there are several options. The additional funds can be kept in an account for you to use for a future trip within one year, be refunded to you to be utilized to cover airline fees or rolled over into our general fund. If you do not travel on a future trip within one year, the excess will automatically be rolled over into the general fund.

### **What to Bring**

Temperatures are around 85 to 95 degrees in Zacapa (hot, not usually quite as humid as Houston). Dress for comfort with maybe an outfit for a special night out. Evenings are pleasant with a breeze, sometimes rain, but never cold. In Antigua, on the other hand, it will be cooler in the evenings, days are pleasant. There is a laundry service at the hotel or HIM House for a small fee so pack light. It is suggested you bring the following:

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- Passport<sup>1</sup>
  - 1 or 2 pairs of long pants for cooler nights and if you are working at a construction site
  - 2 pairs of comfortable shoes
  - 1 or 2 nice outfits for evening activities and R&R days
  - Anti-itch cream
  - Alarm clock
  - Clothes that can get dirty if you are planning on doing construction
  - **Bug repellent** (DEET can melt items in luggage so pack carefully).
  - Camera
  - Diarrhea medicine (you might ask your personal physician for and bring Cipro or other antibiotic.)
  - Fanny pack and/or money belt, and/or daypack (daypack is optional but may be useful in Antigua)
  - Flip-flops or sandals for the pool or around your room
  - Hand sanitizer or hand wipes

- Sunscreen
- Medications or specialty items you need (contact lenses, glasses, etc.)
- Pepto Bismol tablets or chewables
- Personal toiletries (ie. Washcloth, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc)
- Hat, bandanas
- Jacket or sweatshirt; rain poncho, umbrella (optional, but I've needed it in Antigua several times)
- Scrubs if planning on being in surgery
- Shorts and short sleeve, light-weight shirts
- Small Bible (or New Testament) if you are interested in participating in morning prayer time.
- Small flashlight or headlamp
- Sports Water Bottle<sup>2</sup> with a carrier or carabineer
- Sunglasses
- Swimsuit, bath or beach towel
- Travel alarm clock (or cell phone and charger, although you may not have cell phone service in Guatemala<sup>3</sup>)
- If you are a medical provider, please bring a stethoscope and otoscope if possible
- Mask(s) for your personal use and, if possible, extras to share with the Guatemalan people you are working with
- Gloves if you are on a medical/dental/therapy trip for patient contact
- COVID vaccine record

### **Extras/Optional**

- Non-perishable snacks
- There are soft drinks available, but in Guatemala, there are less diet drinks. If you like sweetened, sugar-free beverages, bring individual-size Crystal Light or Gatorade packets to add to bottled water. If you like artificial sweeteners in your coffee, bring some.
- Plan on carrying your camera with you at all times in a fanny pack or pocket.
- Personal facial cleaning cloths or wipes
- Toilet paper or tissue packets (for travel and worksite use; housing has toilet paper)
- A 3 prong to 2 prong adaptor for outlets. Most outlets are only 2-prong. (They have same electrical outlets as U.S.)
- Locks for luggage (for storing your personal items in your suitcase while staying at the hotels)
- Small travel laundry bag with your name on it.
- Work gloves if you plan on working with the construction team.
- If you know services you will be providing, you may bring supplies or equipment needed (battery-operated hand drill for construction; stethoscope for medical personnel; scissors, needles, etc. for seamstresses).

<sup>1</sup> Make 2 copies – 1 for your luggage, 1 to leave at home. *If it will expire within 6 mos. of trip, get it renewed ASAP.* You might email a copy of your passport to yourself, should you need to retrieve it, or copy it onto a memory chip. A valid U.S. passport is required for all U.S. citizens, regardless of age, to enter Guatemala and to depart Guatemala for return to the U.S. A resident of the US who is a citizen of another country should bring their resident visa and paperwork. Also, please make sure to check with the appropriate Embassies on other requirements. While in Guatemala, U.S. citizens should carry a photocopy of their passports, with them at all times. HIM staff will offer to collect original passports for safekeeping in a locked safe during the work week.

## **Leave at Home:**

Nice, valuable jewelry, wedding rings, watches, flashy cameras or computer equipment. Hotels are safe, but you are never to leave anything of value visible to cleaning staff or unattended at a work site.

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## **Other:**

**Minors** under 18 traveling with a valid U.S. passport do not need special permission from their parents to enter or leave Guatemala. If a minor should break any laws or become difficult and uncooperative, they may be sent home early at their parents' expense.

A passport is required to travel to Guatemala. **Passports MUST be valid for 6 months after departure date!!!** U.S. citizens do not need a **visa** for a stay of 90 days or less.

**If you are not a U.S. citizen, please check with the Guatemalan consulate on the requirements to enter the country.**

You do have the option to sign up for the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (formerly known as "Travel Registration" or "Registration with Embassies") to receive the latest travel updates and information to the country you are traveling to. This is not mandatory; however, it would be a good resource. Please see the website for more information:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/step.html>

## **Social Media:**

Please make sure to like Hearts In Motion on Facebook and follow us on Instagram! Also, please feel free to tag HIM and use #heartsinmotion so we can stay connected.

## **Cash for the Trip**

Dollar exchange is around 7.0 quetzals (Q's) to \$1 U.S. You are allowed to bring \$800<sup>4</sup> worth of purchases into the U.S. without paying any duty. After that, they may impose a tax. Shopping is very reasonable in Antigua (R&R time). It has been somewhat challenging to exchange money at banks in Guatemala. The exchange rate at the money exchange windows at the airport is not favorable to travelers. Currently, the easiest way to obtain Guatemalan money is to utilize one of the safe ATMs. Dollars are accepted in Antigua for some activities; however, the bills should be fairly new and in good shape (they may refuse to take well-used or ripped bills). Traveler's checks are not useful other than at the bank or Exchange at the airport. Credit cards can be used in ATMs, nice stores and restaurants in Antigua, but not in the inexpensive markets. Other expenditures will be entrance fees to museums (possible), laundry, and alcoholic beverages.

<sup>2</sup>Fill your water bottle at the departing airport for the 1<sup>st</sup> day's travel. You can refill it each day. This small item will save a lot in \$ to HIM. We can buy 5 gallon jugs for the same cost as a 16 oz. bottle

<sup>3</sup>Cell phone service is unreliable. Bring your cell phone to use as your alarm clock. HIM staff can loan you their phones should you need to call home. (You will be expected to cover the cost of the call.) There will be internet access and staff can let you use their laptops, should you need to send emails home. Antigua has several internet cafes as well.

<sup>4</sup>We recommend not carrying more than \$300 in cash. ATMs are available in Antigua.

## **Vaccinations**

Due to the risk of Covid-19, HIM is highly recommending volunteers to complete the vaccination process for the virus (1 or 2 step and booster). No other shots are required to travel with HIM to Guatemala, but we recommend that you have an updated tetanus shot and Hep A vaccine. We also recommend checking with your family doctor regarding any additional vaccinations that he/she recommends or any other medical advice.

For the protection of those we will be working with, we are suggesting that all volunteers complete a Covid test within 24 hours of travel. Either a PCR or antigen test is acceptable. It can be a home test. If using a home test, please take a photo of the negative result that you can provide to HIM upon request.

## **Packing and Luggage**

Pack your most important items (including medications) and a couple changes of clothing in your carry-on luggage. Most airlines now charge for the first and second checked suitcases. Please check with your airlines regarding specific fees. If Hearts In Motion requires you to check a second piece of luggage of supplies for the trip, we will cover the cost. A receipt will need to be provided.

United, American, Delta and other Airlines will usually permit 1 carry-on bag plus 1 personal item (briefcase, purse, day planner, small laptop computer, camera case, compact disk player or similar sized personal entertainment item) per passenger to be carried on the aircraft under general ticket fees. Please check with your provider regarding possibly more stringent requirements under their "basic" economy plan. The maximum combined linear measurement (L + W + H) of the carry-on bag is 51 inches (130 cm) and no more than 50 lb. Laptop computers must be removed from their cases and placed on the baggage belt at the security checkpoint.

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Airport security requires that **all liquid containers** (including lip gloss, Vaseline, nose spray, eye drops, lotions, etc.) in carry-on baggage be placed in a **quart size Ziploc bag**, and that none of the liquid containers be more than 3.4 oz. This Ziploc bag of liquid containers will go through the x-ray outside of your carry-on so be ready to show it to security personnel. If you have liquid containers larger than 3.4 oz., or more bottles than can be placed in a quart size bag, put them in your checked luggage.

**Note:** No knives of any size or material are allowed past the security checkpoint (including, but not limited to, pocket knives, folding or retractable blades regardless of blade length or composition, box cutters, X-Acto knives, scissors with a pointed tip, straight razors, Leatherman or Swiss Army Knives). If you want to bring special tools or knives to use during the construction project, for example, pack them in your checked luggage.

## **What to expect when arriving into Guatemala City**

When you arrive in Guatemala, gather your luggage, go through customs with your group (if traveling as a group) and exit the first set of doors. A HIM representative wearing a HIM T-shirt will be waiting just outside the first set of exit doors. He/she will escort you to the bus that will bring you to the hotel in Zacapa. Please watch and hold on to your personal belongings while you are at the Guatemalan airport, as stealing is very common. The bus ride to the hotel is between 4-5 hours. We will stop for a bathroom and snack break.

If for some reason that your flight is delayed or do not see the HIM representative, please call our office, Nancy Winiecki, Bert Echeverria or Julie Stevens ASAP so we can make all the necessary changes or notify the correct person. The phone numbers are listed below.

## **Housing Information**

Hearts In Motion is pleased to announce that we have remodeled our facility in Teculután and will now be able to house many of our groups there. Larger groups at this time will be staying at Hotel Atlantico located at Km 126 in Rio Hondo, Zacapa.

At the end of the trip, the group will be staying at one of several hotels in Antigua, Guatemala.

Rooming arrangements will be made for each arriving group. As per HIM policy, unmarried couples will not be roomed together. People wanting or needing their own room may pay an additional fee to secure their own room. Depending upon the size of the group, this may not be possible at the HIM house in Teculután.

## **Trip Rules/Notes for Group (Will be discussed during orientation on 1<sup>st</sup> day)**

## I. GENERAL

- ❖ Remember you are a representative of HIM, so **be respectful** because we are guests in this country.
- ❖ Remember the “F” word: **Be Flexible** – often things do not go as planned.
- ❖ **Be aware of what you say** with Guatemalans around. They may understand more than you think.
- ❖ The septic systems in all of Guatemala can’t handle toilet paper; please **deposit in bathroom waste basket**.
- ❖ Photograph protocol: Always **ask permission** before taking a picture. Be mindful of pictures posted on Facebook.
- ❖ Make no promises and please **don’t give out your contact info** to the Guatemalans.
- ❖ **Don’t give anyone any money**. Have a great experience, but we’re not Santa Claus.
- ❖ If want to do something for someone, **discuss HIM leadership staff** first.
- ❖ Cell phones available with all HIM staff members. We just ask that you pay for the minutes you use.
- ❖ You are an adult, so **act responsibly**.
- ❖ Name tags need to be returned on Thursday night at dinner.
- ❖ **Don’t give kids cell phones** (they run faster than you do)
- ❖ We will pick a trip stats person; he/she will present at end of week.
- ❖ To track pix, **follow & link HIM on Facebook/Instagram**: @HEARTSINMOTION.ORG; #HEARTSINMOTION

## II. HEALTH-SPECIFIC

- ✓ **Don’t use tap water** for any internal use (drinking, brush teeth, etc). Use bottled water or pitcher of pure water in room for internal use. You can **refill your water bottles from the cooler** outside of room #\_\_\_\_\_.
- ✓ Cooked street food is okay if you want a case of diarrhea. **Don’t eat anything that was washed locally**.
- ✓ There are bugs here especially in grass areas. **Use plenty of bug spray**.
- ✓ Expect at least one episode of diarrhea (no extra charge). If you don’t have meds **contact HIM staff immediately**.
- ✓ If you don’t feel well, **tell a HIM staff member as soon as possible**. Don’t be ashamed & try to keep it a secret.
- ✓ Make sure that you have **notified HIM staff of any personal medical needs**. It will be kept confidential

## III. HOUSING-RELATED

- There is **NO hot water** at the hotel.
- **Be mindful of noise**. Guatemalans see Americans as being loud.
- Hotel and HIM House staff **only speak Spanish**.
- At the hotel, the restaurant and desk open at 6am and close at 10pm. Outside lighting is turned off at 11pm. Coffee will be available at the HIM house at \_\_\_ am.
- **Laundry can be taken to the registration desk at the hotel or given to the HIM House manager**. Allow 2 days to return, although it is usually completed within one day. The cost is between Q25 – Q75 (\$3.50 -\$10.00)
- You can **leave tips in your room upon checkout**.
- You can **change money at the hotel front desk** at the current exchange rate (can vary). If staying at the HIM House, the easiest way to obtain Guatemalan money is through a nearby safe ATM.

## IV. FOOD-RELATED

- **Meal menus are pre-selected**, so notify HIM staff if you are a vegetarian, or have other dietary needs.
- All **food at the hotel or HIM House is okay** to eat.
- HIM will pay for all water, sodas, and coffee at the hotel or HIM House. **LIMIT SODAS/WATER BOTTLES TO 3 MAX EACH DAY**.
- At the hotel, you can pay for ice cream & alcoholic drinks either when purchased or charge to your room (pay upon checkout). HIM adheres to the legal drinking age of 21. **If you are under 21 and it is reported you are drinking, you’ll be sent home at your expense**.
- For covered beverages, at the hotel order at bar or take from cooler and tell/show to dining room staff and say “Karen”. If staying at the HIM House, beverages will be available in designated cooler
- **Only take one plate at dinner** since we pay per plate.
- The times for Breakfast & Dinner each day will be announced

## V. SAFETY-RELATED

- If staying at the hotel, keep door locked & don’t leave valuables unattended outside. Know security guard phone # for evening emergency.
- To run/walk outside grounds, **do it in groups of 3 or more with at least one man**. Let HIM staff know.
- Traffic is dangerous; if crossing street, **always look in both directions**.

## **Emergency Numbers (MAKE SURE TO CARRY A COPY WITH YOU)**

Aaron Frazita, IN Office	502-640-0217 (US cell) <sup>5</sup>	<a href="mailto:Aaron@heartsinmotion.org">Aaron@heartsinmotion.org</a>
Bert Echeverria, HIM Field Rep in Guatemala	011-502-4080-0080	<a href="mailto:Berthim78@gmail.com">Berthim78@gmail.com</a>
Nancy Winiecki, HIM staff	011-502-5346-9287 219-741-5947 (US cell)	<a href="mailto:Nwiniecki2002@yahoo.com">Nwiniecki2002@yahoo.com</a>
Yazmin Retana, HIM staff in Guatemala	011-502-3081-2864	<a href="mailto:Yazret21@gmail.com">Yazret21@gmail.com</a>
Monica Rosas, HIM Rep in Guatemala City (speaks English)	011-502-5339-3011 (cell) 011-502-2422-3520 (work) 011-502-2434-5601 (home)	<i>Call if there is an emergency in Guatemala City</i>
Hotel Atlántico, Rio Hondo, Zacapa, Guatemala	011-502-7934-7160	<i>Where we may stay for the work week (Friday to Friday)</i>
Sarah Cabrera (speaks English)	011-502-3169-1302	<i>Call if there is an emergency in Guatemala City</i>
Edgar, Firefighter in Guatemala City	011-502-5770-4902	<i>Call if there is an emergency in Guatemala City</i>
Jorge, Taxi driver (speaks English)	011-502-4521-9234	<i>Call if there is an emergency in Guatemala City</i>
Hearts In Motion, Munster, Indiana	219-924-2446	<a href="mailto:Information@heartsinmotion.org">Information@heartsinmotion.org</a>

\*If there is an emergency while you are traveling or when you arrive into Guatemala, please give one of us a call (start at the top of the list)\*

## **Travel Insurance**

Hearts In Motion requires that all volunteers have emergency medical travel insurance. The cost of emergency medical travel insurance is already included in the trip cost.

We highly recommend the purchase of travel cancellation insurance in case you are not able to travel with us for any reason. For the purchase of travel cancellation insurance, HIM has identified online organizations offering such coverage. Coverage ranges from ticket cancellation to full medical evacuation. Below are links to websites you might consider; there are certainly others:

- [www.missiontripinsurance.com](http://www.missiontripinsurance.com)
- [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com)