

# Orphan's Heart



## Guatemala

*Team Handbook*

- Guatemala is slightly small than the state of **Tennessee**
- The official language is **Spanish** but there are more than 23 officially recognized Amerindian languages
- The population of Guatemala is just over **14,000,000** people
- The capital and largest city is **Guatemala City** (over 1 million)
- Guatemala has a **constitutional democratic republic** form of government
- The major agricultural crops are **sugar, coffee, bananas** and **vegetables**
- Guatemala's main industries are **sugar, textiles, furniture** and **tourism**
- The **average income** in Guatemala is **\$2,800.00 USD**
- **54%** of Guatemalans live below the **poverty line**
- Guatemala won its independence from Spain on **September 15, 1821**
- **50%** of children under the age of 5 suffer from **chronic malnutrition** (one of the highest rates in the world) and in some indigenous areas malnutrition rates can reach **70%**



Orphan's Heart would like to thank you for your heart to serve in Guatemala! We are excited to see how the Lord will work in your life and in your fellow team members' lives not only leading up to your mission trip and while you are serving in Guatemala but also upon your return home. This is an exciting time to be the hands and feet of Christ and be able to serve some of the most amazing children and families in the world!

Included in this handbook you will find useful information to help you prepare and plan for your upcoming mission trip. The requirements set forth in this handbook and any guidelines given by Orphan's Heart staff are designed to be respectful of the Guatemalan culture and must be followed at all times. These rules may cause slight inconveniences to you or your team but your experience in Guatemala will be much more enjoyable and your witness better received by showing respect to those whom we go to serve. If you, or your team, have any questions regarding this material, please do not hesitate to contact our office. Thank you again and we look forward to serving with you soon!

## Orphan's Heart Mission Statement

Our mission is to reach out and provide Christ-centered services to orphans and other children and families in need throughout the developing world in order to meet their physical, spiritual, emotional and medical needs.

## Orphan's Heart Background

Orphan's Heart is the international childcare program established by the Florida Baptist Children's Homes in 2008. Orphan's Heart's mission is to provide for the physical and spiritual needs of orphaned and disadvantaged children in the developing world. Our core strategy focuses on sending short-term mission teams to our priority locations. Since 2008, over **five thousand seven hundred** (5,700) volunteers have traveled with Orphan's Heart providing over **two hundred and forty thousand** (240,000) hours of service to more than **one hundred fifty thousand** (150,000) children. Orphan's Heart understands the importance of working alongside nationals; therefore, we partner with local ministries throughout the world to help improve the level of care for children, improve the safety and security of children and help improve conditions to foster better health and sanitation.

Currently, Orphan's Heart partners and works alongside organizations in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Costa Rica, Colombia, Jamaica, Latvia, Romania, Tanzania, South Africa, Kenya, and Uganda.

## Vision for Guatemala

In 2008, Orphan's Heart partnered with Colonia Infantil, a malnutrition center in San Juan, to help meet the needs of children suffering from malnutrition by providing financial and administrative support and approximately 35 mission teams per year. The Center currently has around 80 children in its care ranging from newborn to 10 years of age. With so many children in its care and in various stages of malnutrition there is much work to be done!

The children in the care of the Center are not true orphans. All of the children have families – their families are simply unable to provide a sufficient amount of food for their children. The Center receives children through court orders,

social workers/medical clinic referrals, and by parents who have heard of the Center by word of mouth and seek its help and care. Once a child is admitted to the Center they undergo a medical evaluation and are placed in a group according to their development or need for special medical attention. Children stay at the Center until they have reached a healthy weight and then are reunited with their families. The Center employs a full time social worker who works with families and provides educational and emotional support so that the cycle of malnutrition does not continue.

## Mission Requirements: Spiritual

### James 1:27

*“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after **orphans** and **widows** in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”*

### Isaiah 58:10

*“... and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the **hungry** and satisfy the needs of the **oppressed**, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.”*

A Spirit led attitude of **SERVICE** and **MINISTRY** is a must for any mission trip. Mission team members must remember to be **FLEXIBLE**, **PATIENT**, and **UNDERSTANDING** at all times while serving. We will be traveling to a developing country – things DO NOT work like they do in America. Please do not expect the same level of comfort, convenience, accommodations, and sanitary conditions as you enjoy and are blessed with at home. We can assure you that things will not operate the same way they do in America, but this is all part of the adventure and blessing of experiencing another culture. An attitude of **PRAYER** and willingness to trust God through all situations and challenges is also essential. Schedules and situations can and will change in a matter of minutes. Through these experiences you will have the opportunity to experience firsthand God at work answering prayers, providing solutions, and opening doors.

## Mission Requirements: Medical

### Existing Medical Conditions

If you have an existing medical condition(s) that is being treated by a physician, you must (1.) notify your treating physician that you will be traveling to Guatemala, (2.) receive permission from your treating physician to travel and (3.) notify your mission team leader and an Orphan's Heart staff member of the condition(s). If the condition(s) is being treated with medication(s), please ensure that you have an adequate supply of medication to last the duration of the trip.

### Potential Medical Conditions

The stress of travel, changes in surrounding environment, lack of sleep, excitement, change of time zone, and increase in physical activity are all factors that have the potential to wear down your body and increase your chances of getting sick while serving abroad. By following a few simple guidelines and paying attention to symptoms, you can greatly reduce your risk of becoming ill due to the following common problems:



### Dehydration

At higher altitudes dehydration can occur faster than you think! This coupled with the amount of energy expended while serving and not making a conscious effort to drink plenty of water can dehydrate you without even realizing it. Signs of dehydration can include (but are not limited to): fatigue, weakness, confusion or fuzzy thinking, inability to concentrate, urine that is bright yellow gold, and salty lips when you lick them. Please **drink plenty of purified water**, especially when working outside. Purified water will be provided by Orphan's Heart at the hotel, Center and during transportation to/from airport.

### Car Sickness

If you suffer from car or motion sickness please let your team leader and an Orphan's Heart representative know and we will make sure you have a seat towards the front of the bus or near a window. Roads in developing countries can be bumpy and full of twists and turns and traffic can be bad. Team members may consider bringing Dramamine (less drowsy) to help with the symptoms of car/motion sickness.

### Allergies

Pollen from unfamiliar flowering plants, dust, and excessive exhaust fumes can aggravate even the best sinuses. If you suffer from allergy problems, please consider bringing a nasal decongestant, antihistamine, or prescribed medicine (after contacting your physician).

### Sun Burn

Please use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher when planning on being outside for an extended period of time.

### Gastrointestinal Illnesses

Most gastrointestinal illnesses in developing countries are due to consumption of contaminated food/drink and failing to religiously wash your hands and use hand sanitizer. As a note, **ALL food and drinks provided to mission teams by/through Orphan's Heart (whether at a hotel, restaurant, or someone's home) will be safe.** Do not consume anything that is not provided to you by/through Orphan's Heart as food and drinks sold at street vendors or other restaurants may contain bacteria and/or parasites. It is a very good idea to bring anti-nausea and anti-diarrheal medicine as a backup or if you have a sensitive system. Lastly, many individuals who do a lot of foreign travel carry a prescription for Ciprofloxacin or Amoxicillin in case they pick up a "bug." These are both prescription antibiotics that are great at treating intestinal bacterial infections. Please talk with your physician to see if one of the prescriptions would be right for you.

### Blood Sugar

If you have issues with your blood sugar and require more frequent meals please bring extra snacks. We will provide breakfast, lunch and dinner but breakfast may be very early in the morning and dinner not until later at night. Be sure to let your mission team leader and an Orphan's Heart representative know if your blood sugar condition is serious.

### Malaria

As mosquitos and other insects are attracted to sweet smells, we discourage the use of perfumes, colognes, excessive hair products and most lotions. By minimizing the use of these products you reduce your risk of being bitten by mosquitos. While malaria is present in some areas of Guatemala, it is not located in Guatemala City, Antigua or in San Juan due to its elevation. For additional information please speak with your health care provider and visit the Center for Disease Control websites relating to international travel:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2014/chapter-3-infectious-diseases-related-to-travel/travel-vaccines-and-malaria-information-by-country>

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/guatemala>

If you have not had Chicken Pox it is highly recommended that you receive the vaccination before the trip.

## Mission Requirements: Dress

### General

With an average high temperature of 72°, Guatemala has the perfect climate! So as you pack, think pleasant weather, casual and comfortable – at the same time though please remember to be **modest**. At the Center you may dress as you would any time you are working with children. Comfortable, closed-toed shoes are a must! Sandals and flip-flops are only allowed for showering and for lounging around the hotel or dorm (if you are staying at the Center.) Shorts\*, revealing tops, sleeveless tops and tight clothing are not appropriate (capris are acceptable at all times.) Wearing modest clothing demonstrates cultural sensitivity and preserves the team's testimony. Remember whom we are representing and the purpose for which we have come. It is also a good idea to avoid military camouflage and excessive, exposed tattoos as they may represent something completely different in another culture. We suggest bringing a light jacket for the cool nights and mornings!

\*Shorts are not acceptable to wear for ministry work at the Center or as we are out in Antigua. Team members are permitted to wear modest shorts while lounging around the hotel or dorm in the evenings.

## Mission Requirements: Safety

### General Information and Safety Tips

Orphan's Heart takes the safety of our teams and team members very seriously. While the crimes committed in Guatemala are the same as anywhere else, following a few basic precautions, exercising some travel common sense, and listening to your team leaders and Orphan's Heart staff can prevent virtually all problems. Remembering things like, "do not carry an excessive amount of cash," "keep doors and windows locked," and "stay in groups in populated areas," will determine whether or not you and your team have a safe, successful mission trip. Here are some additional safety tips for your trip:

- Dress conservatively
- Avoid the appearance of affluence
- Carry the minimum amount of valuables necessary for your trip and plan a place or places to conceal them
- Avoid placing valuable/important items in hand bags and outside pockets which are easy targets for thieves
- Inside pockets and a sturdy shoulder bag with a strap worn across your body are safer
- ALWAYS walk in groups of 3 or more
- Notify your team leader and an Orphan's Heart staff member before leaving the apartment, work site, or group

## Travel Tips

### Medications

Please keep all medicines, vitamins, and supplements you may be bringing with you in their original bottles or weekly pill keepers (as much as possible). An assortment of pills in a plastic bag has a tendency to look suspicious to customs officers. As mentioned earlier, make sure you have an adequate supply of whatever medicines you need for the duration of your trip.

### Passport

While traveling to and from Guatemala you will need your passport on you at all times. Do not put your passport in your checked suitcase while traveling! We recommend that you make a color copy of the inside flap of your passport (the pages with your picture and your signature) and keep it separate from your passport in the event your passport is misplaced or stolen.

### Money

The local currency is the Quetzal – named after the national bird! Exchange rates fluctuate daily, but generally there are about 7.5 Quetzales to the American dollar. **All** of your in-country expenses, including tipping, are covered by Orphan's Heart. The only thing you will need money for is souvenirs. \$100.00 USD is usually enough for team members. If possible, try to bring clean bills (not torn or written on) in smaller denominations.

### Staying At The Hotel

- No adaptors are needed and the outlets are the same as in the United States
- No tipping is required – Orphan's Heart covers all expenses
- Please remember that there are other guests staying at the hotel – please be respectful
- There is free wifi available at the hotel
- Do not flush toilet paper in the toilets (a small trashcan will be located in every bathroom for paper waste)
- Bottled/filtered water will be provided by Orphan's Heart – do not brush your teeth with the tap water
- It is safe to leave important things in your bags in your room (passport, iPad, etc.)

### Staying At The Center

- The current and outlets are the same as in the States – however, if you have a three prong plug you will need a three-to-two prong adaptor
- Wifi is available (the password is [Inf@nt1!\\$\\$](#))
- Do not flush toilet paper in the toilets (a small trashcan will be located in every bathroom stall for paper waste)
- Bottled/filtered water will be provided by Orphan's Heart – do not brush your teeth with the tap water
- There is a boys' dorm and a girls' dorm but there is only one bathroom facility with four bathroom stalls and five shower stalls – a shower schedule will be provided by your team leader
- Bring a robe/cover up and shower sandals for use in the dorms

- Sheets, pillow cases, pillows, blankets and one bath towel are provided but you will need to bring a hand towel and washcloth – if you would like to donate these items to the Center at the end of your stay it would be greatly appreciated
- It is safe to leave things important things in your bags in your room (passport, iPad, etc.)

### Packing and Luggage

Each team member will generally be allowed one (1) fifty (50) pound checked bag. You will also be allowed one carry-on (i.e. a backpack that can fit in an overhead compartment) and one personal item (i.e. a small purse or bag that can fit underneath the seat in front of you). Teams are more than welcome to bring more than one checked bag per person in order to carry supplies to Guatemala. The second checked bag usually costs around \$40.00 USD per bag (depending on the airline) and must also weigh fifty (50) pounds or less. Many times team members' Sunday school classes or Life Groups are willing to help pay this amount to get supplies to missionaries and the local church – do not hesitate to ask! Frequently, team's suitcases are transported on the top of vehicles. This is not the time to bring your brand new, beautiful matching luggage set! Also, make sure your luggage is easily identifiable. Orphan's Heart will be providing bright blue luggage tags to help in this effort. Please make sure you and your fellow team members have the luggage tags on all your checked luggage and carry-on bags!

### Airport

After we arrive in-country, your Orphan's Heart staff member will lead you and the team through immigration, baggage claim and customs. You will need to have your passport, country form (to be provided on the airplane or at the airport\*) and luggage tags (the barcode and sticker provided you when you checked your bag in the United States at the airline counter) ready. As when traveling in the United States, you are not allowed to take pictures while in line for customs or immigration. At baggage claim, there may be gentlemen that want to help with our luggage. We will be handling our own luggage as a team. So if they ask, just say, "No, thank you." Do not worry if bags are searched/x-rayed by customs officers – they are just doing their job. We will not be bringing anything into the country that will pose a cause for concern.

Remember . . . less is better! The less you pack the better! And the less you say during the immigration and customs process the better!

***\* For your customs and immigration forms: The address where you will be staying is "Hotel Soleil, Antigua" if you are staying in Antigua and "Colonia Infantil, San Juan Sacatepequez" if you are staying at the Center. Additionally, you are traveling to Guatemala for "pleasure/tourism."***

### Basic Do's Don'ts

- **DO NOT** give money to anyone!!! If you see a need that you believe should be addressed, please let an Orphan's Heart staff member know.
- **DO** be discreet when taking pictures. Taking pictures of nationals without asking permission is highly offensive. Remember we want to be respectful and maintain our testimony.
- **DO NOT** leave the group without telling your team leader and an Orphan's Heart staff member.
- **DO NOT** leave the hotel of the Center alone.



- **DO NOT** drink the tap water.
- **DO** remember that although English may not be their first language, most Guatemalans understand more English than you think – please be careful about what you say and who you say it in front of!

## Photographs of Children

In an effort to protect the children we serve in every way possible, we ask that mission team members are conscious of the pictures they take of children and post on social media or use in print/media. **Mission team members are prohibited** from taking pictures of children that are not fully clothed (i.e. in diapers or bare chested), using the bathroom (i.e. being potty trained in Guatemala) and/or bathing. Photographs of children's faces and children that are fully dressed are permitted. If you plan on posting pictures of children on social media or in any other type of print/media, **DO NOT** label the photo with the child's name or the city where they are located. For specific questions, please talk with your trip leader.

## What To Bring (General)

- ☐ Cash (small denominations)
- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Color copy of passport
- ☐ Sports Bottles (empty)
- ☐ Single use packets of electrolyte replacement (such as *Gatorade* or *Propel*) or single use packets of drink mix for water (such as lemonade, etc.)
- ☐ Snacks
- ☐ Backpack or small bag to take personal items, water, food, etc. to and from the ministry/construction site
- ☐ Flashlight or head lamp with a few extra batteries
- ☐ Sun block
- ☐ Toiletries
- ☐ Mosquito repellent
- ☐ Appropriate clothing and footwear (comfortable walking shoes)
- ☐ Flip flops/sandals/shower shoes (to be worn around the hotel)
- ☐ Modest pajamas
- ☐ Washcloth
- ☐ Poncho/Rain Gear
- ☐ Sanitary wipes and/or hand sanitizer
- ☐ Plastic bag for dirty laundry
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Orphan's Heart t-shirt
- ☐ Journal (optional)
- ☐ Hat and sunglasses
- ☐ Surge protector (to use when charging electronic devices)
- ☐ Small first aid kit (optional)
- ☐ Bandanas or sweat rag (optional)
- ☐ Prescription medicines (as needed)
- ☐ Medicines such as Dramamine, Ciprofloxacin, anti-diarrheal medicines (please consult your physician regarding what medications are best for you)
- ☐ Supplies for children's ministries (if applicable)
- ☐ **FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE**
- ☐ **SERVANT'S HEART** . . . Come prepared to join God where He is at work!

## What Not To Bring

Excessive amounts of cash

Jewelry

## What To Bring (Donations)

The following supplies are in needed by our ministry partners in Guatemala. Teams wishing to bring supplies to leave in Guatemala are encouraged to collect the following:

- ☐ Children's books in Spanish
- ☐ Onesies (all sizes)
- ☐ Baby Soap (bar)
- ☐ Pajamas with "feet" (all sizes up to 8)
- ☐ Diapers (Size 3 and 4)
- ☐ Infant formulas (powdered, all stages)
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Baby/child nail clippers
- ☐ Surgical gloves (S, M, L, XL)
- ☐ Diaper rash ointment
- ☐ Baby shampoo
- ☐ Baby lotion
- ☐ Baby oil
- ☐ Crib sheets (fitted)
- ☐ Fitted and flat sheets for twin beds
- ☐ Blankets for twin beds
- ☐ School supplies (pencils, pens, notebooks, erasers, crayons, markers, construction paper, glue, etc.)
- ☐ Large hand sanitizer bottles
- ☐ Disinfectant wipes
- ☐ Children's puzzles
- ☐ Magic Erasers
- ☐ Digital thermometers

## Important Contact Information

### Ron Gunter

*Vice President of International Childcare*

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### Howard Hooper

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### Andrew Tattrie

*Director of Operations*

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### Orphan's Heart Main Office

(863) 577-4488

### Hotel Soleil

9a Calle Poniente

Antigua, Guatemala

011-502-7879-4444

### The Embassy of the United States in Guatemala

Todd Robinson, Ambassador to Guatemala

Avenida Reforma 7-01, Zona 10

Guatemala City, Guatemala

Hours of Operation: Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Friday 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (Except Holidays)

Telephone: 011-502-2326-4000

Fax: 011-502-2326-4654

*With your help we can continue to make significant changes in the lives of the children and families that are in the most need throughout Guatemala. On behalf of these children and families we would like to thank you for your time and your heart to serve with Orphan's Heart.*



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