

Team Member Handbook

“Serving” Mission Trip



LOVESERVES INTERNATIONAL
3310 US HWY 301N, ELLENTON FL 34222

Dear LoveServes Traveler:

Welcome to the LoveServes ministry! We are excited to have you join us on a short-term serving mission trip to serve alongside a church that has completed our LoveServes training and is actively impacting their community for Christ! We want this trip to be a defining moment in your life as you follow Christ's example in serving others.

We have prepared this manual to equip you as a serving team member for the upcoming trip. The manual outlines what you need to know to get the most out of your travel experience. In addition, we will meet with you to share information that will equip you spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically for your mission team experience.

We will have three orientation meetings that are a required part of your pre-trip training; your Team Leader will let you know of the dates, time, and location; a fourth meeting is typically scheduled as a "packing meeting" for ministry supplies and to review final trip details. During the meetings you will have an opportunity to meet members of your team and get to know them. We will also provide details on the work and ministry opportunities you will encounter. Additional handouts, opportunities for questions and time for prayer are all important ingredients that you will not want to miss.

We also urge your serving team to set aside time as a group for prayer and team building. The most effective teams are those that are comfortable with each other and have spent time together in prayer. It is a time where you can share your personal testimonies, prayer requests and bond together as a team.

Each of you has a gift(s) that God can use to bring about kingdom-changing work through you and in you. Be willing to stretch out of your comfort zone to reach others and grow in your spiritual life.

We are looking forward to getting to know you,

The LoveServes Team

LoveServes.org

Contents

- About LoveServes- Why we exist?..... 4
- Purpose of a Mission Trip..... 4
- Ministry Plan 4
- Going into the Community 5
- Tips for Working with interpreters..... 5
- Your Role as a Team Member 6
- Code of Conduct 6
- As a team member, you are expected to: 6
- Accommodations..... 8
- Processing Your Trip While You Are in the Dominican Republic 9
- About Re-Vision our ministry partner 10
 - Pre-Trip Preparation..... 11
 - Travel Team Orientation Schedule 11
 - Paperwork Checklist..... 12
 - Passport 12
 - Flight..... 12
 - Medical and Airline Insurance..... 12
 - Immunizations, Medications, and Health Cautions..... 12
 - Financial Recommendations for Travel Team Members..... 13
 - Things To Do at Home Before Leaving 13
 - Financial Obligations..... 14
 - A note about the project costs 14
 - Fundraising Guidelines..... 15
 - Letter Requesting Support..... 16
 - Packing List 17
 - Optional Items..... 17
 - Additional Comments on What or What Not to Bring..... 17
 - Cell Phones/Electric Voltage/Internet..... 18
 - Airline Reservations, Flight Information, and Transportation to the Airport 18
 - Baggage Guidelines 18
 - Carry-On Baggage Reminders..... 19
 - Airport Procedure: Outbound 19
 - Airport Procedure: Arrival..... 19
- Travel Team Roles 21

Guidelines for Your Stay in the Dominican Republic.....	22
Currency Exchange	22
Lodging and Meals	22
Incredibly Important to Remember!!.....	22
Conflict Resolution.....	23
Church.....	23
Giving Policy	23
Suggestions for Collaborating with Women in DR	24
A Brief Overview of Dominican Demographics, History and Culture.....	24
Guidelines for Your Return Home.....	26
What Do I Do When I Get Home?	26
Reverse Culture Shock.....	27
How You Can Impact Your Home Church	27
Emergency Contact Information	28
Our Contact Information	29

About LoveServes- Why we exist?

LoveServes International is equipping churches to restore communities. We do this by walking alongside Pastors mentoring and coaching them, to develop a healthy Church that equips its members to love God and love their neighbor. Equipping God's people for works of service for the building up of the kingdom of Christ. (Eph. 4:12). The focus is on the workers (church members) being prepared and sent; the workers learn what it means to love their neighbors in practical ways. The pastors equip their church members to move from the seat to the streets – to do the work of ministry out in the community, focused on loving their neighbors and reaching lost people. A healthy church is outwardly focused – loving their neighbors by helping to meet their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs – and takes ownership of a holistic vision for relief and development of the community. The healthy church becomes the catalyst for change. Church members minister to their neighbors (people around them), which awakens those in the community who are spiritually dead to see and receive the love of Christ and the opportunity to accept the Gospel. This is the fruit of a healthy church.

Equipping God's people for works of service for the building up of the kingdom of Christ.
Ephesians 4:12

Purpose of a Mission Trip

Gain a vision of God's love for the world and make a difference!

The purpose of a mission trip is three-fold:

1. First, to come alongside and partner with a local church that LoveServes has been coaching to complement one another in the body of Christ.
2. The second purpose of these "serving" mission trips is to expose you to a unique ministry that has harnessed Jesus' simple strategy to build His Kingdom. "Equipping God's people for works of service for the building up of the kingdom of Christ..." Ephesians 4:12
3. The third purpose is for personal spiritual growth.

Ministry Plan

Partnering with the local church to reach its community! Needs vary but are typically met in four key ways:

1. **Home visits:** We join a church leader on a visitation to pray, fellowship, share stories, and ultimately share the Gospel. As a team we will
 - a. Prepare our heart. Pray, and maintain a humble attitude!
 - b. Decide who will translate, and what invitation will be extended.
 - c. We prefer evangelizing to come from a member of the local church because they are the ones to disciple them.

Have a conversation in-country to ask how we can support the home visit with the church members.

2. **Outreach ministries:** Help with children and crafts, women's outreach, and sports outreach.
3. **Labor projects:** painting, cleaning, or supervised constructions projects
4. **Specialized skills:** use a special skill set to meet a particular need as the Dominican pastor so deems, e.g., a doctor might help with a med clinic, a pastor or business leader might do a seminar, or certified tradesmen might provide training at a vocational school or computer class

Going into the Community

- You will have opportunities to go in small groups with a member of the church and a translator to do home visits. Don't be afraid to engage people that you meet on the street or in the home. Invite them to attend a service, ask if you can pray for a specific need, or give a testimony.
- When walking on the street or visiting a home, don't snap pictures like you are at a zoo. Place yourself in their situation and be sensitive. Appropriate times include during ministry times, on the jobsite, or inviting someone you've met to take a photo with you.
- Never give to individuals in the community
- or church. If you bring items to donate or leave behind, you will have an opportunity to place them in a location where the Revision Team will distribute them to the church or individuals.

Tips for Working with interpreters

Unless you have fluency in the language of your host country, you will be communicating with others through an interpreter. The following are tips that can aid you in this experience:

It is helpful to discuss with your interpreter, beforehand, the content of your message. He/she may have ideas or suggestions for you, and it will give him/her a chance to get a general idea of what you want to say.

Be sure that the interpreter has a Bible written in their native language if you intend to use it in your reading.

Speak in short phrases, not longer than two sentences at a time. The interpreter may choose to translate, but many times he/she may need to explain in great detail what you have just said. The length of time that he/she speaks, therefore, may be longer than what you have spoken.

Keep eye contact with your audience. You will, of course, glance at your interpreter from time to time, but most of your attention should be on your audience. You are speaking to them.

Make free use of gestures that are comfortable for you. The interpreter may or may not imitate them.

Avoid theological or difficult terms. Use simple language. Your interpreter may know simple English words and phrases, but more complicated ones may be too difficult to interpret.

Speak clearly, slightly slower than normal, and loud enough for all to hear you. Even if they cannot understand you, they want to hear your voice.

Try to avoid slang and colloquial expressions. Slang is exceedingly difficult to translate and sometimes it is impossible to translate certain phrases. If you must use some “expression words”, talk it over before the meeting to give the interpreter a chance to prepare an adequate translation.

Remember, no one is expecting perfection. The most important thing is that your message is communicated. Most people are very understanding and forgiving of any mistakes you make. They appreciate your effort.

Your Role as a Team Member

As representatives of LoveServes International, LoveServes relies on our teams to play a part in maintaining a healthy relationship with our International ministry partners and churches.

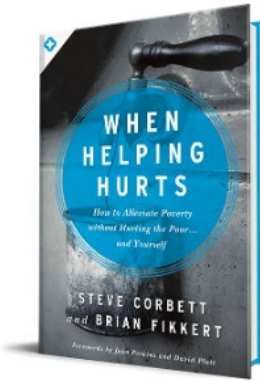
Code of Conduct

As ambassadors of Christ and the local church that you are serving, your actions reflect a testimony directly to the watching community. As such, a breach of the Member’s Code of Conduct may result in immediate dismissal from the Serving Team and being sent home at your personal expense.



As a team member, you are expected to:

- Respect the leadership of your Team Leader.
- Participate in 3-4 required pre-trip Orientation meetings.
- Read Helping without Hurting; to help you prepare to engage in your short-term missions in healthy ways and steward your experience well.



- LoveServes is working hard to raise up national leaders. We want to break the entitlement or "welfare" mentality, prevalent in many Dominican churches.
- The team is NOT there to "fix their problems" or "to save the day"! It is important that Dominicans don't perceive Americans coming to take over and assume responsibility for the success of the ministry!
- In humility, we seek to build a mutually benefiting relationship that brings long-lasting solutions to the community's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

- Commit to the physical, emotional, and spiritual preparation you'll need to fully participate on a trip.
- Agree to the fundraising guidelines and satisfy all financial obligations 45 days prior to trip departure.
- Travel with the team **at all times** and not add, remove, or change any part of the trip agenda for personal reasons.
- Abstain from culturally offensive behaviors, including the use of illicit language, swearing, smoking (this includes vaping and e-cigarettes), and drinking alcohol during all parts of the trip.
- Handle all matters of conflict according to the biblical principles outlined for conflict resolution in Matthew 18 and affirmed in LoveServes' Waiver and Conciliation Clause.
- Respect LoveServes' social media guidelines in a way that honors God, represents LoveServes well, and brings dignity to our International ministry partners.
- Agree to LoveServes international's giving policy as it relates to gifts to community members and churches.
- Abstain from swearing, smoking (this includes vaping and e-cigarettes), drug use, pornography, fighting, cursing, drinking alcohol and gambling which are prohibited.
- We ask that books and music brought with you reflect a positive, Christian lifestyle.
- Bring any complaints or incidents involving ministry staff or members, or conflicts with other volunteers promptly and directly to your Team Leader.
- Please be punctual for all activities, meals, and departure times out of consideration for the schedule and for staff and other volunteers.
- Wear modest jewelry and clothing; this is an expression of respect for the church you are serving beside in the D.R.

Motivation for Helping (Attitude is Everything)

- What is my motivation for helping?
- Do I consider myself superior in some way to the people in the Dominican Republic?
- How will my attitude affect how I would help someone in poverty and/or minister to the lost?

The Right Attitude Must be Humility

The Right Motivation Must be Love

The Right Application Must be Partnership

Be Humble, Adaptable and Teachable (H.A.T.)



So, put your H.A.T. on and let's go!

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. COLOSSIANS 3:12 NIV

Accommodations

- Items such as alcohol, cigarettes of any kind (including vaping and e-cigarettes), drugs, pornography, or weapons are prohibited.
- Depending on the male/female ratio of the group, married couples may be in separate rooms, although all efforts will be made to keep couples together.
- Being in a private room with a member of the opposite sex is not permitted without authorization.
- Respect for the dress guidelines is expected.
- Please respect that the lounge areas are shared with other volunteers; they must be kept clean.
- Respect for the personal property of others is expected.
- Bedrooms and bathrooms must be kept neat.

Processing Your Trip While You Are in the Dominican Republic

- **Separate** – Set aside time for solitude. Designate quiet time just to listen to God is restorative.
- **Engage** – Get to know the local residents. Connecting with them as people expands your compassion.
- **Care** – Adequate sleep, hydration and nutrition are very important to maintaining your health.
- **Share** – Tell your teammates what you are experiencing, what you are learning, what you are struggling with, and how they can support you.
- **Write** – Journal your activities, your accomplishments, your reactions, your feelings, and the things that God is doing in you and through you.
- **Debrief** – Meet as a team daily to discuss what went well; what challenges you encountered; what information you need to bring back home; and how you will prepare for days ahead.
- **Worship** – Praise, acknowledge, honor, and thank God for who He is. Thank Him for calling you to serve.



About Re-Vision our ministry partner

- LoveServes works with an in-country ministry partner, Re-Vision, who will serve as the coordinating host of your serving

trip team in the Dominican Republic.

- Re-Vision is based in the Dominican Republic, and will coordinate housing, meals, transportation, and translators for the serving teams.
- Re-Vision is “a faith-based organization that focuses on establishing and directing long-term partnerships for ministry . . . in the Dominican Republic.” They provide resources for economic, educational, medical, and spiritual development in local communities.
- Re-Vision will communicate directly with the pastor of the church where the team will be serving to determine what is needed from the team, the construction and/or community project, materials needed, and any other arrangements that need to be made through the church.
- Re-Vision will put together a tentative daily schedule of activities and requested ministries.
- Re-Vision plans a “day off” where the team can refresh through leisure activities; the activity will be coordinated in advance of the trip. Some of the activities will require paying a fee. The Team Leader and LoveServes staff will discuss the options and costs with Melanie, and the Team Leader will relay the information to the team.

Pre-Trip Preparation

Travel Team Orientation Schedule

To be determined

Session 1

- Introduction
- Icebreaker
- Vision and Mission
- Trip Overview
- Required Paperwork and Passports
- Team Building/Prayer
- Fundraising and Financial Deadlines
- Immunizations
- Travel Arrangements
- Cultural Training, I



Session 2

- Icebreaker
- Team building/Prayer
- Dominican Republic History and Culture
- Cultural Training II
- Team Roles
- Guidelines and Boundaries
- Schedule in the DR
- Relationships through Language

Session 3

- Icebreaker
- Team Building/Prayer
- Packing List and Clothing
- Baggage
- Airports, Customs
- Money/Currency Exchange
- Contacting Home
- Emergency Contacts
- Cultural Training III
- Cultural Shock/Reverse Shock

Session 4 (Optional)

- an optional meeting to pack supplies

Paperwork Checklist

- Media Release <https://files.constantcontact.com/2684f834401/e5232bc7-9c85-4186-8d5b-9c4804a35a5d.pdf>
- Parental Consent Forms – For minor children traveling without 1 or 2 parents <https://www.us-passport-service-guide.com/minor-travel-consent-form.html>
- Passport email to Patricia@loveserves.org or text 303-775-8444
- Trip Participant Waiver and Conciliation Clause <https://files.constantcontact.com/2684f834401/5464f5b1-dc12-4065-a127-a8ff44b2eb43.pdf>



Passport

All North Americans traveling to the Dominican Republic must have a passport. For information go online: <http://travel.state.gov/passport> . If you are applying for a new passport, please allow 4 – 8 weeks for this process. **PLEASE BE SURE** that the expiration date of your passport is **AT LEAST 6 months prior to the RETURN DATE of your mission trip.**

Flight

Individuals/group handle all airfare and travel arrangements to and airport. A LoveServes International representative will meet you at the airport, and a LoveServes driver and your transportation will be waiting for you. Be sure to check with the airline for current restrictions, luggage weight limits, etc., prior to arriving at the airport. Don't worry if you are an individual; we will make sure you are connected with your group when you arrive.

Medical and Airline Insurance

LoveServes carries International Emergency Medical coverage for each person; however, it is recommended you carry **your own** medical and/or airline trip insurance, as well. Especially during hurricane season.

Immunizations, Medications, and Health Cautions

Visiting a third-world country often requires immunizations to protect against potential diseases. Although we don't need any immunizations or medication, the following are noteworthy recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention for traveling to the Dominican Republic:

- Routine vaccines: You should be up-to-date on measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot.
- Malaria: When traveling in the DR, you should avoid mosquito bites to prevent malaria. Use repellent with Deet.
- Zika virus is a risk in the DR. the CDC recommends that Pregnant women should not travel to the DR because Zika infection during pregnancy can cause serious birth defects.

Financial Recommendations for Travel Team Members

- As with any travel, be always mindful of your money.
- Once you arrive at your accommodation, you may wish to secure your valuables in your suitcase using a travel lock.
- Avoid allowing your money to be seen by local residents and use caution when exposing your funds in public markets and souvenir shops.
- Mastercard and Visa are the most widely accepted cards internationally.
- Your bank may charge you a transaction fee for the international travel exchange. Ask about these fees prior to traveling.
- If you plan to use a credit card, call your company, and alert them that you will be traveling.

Things To Do at Home Before Leaving

- Register for E Ticket Immigration before leaving
<https://eticket.migracion.gob.do/Auth/TravelRegister>
 - This E Ticket is for entering and leaving the Dominican Republic (when prompted for accommodation address, Use our Dr office address on the e ticket Immigration. The destination address:
 - Province: Distrito Nacional*
 - Municipality: None. Or if needed try Santo Domingo de Guzman*
 - Section: Urbanización Renacimiento*
 - Street and number: Diagonal B, # 18 A*
 - Please **do not choose the Work option** as that refers to paid employment or business-related travel.
 - If you are questioned as to why you are entering the country, simply tell them you are “on holiday for missionary work.”
- **Make two copies of your passport main page**; leave one copy at home, and place one copy into your carry-on luggage. Verify that you have at least four (4) blank pages in our passport that can be stamped by officials.
- **Make a list of all the medications** you are taking with you on the trip and make two copies. Leave one copy at home with your family and place the other copy into your carry-on luggage.
- **Get immunizations** recommended for travel to the Dominican Republic. Consult with your Doctor.
- **Review the packing list and** begin preparations for getting the necessary items for your trip.
- **Make copies (front and back) of any credit cards** that you are taking on the trip and leave them at home so you can make contact in the event they are lost or stolen on the trip.

(You may wish to also take photos on your cell phone so you can immediately call—unless, of course, your phone is lost, too.)

- **Contact your credit card company** if you are planning to take a Mastercard or Visa.
- **Remove** your non-essential credit cards from your wallet.
- **Register** for a frequent-flyer program if you haven't done so previously.
- Leave emergency contact information with your family.
- Add cluster app to your phone. <https://cluster.co/download> Private group sharing with friends and family.

Financial Obligations

- The mission trip is \$910 per person plus project costs* and airfare.
- There is a \$250 non-refundable deposit for each trip member. (The balance then would be \$660). **The balance for every trip member is due 60 days prior to leaving.**
- The project costs of the trip for the Construction/Ministry project costs are a separate expense that the team will raise together. Project costs are **due 45 days** prior to leaving. Your trip coordinator can provide you with the cost of your mission project. In some cases, your church will help cover project costs.
- **USA Mail: Make your check payable to:** LoveServes International 3310 US Hwy. 301 North, Ellenton, FL34222 (Please write "Mission Trip" in the memo line)
- **You may also pay online at loveserves.org OR USE THE LOVESERVES APP**
- **The direct link for mission trip payments is <https://ppay.co/MKSkDvMyNVk>**
- **The direct link for project donations is <https://ppay.co/5pPVjxilQHQ>**
- **If your support exceeds the cost of the trip, the excess funds will be used to offset the expenses incurred for other team-related costs, such as outreach supplies, construction supplies, etc.**

A note about the project costs

LoveServes wants our trips to be as accessible financially as possible. With that said, our trips always have a construction project that will involve helping the local church expand their ability to reach more people in their communities.

We recognize that it may be a challenge for some just to raise the funds for their own trip expenses.

This is why we have chosen NOT to divide the needed project expense and added to each trip members budget. Instead, we choose to approach the project cost as a team.

Some members may be able to give personally towards the project cost, others can write letters asking others to help.

Either way, all funds given towards any part of your mission trip and the project costs are tax deductible.

Typically, Project costs range anywhere from \$12,000 - \$18,000. Check with your trip leader for the amount to be raised for the project. (Please note: Raising the funds for the project is a team effort, we recognize not every team member has any more to give. This is a great opportunity for churches, friends and families to join in the cause)

Fundraising Guidelines

- Mission trip members are responsible for raising their own funds to cover trip expenses. Some can cover all their expenses, but others will want or need to raise funds through fundraising projects or gifts.
- We suggest the following approach to fundraising:
 - a. One-third of the total trip expenses should come from your own funds or through your own fundraising activity.
 - b. One-third should come from soliciting attendees at your church.
 - c. One-third can be raised from family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and others outside your church.
- Use a fund-raising letter at the end of this document, as a template for letters you use to raise funds. Involving others in helping you meet the mission trip costs is a great way to develop interest in missions, commitment to helping others, and giving them an opportunity to be part of serving God!

Letter Requesting Support

Sample Fundraising Letter- The template letter includes information from an earlier trip and is only there as an example.

(Date)

Dear (___):

I am excited to tell you that I have been selected by LoveServes International to serve on a mission team that will be traveling to the Dominican Republic on (date). LoveServes is an organization that works with churches and their pastors to help them reach their communities with the Gospel of Christ.

(The following paragraph is an example. Substitute the information for your mission trip)

The team I am joining will be providing resources, support and assisting a local church in the town of (NAME OF TOWN) where extreme poverty and lack of opportunity grow every day. The pastor, (ADD PASTOR NAME), is building a community center that, in partnership with Compassion International, will feed and minister to over two hundred children. The center will also improve the quality of life for adults by providing tutoring, meals, and technical courses. In addition to helping with construction, we will take part in a Vacation Bible School program for children, a women's craft ministry, and take part in community home visits.

The cost of the trip is \$ 910.00 includes lodging, transportation and meals in country. I will need to buy my own flight which is about \$ _____ The project cost is \$ _____, which we are raising as a team. I am expected to use personal resources to fund a part of my trip. I am also encouraged to seek financial aid from others who may be interested in supporting my mission work. I am humbly asking that you prayerfully consider donating to help me cover my expenses. By making a financial gift, you too can impact the lives of those seeking Christ in the Dominican Republic.

If you wish to contribute, please follow these instructions.

- Make your check payable to (name of Church or LoveServes International (LSI)).
- Write "[Trip date] Dominican Republic" and (my name) in the memo section of the check.
- Give the check to Leader, mail directly to the church, or put it in the offering at Church or mail to LSI
- Your gift will be recorded and acknowledged. All donations are tax deductible.

If your support exceeds the cost of the trip, the excess funds will be used to offset the expenses incurred for other team-related costs, such as outreach supplies, construction supplies, etc.

Please pray for me as I begin this journey to spread the love of Christ and to grow spiritually. I am excited to see what God is going to do through me and to me!

Sincerely, (Your Name)

P.S. You can also donate online at Loveserves.org, there is a transaction fee.

AAVI, Inc. DBA LoveServes International is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. All donations are tax deductible in full or in part. EIN: 65-0406418 Office: 3310 US HWY 301N, Ellenton FL 34222

Packing List

- 4-5 sets of work clothes (long pants and t-shirts with sleeves are required on worksites; capri pants are acceptable for women)
- 3-4 sets of clothes to wear after work and on day-off
- Fingertip length shorts are OK at camp/lodging and on day-off.
- No tank tops or sleeveless shirts in the community where we will be working or ministering but are fine on our day off and around camp.
- 1-2 outfits for church service (bring extra pair of shoes so you aren't wearing work shoes to services)
- Men should wear long pants and collared shirt (lightweight polo shirts are good)
- Women should wear skirts or dresses that reach the knees, no tank tops or sleeveless shirts
- 2 pair of work gloves
- 8 sets of underclothing.
- 1 pair of sturdy work shoes, boots, or sturdy tennis shoes
- 5 pair of work socks
- Lightweight pajamas, please be conservative.
- Bandanas or "Cooling Towel" (Walmart carries them) for work site.
- Swimming suit - Please be conservative one piece for women or wear a shirt over; no speedos for men.
- Shower Flip flops
- A pillow and twin sheets for bunk beds (NOTE: Pillows are not considered "carry-on" or "personal item" on airplanes – so if it does not fit in your suitcase just carry it)
- Mosquito Net (our DR staff will have nets for rent approx. 3.00)
- Shampoo and soap Brush or comb Toothpaste and toothbrush
- 2 Towels for showers are recommended because it usually takes a full day for a towel to dry when hung.
- Razor and shaving cream Insect repellent Lip Balm
- Flashlight
- Medications (baby powder or other skin protectant is good for keep from chaffing)
- Bible and pens (Mission Journal will be given to you in advance)
- Hat for sun protection, sunglasses, and sunscreen (SPF 50 and above is recommended)
- Refillable and Insulated Water bottle!
- Hand Sanitizer

Optional Items

- Camera and extra batteries (please remember to be sensitive when taking pictures)
- Fanny pack or backpack to carry items to the work site and on day-off.
- Toys and activities for playing with kids in the community but not to give out. (Frisbees, tennis balls, jump ropes, bubbles, coloring books, crayons, fingernail polish, etc.)
- Powdered Gatorade or small liquid bottles that you can add to water that has electrolytes
- Granola bars or other SEALED SNACKS, please remember that food attracts bugs, so all food must be kept in sealed bags or containers

Additional Comments on What or What Not to Bring

- Your work clothes may be subject to concrete, paint, sweat, mud, etc. Please do not wear work clothes that you do not want to ruin. Long pants or capris are required at work sites. Wear work clothes that are cool and comfortable.
- Do not bring any valuables. You are responsible for anything you lose. LoveServes does not recommend wearing jewelry in the Dominican Republic. Wedding bands are fine.
- Do NOT bring any illegal substances, tobacco, or alcohol. We will send someone home if we find someone using these during the week.
- Our staff in the DR will exchange money for your group at the current rate.

Cell Phones/Electric Voltage/Internet

- If you bring your cell phone –You might consider an international calling plan.
- Always keep your cell in Airplane Mode unless you decide with your carrier to use an international plan for phone use including cellular data.
- Electric voltage and frequency are the same in the Dominican Republic as in the US and Canada (110V and 60Hz). The power plugs and sockets are the same.
- The Internet is **not** readily available at the camp.

Airline Reservations, Flight Information, and Transportation to the Airport

- In most cases, you will need to make your own flight arrangements. You should do so approximately two months before you leave.
- If the team is predominantly from one church, a travel Team Leader could make the reservations for the entire team through a travel agent. Payment for the trip by the traveler could be made to the church and would, therefore, be tax-deductible. This procedure is legal under the IRS code.
- If possible, plan to travel to the airport together as it helps build a team's spirit and enthusiasm.
- ALL TEAM MEMBERS must arrive and depart from the same airport in the D.R. during the designated window of time and dates.

Baggage Guidelines

Check airline website. Some airlines allow one free checked suitcase. Others like Spirit air charges for each. Weight limits vary as well. Always double check on the airline website.

Carry-On Baggage Reminders

- Be sure to have a full change of clothing in your carry-on in case your checked bag does not arrive the same day you do.
- Be sure your medications are in your carry-on luggage where they are accessible to you in the airports, in flight, and during road travel to the lodging site.
- If you are packing any type of toiletries in your carry-on, please remember those items must follow the airline restrictions:
- Bringing open packages of food into the country is prohibited by law. Should a customs official find open food packages in your possession, they may be confiscated, or you may be asked to discard them.
- Keep your valuable items with you while traveling, in either your carry-on or personal bag. This includes money, jewelry, electronics, cameras, phones, laptops/tablets, etc.
- Tools that could potentially be used as weapons (screwdriver, hammer, wrenches, etc.) should be packed in your checked luggage. This includes pocketknives, as well.

Airport Procedure: Outbound

You will check in using your passport. You should also have your boarding pass, E Ticket for entering and leaving the Dominican Republic (this replaces the tourist card). Check your baggage to its destination and place the baggage claim ticket in a safe place, as you will need it. You will then proceed to the security check-point where you will need to show your passport and boarding pass.

Airport Procedure: Arrival

- You will go through customs upon arrival in the Dominican Republic. You will need your passport and E TICKET - <https://eticket.migracion.gob.do/>. Use this address on the e ticket Immigration.
- The destination address for your mission trips is our DR Office
 - Province:** *Distrito Nacional*
 - Municipality:** *None. Or if needed try Santo Domingo de Guzman*
 - Section:** *Urbanización Renacimiento*
 - Street and number:** *Diagonal B, # 18 A*
- If you are asked as to why you are entering the country, simply tell them you are “on holiday for missionary work.” Typically, you will NOT have any items to declare. *You do not need to claim any items that you are transporting into the country as they are humanitarian supplies/gifts and are not subject to taxes.*
- After going through customs, you will collect your luggage from the designated carousel and go out to the reception area. A LoveServes representative will be waiting for you.

Processing and Preparing for your Trip

- **Pray** – Thank God for the call to serve. Ask him to prepare you spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally.
- **Meet** – Get together with the other members of your team for a time of prayer and relationship building. Share your testimonies, discuss your spiritual gifts, and talk about your expectations and dreams for your experience.
- **Write** – Journal your thoughts, feelings, and things God is revealing to you through prayer, scripture, and your interactions with others.
- **Review** – Read through your training manual and attend all orientation meetings.
- **Follow Through** – See your physician, obtain your immunizations, and turn in paperwork.
- **Communicate** - Tell others about your upcoming trip. Ask for their prayers and financial support. Use this as an opportunity to share Jesus.
- **Prepare** – Begin working on a 3–5-minute testimony of what God has and is doing in your life. Try to include your favorite Bible verse and why or how it has affected your life.
- **Care** – Get plenty of sleep. Eat healthy foods. Begin to break unhealthy habits.
- **Journal** – one week before you leave you can begin using your journal.

*“Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths.
Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.”
Psalm 25:4–5*

Travel Team Roles

Team Leader _____

The Team Leader manages daily oversight of the team—including division of tasks, setting the schedule, daily debriefings, managing volunteers, settling disputes, addressing concerns, and final decision-making on matters of importance to the team and LSI representatives. The TL is the primary point of contact with our local hosts and partners.

Devotions Coordinator _____

The Devotions Coordinator handles coordinating prayer/study/fellowship time under the direction of the Team Leader. This includes scheduling prayer meetings prior to departure, as well as coordinating *daily devotions* while in the country. The DC is not responsible for leading all devotions but should encourage and arrange for members of the team to lead a session.

Worship Leader _____

The Worship Leader handles selection of songs, instrumentation, and leading the team through a time of worship at the beginning of the devotional period each morning. Bringing copies of song lyrics for the team to use is helpful.

Team Recorder _____

The Team Recorder handles keeping a written record of the team's activities as well as insights and feedback for the LSI leaders. Each day during the trip, the Team Leader should gather the team for a time of reflection and debriefing. The TR handles capturing important notes, decisions, key things learned, and suggestions for future trips. This information should be shared at a debriefing meeting with LSI leaders after the return of the team.

Children's Program Leader _____

The Children's Program Leader handles planning Bible lessons, songs, games, kid's crafts for indoor and outdoor use. The CPL should work with the Team Leader and REVISION in the DR to get information from the DR pastor on what he would like the team to accomplish, who they will work with, how much time they will have, how many they expect to attend, and a description of the site for the program. The CPL will work with volunteers on the team to develop the program, materials for crafts, and description of games including balls, etc.

Construction Leader _____

The construction Leader will obtain a description of the construction project including plans, materials, and tools needed. The CL will work with the pastor and/or on-site project leader(s) and communicate to the team what needs to be done. The CL will assign members of the team to specific tasks, assess progress, and make necessary changes as needed. The CL should always be assessing tasks to determine that safety standards are met.

Team Photographer _____

The Team Photographer handles keeping a digital record of the trip. It is helpful to have images of the team in action, as well as before/after photos of construction projects. The TP also helps coordinate the sharing of photographs among team members both during and after the trip. While all team members are welcome to take pictures, the TP is charged with the responsibility to document the trip activities.

Storyteller Leader _____

We would like to invite two people to volunteer to be LoveServes Storytellers for our upcoming mission trip. The task is simple, yet important. The task is something many of you would be doing anyway - taking photos and video snippets during the trip. The only difference is that LoveServes is asking the Storytellers to be purposeful in capturing a few specific moments. If you are interested in serving as a LoveServes Storyteller during our mission trip, please let your Trip Leader know before you leave.

Guidelines for Your Stay in the Dominican Republic

Arrival in the Dominican Republic

Airport: As mentioned in a previous section, after disembarking, you will go through customs, collect your baggage, and proceed to the waiting area where a representative from LoveServes International will be waiting for you. The representative will lead you out to the parking lot where you and the luggage will be loaded on a bus for the trip to your destination.

Currency Exchange

You will have an opportunity to exchange US dollars for the Dominican Peso when you arrive at your destination - this will be done through our ministry partner, Re-Vision. Please do not exchange money at the airport - the fee is higher.

Lodging and Meals

LoveServes contracts with a Christian organization called REVISION for transportation, lodging and food. REVISION is based in the Dominican Republic and has a team that works with each mission group to take care of the day-to-day needs. **It is very important to let the LoveServes coordinator know if you have any food allergies or special dietary needs.**

Incredibly Important to Remember!!

- ✓ Never drink any water that is not bottled or from the team Water Coolers!
- ✓ Use your refillable water bottle instead of plastic cups.
- ✓ Use bottled water for brushing your teeth.
- ✓ Never throw toilet paper in the toilet! The plumbing system in the D.R. cannot handle toilet paper. Always fold up and place in the small trash can next to the toilet.
- ✓ Don't go anywhere alone and don't wander off the property!

Conflict Resolution

International travel and the close quarters of a mission team can be stressful. Because we value relationships over accomplishing tasks, we want to highlight some guidelines for how to navigate any conflicts that may arise before or during your trip.

“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15–17

When conflict occurs on a team between any two individuals, the following steps should be followed until resolution is reached.

1. Privately address the concern with the other person involved in a kind, candid, and timely manner. (Exception: If the conflict or issue includes safety concerns, notify your Team Leader immediately.)
2. Listen and seek to understand the other person’s perspective. Keep the conflict private and limited to the parties involved so that the rest of the team and/or the partner are impacted as minimally as possible.
3. Pray and seek a solution or peaceful agreement together. If resolution cannot be reached, bring the concern to the Team Leader. Under the guidance of the Team Leader, pray, listen, and seek to understand until a resolution can be reached. If the Team Leader is involved in the conflict, or if the conflict cannot be resolved, bring the issue to a LoveServes staff person.

Church

- Team members are expected to show respect to the pastor.
- Please always respect the church as the house of God.
- Do not talk, read, sleep, chew gum, take photos or use your cell phone during services.

Giving Policy

Resist the desire to give things to individuals you meet or work with during your mission experience. We are striving to break the poverty mindset. If you have something to donate (clothing, tools money, etc.) leave them in your room when you are ready to leave and our partners, REVISION, will take them to the pastor for distribution as he deems appropriate.

Never make promises that you will give money or things to anyone. If you want to give in a greater capacity, discuss with LoveServes staff, not directly with the local pastor. The presence of an American team at a church is noted by the community. Simply by serving, you raise the authority and credibility of the local pastor.

Suggestions for Collaborating with Women in DR

BASIC ASSUMPTION: There are many more similarities than differences among women of different countries! Things that are important to you are most likely important to them, for example their children, husbands, and homes.

Enter every activity with a spirit of adventure! Maintain positive enthusiasm! Consistently respond to women in a warm, accepting, non-threatening way.

Be careful how you use your voice.

Talking louder will not make the women understand better! Remember, exasperation can be understood in any language!

Request that your interpreter try to imitate your facial expressions, mannerisms, inflection, volume, etc. Be careful how you "report" your individual experience with the women in bible study with your other American team members.

SMILE! SMILE! SMILE!



A Brief Overview of Dominican Demographics, History and Culture

The Dominican Republic is a study in contrasts. It is a third world country rich in history, yet struggling to find its place in the fast-paced, high-tech 21st century. The ease with which Americans may enter the D.R. may obscure the fact that this country is vastly different from the United States in history, customs, and standards. Since your ministry trip will bring you into direct contact with the Dominican nationals in far different circumstances than if you were traveling as a tourist, it will be helpful to have some background about the Dominican Republic. When you know the history of a country and what the people have been through to get to where they are now, it helps you to understand and love the people.

- The current population of the Dominican Republic is 11,08 million as of March 2022, based on the latest United Nations estimates.
- The Dominican Republic ranks 85th in the list of countries (and dependencies) by population.
- The population density in the Dominican Republic is 590 people per square mile.
- The total land area is 18,654 square miles (about twice the area of New Jersey).
- The urban population makes up 81.6 % of the total.
- The median age for the country is 26.1 years.
- Roman Catholics make up 57% of the population, with Protestants at 23%.



History of the Dominican Republic

Christopher Columbus landed on the island of Quisqueya, as the original Indians called their island, on December 6, 1492. The Spaniards virtually wiped out the Indian inhabitants and made the island the first seat of their New World Empire. Dominican history is a story of conquests by such countries as Spain (three times), France (twice), Haiti (twice), and the United States (twice). From 1916-24, the country was under the administration of the U.S. to help collect custom fees for the payment of the national debt. Marines were sent to the D.R. in 1965 to maintain order, protect U. S. citizens there, and to keep communists from taking over the country. In 1874, the U.S. almost accepted an offer to annex the country. Four periods of national independence have been known, the most recent beginning in 1924.

Santo Domingo, the capital city, has the distinction of being the first city in the Western Hemisphere founded by Europeans. To put this city in proper historical perspective, consider that Santo Domingo was already 75 years old when William Shakespeare was born. When the Mayflower landed on Plymouth Rock, Santo Domingo was well into its second century. Harvard University was founded a full one hundred years after Santo Domingo's University which was the first to be chartered in the Western Hemisphere. Today, Santo Domingo is a thriving metropolis, with more than a few disadvantages of urbanization.

The capital city has been pillaged by the likes of Sir Frances Drake. The entire nation was held under the thumb of the cruel dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo for some 30 years. His reign ended in 1961 when he was assassinated.

Culture

In the Dominican Republic, the family forms the basis for stability and loyalty to the family is of utmost

importance. The family provides a social network and helps members when there is a need. Family includes two or three generations and tends to live together in the same general area.

Dominicans take pride in extending hospitality and will work hard to please their guests.

Use a firm handshake and direct eye contact when greeting a Dominican. Maintain eye contact when conversing, as it is a sign of interest in the person.

Class structure is generally based on racial and economic background. Social stratification divides into lighter skinned European descendants and darker skinned African descendants. A mixture of the two, form most of the middle class.

Guidelines for Your Return Home

US Customs and Border Control

- On your return to the US, you will go through customs at the airport. You will need your passport and completed form on the E immigration app.
- The declaration form requires you to declare the souvenirs and other items you purchased in the Dominican Republic, including the value of each item. You are eligible for a duty-free exemption of Approximately \$800.
- Question 11 (d) on the form asks if you have been on a farm, ranch, or pasture at any time during your stay. If you have, you may be questioned, and the bottoms of your shoes examined and disinfected.

What Do I Do When I Get Home?

Believe it or not, one of the toughest things about a mission trip is going back home! When you think about the truly mind-blowing things you have experienced in the last 8 days, it is nothing short of a miracle what GOD has done in your life!

Obviously, you have thought about home, family members, friends, and even work or school . . . you've probably thought about all the people who are praying for you on this trip . . . all those who did not come on the trip but supported you.

Here is where the rubber meets the road (as they say). You are excited to share your experience with others—to tell them all the amazing things God did. You are aching to show the people you love all your photos and videos of the experience that has captured your heart . . . but . . . many of them will give you a few minutes of interest, but then it will be “business as usual.” It is NOT that they don't care about you; they just did NOT experience what you did and cannot possibly understand. Most people you try to share your stories with will disengage much sooner than you want them to.

(Ask a few veterans to share with group what happened when they returned home from their last mission trip)

Here are four tips to help with Re-Entry:

- Recognize God’s work in your life was truly real and important, regardless of what other reactions are.
- Pray for God’s wisdom and contentment.
- Think of ONE highlight from your experience and focus on how it affected you personally. Then think of a SINGLE word that will serve as your trigger word and a HOOK word for the people you want to share your story with. Do not make the word too “obvious,” but a more obscure word that will cause your listener to mentally stop and ask you what you mean by that word. (Ex., when someone asks, “How was your trip?” Instead of saying, “It was so good . . . blah, blah, blah”; say, “Handcuffs” (or some such word). Trust me, they will stop and say, “Wait, what?” Then, proceed to tell them the ONE story associated with that word and keep it short. (2-3 minutes)
 - Now practice with someone in your group.

Reverse Culture Shock

Just as visiting another country can be a culture shock, returning to one’s own country can produce a reverse culture shock. After returning home, many who visit abroad begin re-examining their priorities, their values, and what they think of themselves and the United States. You may experience feelings of frustration, anger, guilt, or loneliness and not understand exactly why. You may have a heightened sensitivity when others complain, and you could find yourself complaining a lot less. You have experienced what is critical for survival in the D.R. and how it is both a blessing and a distraction in our American culture to have so much more than we need.

You might feel Americans are too focused on themselves and unaware of what is going on in third-world countries. You will be more aware of how much we waste. You may feel guilty about your home, clothes, and all the nice things you take for granted. As a result, you may develop new attitudes, beliefs, and habits. Take time to be thankful for what you have and be more generous with what God has given you.

How You Can Impact Your Home Church

You can have an impact on the mission’s program in your home church! Here are ideas:

- Either as an individual or as a group make an appointment with your pastor to give him a briefing on what you experienced and how it changed you.
- Ask if he would be willing to give you a short segment in a service to show pictures and give a couple of testimonies (Be sure and prepare so that you stay within the allotted time).
- As an alternative, ask him if he would rather interview a member of the team during the service. That way, he could control the timeframe.
- Focus on the life-changing experience and what God did in your life and the lives of the team because of going to the D.R.

Emergency Contact Information

- ❖ Revision Melanie Spencer 809.299.2565 (In Country rep)
- ❖ Revision Doug Campbell 615.848.3834
- ❖ AAVI (DR Office) Daniel Rodriguez 829.452.6601 (In Country Staff)
- ❖ LoveServes Stephanie Smith 727.480.6172 (On Call)
- ❖ LoveServes Peter Swanson 941.376.0799
- ❖ LoveServes Patricia Vazquez 303.775.8444 (On Call)
- ❖ LoveServes Martin Newby 941.400.8001
- ❖ US Embassy Santo Domingo 809.567.7775
- ❖ MTA Insurance 813.797.3700 (for emergency assistance)

Our Contact Information

LoveServes International 3310 US Hwy. 301 North Ellenton, FL 34222 LoveServes.org
844-352-3376

Our Vision: To develop Healthy Churches in all nations, equipping God's people to make disciples, who make disciples. (Matthew 28:19a ...make disciples of all nations)

Mission Statement: We walk alongside Pastors, mentoring and coaching them to develop a healthy Church that equips its members to love God and love their neighbor.

Ephesians 4:12 "Equipping God's people for works of service for the building up of the kingdom of Christ..."

May you discover the presence and power of God in your life and know the joy that comes when you serve and bless others.

Gracias,
LoveServes International

