

Southeast Mission Trips - Frequently Asked Questions

Do Southeast mission trips comply with COVID safety regulations?

All mission trips are planned in compliance with current regulations from the Center for Disease Control, the U.S. state department, destination country regulations, and state or local health regulations, recognizing these may fluctuate. This includes following common practices such as social distancing 6 feet, wearing masks when in closer proximity or indoors, and the provision of hand sanitizer or hand washing facilities as available. We also consult the airline being used, as well as SOS for international travel information.

Airlines and receiving countries currently require proof of a negative COVID test prior to flight departure coming and going. Each country has different requirements, and this includes airports in countries where travelers transit. Many countries now require proof of completed COVID vaccination for immediate entry.

Are Southeast mission trips safe?

Counting the cost is a part of trusting God in going on any trip whether local, U.S. or International. We ask that each mission trip applicant weigh the pros and cons of attending a trip and ask questions (either contact the team leader or send an email to Ruth at rlemaster@secc.org) prior to applying. This enables our missions' ministry team and team leaders to hear concerns, pray about and address them. A Pandemic-High Risk legal release and indemnification agreement must be signed by each team member while the CDC states COVID-19 and its variants are still considered an outbreak.

How does the Southeast Missions Ministry decide where to take short-term mission teams?

All mission trips serve alongside current ministry partners and church plants.

If I want to serve on a short-term mission team, how do I decide on a trip?

Current trips can be found at <https://www.southeastchristian.org/ministries/missions/trips>. Some mission trips are specifically for a particular group or campus. Click on the trip name for a description and details, including skills needed, physical requirements and health restrictions.

As rewarding and life-changing a short term trip experience can be, they can also be stressful. Please consider personal factors that may distract or prohibit you from full commitment to the trip mission and adapting to unusual conditions.

Do I have to be a Southeast Christian Church member or attendee to participate on a mission trip?

Trip participants must be an active Southeast member or attendee for at least 6 months with verifiable attendance/participation.

What are the age requirements?

Team members must be 18 years or older, unless the trip description states otherwise (i.e. student ministry trips or family trips).

How do I apply for a trip?

Trip applications can be found at <https://www.southeastchristian.org/connect/missions/trips.php>

You must complete the online application, pay the non-refundable trip deposit and submit all required paperwork before your application will be reviewed and processed.

What happens after I apply?

Once completed, your application will be reviewed and processed, and a personal interview may be required. You will be notified when you are approved as team member.

What are the trip requirements?

Please see the online trip-specific information page for complete details. General requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Team members who are 18 and older must complete a mission trip legal release, a Southeast Confidential Volunteer Application, Ministry Safe Online Training, review the Southeast Child Safety Policy and agree to a background check.
- Team members who are under 18 must complete a missions release, a Southeast Confidential Volunteer Application for Minor, and a parent or legal guardian must complete a Medical Power of Attorney form which requires notarization. Additional forms may be required depending on medical needs, destination, flight authorization and whether the ministry partner requires their own application and releases.
- Participants must sign and adhere to the Team Covenant at all times.
- Partner ministries with whom you are serving may also have additional forms to complete.

How do I pay for the trip?

Trip participants are encouraged to invite friends and family in their efforts to raise financial and prayer support for the mission trip. Raising support is an integral part of your short-term mission experience. God could be waiting for an opportunity to show you how big He is!

Trip participants may begin fundraising after having been notified of acceptance to the team and informed of proper fundraising procedures. Detailed fundraising guidelines, materials, and deadlines will be provided at your 1st Team Meeting.

If full support is not raised, any balance is the team member's responsibility. Each trip has designated due dates for half and final funds. These dates are listed in the application and must be adhered to.

What does the trip cost include?

For local trips, the cost varies by trip and is determined by the team leader and ministry partner. If overnight stay is required, the cost will include meals and lodging, but may or may not include transportation.

For U.S. and International trips the cost includes airfare or ground transportation to the destination; lodging; food and transportation while on site; emergency medical insurance; project costs and international visas if required. The trip cost does not include required or recommended immunizations, passport application fees, PPE (masks/gloves/sanitizer) or medications for travel, food at the airport, souvenirs, or snacks/drinks purchased outside of meals.

How much money will I need to bring? Each team travels with trip funds and contingency cash. Team Leaders can advise regarding how much is need for souvenirs, airport meals and extra snacks.

Are there pre-trip meetings? Pre-trip preparation?

Yes, it is required that team members attend all meetings to fully prepare for the trip individually and as a team. Meeting dates will be posted on Service Reef and reminders emailed to participants. Please verify that you are available for all meetings prior to applying for the trip.

If you live outside Louisville, you will be expected to travel at your own expense to and from Louisville for all meetings and for the trip.

Can I travel separate from my team, meet my team there or stay longer?

For U.S. and Int.'l trips, all team members must travel to and from Louisville together. For local trips, transportation will vary depending on the trip type.

What if I am unable to participate in the trip for any reason after being accepted?

The Missions Ministry must receive cancellation as soon as possible. If Travel expenses have been incurred, trip members may be responsible for those costs. Monies paid towards mission trips are considered charitable contributions and are non-refundable.

In the event the trip is cancelled by Southeast or the ministry partner, funds that have been raised can be used for another trip within the same year.

How will my family know that I've arrived safely and will they be able to contact me in case of an emergency? Upon arrival, your Team Leader will communicate with your family to let them know you've arrived. You will receive emergency contact information at your Team Retreat to share with your family.

Can I contact my friends and family during the trip? Our plan is to send regular updates, as technology allows. This is the only communication your family and friends should expect during the trip. While there may be opportunities for communication, it is not guaranteed. Expect that team leaders will restrict the use of personal cell phones.

What will the food be like where I'm going? Adequate and nourishing food will be provided. Some of it, however, may be quite different from what you are accustomed to so be flexible. If you have special dietary requirements, please discuss these with the Team Leader or Missions Staff prior to applying. If your team is invited into someone's home, be prepared to eat what is offered to you.

Is the water safe to drink? Tap water in many countries is not safe to drink. In that situation, your host will provide safe filtered or bottled water for the team.

What if there is a medical emergency? Trip Leaders and ministry partners are familiar with the closest medical facilities and are prepared if the situation arises. Southeast provide each team member with medical insurance during the trip. If you have specific medications, please bring enough for the entire trip plus a couple of days in case of delays.

What kind of supervision will there be? Your team will have a trained Team Leader with you at all times. He or she will be responsible for your spiritual growth and the overall logistics for your team. You will be expected to consent to their leadership and authority as well as adhere to the Team Covenant you signed.

International Trip Specifics:

What if I do not have a passport?

A passport is required for all trips out of the continental U.S. **Your passport must be valid at least 6 months beyond the date you return and have available visa pages if your trip requires a visa.**

Don't wait! Renew or apply for a passport immediately following your approval! Regular passport renewal processing times are 10-12 weeks. Go to [Processing Times for U.S. Passports \(state.gov\)](https://state.gov) for more information.

Requirements:

- birth certificate (not hospital record)
- government-issued photo identification document
- cost can be \$135-\$200 or more
- allow 10-12 weeks for your passport to arrive
- 2 passport-size photos

Note: If visas are required for the destination, 2 more color pass-port sized photos may be required.

What immunizations are required?

Passport and immunization costs are not included in the trip cost and are the responsibility of the team member. No funds received through trip contributions can be used.

- Team members are expected to assume the responsibility and liability for their personal health decisions.
- The Missions Ministry strongly supports the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control. Check passporthealthusa.com to find out which immunizations are required. Many countries now require proof COVID vaccinations were completed 2 weeks prior to departure and list on their embassy websites which COVID vaccinations are acceptable. Some countries approve an antigen test, or doctor proof of COVID infection completion.

- Contact an immunization provider, your physician, UL Vaccine and International Travel Center (562-2822), Passport Health (423-9799) or others.
- Plan 4 - 8 weeks before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect.
- Check with your health insurance to see if any of these immunizations are covered by your insurance. Plan to spend anywhere from \$10 - \$500.