

## FAQ'S ABOUT SAFETY

Below is a list of frequently asked questions for your convenience. If your question is not answered here please call us at (830) 620-0224.

**Q: What is Strategic Alliance's policy about team safety?**

**A: Please visit our [STRATEGIC ALLIANCE SAFETY POLICY](#) page to view STRATEGIC ALLIANCE'S official statement about our procedures in REYNOSA.**

**Q: What measures have you taken to keep groups safe in Mexico?**

**A: In close alliance with our Mexican staff, local pastors and government officials we consistently monitor the safety of the area where we work. Upon arrival at the border all Strategic Alliance teams will be escorted across the border to the El Camino Hotel. Vehicles will park in a secure, guarded parking lot at the hotel. Our teams will travel to and from the work site during daylight hours. Ministry vehicles will not be allowed to leave the work site during work days except to travel to and from the hotel. Vehicles will not be allowed to leave the hotel after dark. There will always be an experienced Strategic Alliance Staff Member at the hotel during the outreach. Teams will be escorted back into the United States the last day of the outreach.**

**Q: Does Strategic Alliance have an evacuation plan, if necessary?**

**A: In case of an emergency, here is our plan of action:**

**Strategic Alliance staff will communicate to the outreach leader the reason for the evacuation.**

**Strategic Alliance staff will provide the outreach leader instructions for the evacuation and the time the team will leave the worksite. (return directly to the El Camino Hotel.)**

**Strategic Alliance staff will remain at the work site until the team has vacated the site.**

**All Strategic Alliance Mission Outreach team members will be accounted for at the hotel.**

**All Strategic Alliance Mission Outreach team members will be escorted to the U.S. border, if deemed necessary.**

**Q: What should be our greatest concern while serving in Mexico?**

**A: Our Mexican staff who lives in the community where we work, the pastors that also live in the community and the government officials that advise us, say that the greatest risk of exposure to violence is because of personal involvement with illegal drug activities.**

**Q: Has Strategic Alliance or its ministry teams experienced violence while serving in Mexico??**

**A: No, Strategic Alliance nor their ministry teams have witnessed violence in its 22 year history in Mexico. That's not to say that bad things haven't happened. (e.g. a van was stolen in 2002, an unsecured briefcase with several hundred dollars was stolen during an outreach)**

**Q: What is the current U.S. State Department Advisory on travel in Mexico?**

**A: U.S. travel warning's change frequently. Please visit the U.S. Department of State website for specifics on travel warnings and other travel information in regards to Mexico.**

**Q: Should families feel safe bringing their children?**

**A: That is a decision each family needs to make on their own or as a team. Keep in mind that we serve families that have children and live in the area where we work.**

**Q: What would have to happen for Strategic Alliance to stop teams from going to Mexico?**

**A: Strategic Alliance Staff living in the areas we work constantly monitor the activities in the community. That combined with input from government officials enables us to make intelligent decisions about the security of our teams. If, at any time, we determine that our safety would be compromised we will suspend activities. Otherwise, we will continue to take teams to serve the needy.**

**Q: Are we allowed to travel alone to go to the store or pick up supplies while in Mexico?**

**A: Never travel alone in Mexico. The “buddy system” is always in effect. Please take extra care to plan ahead before crossing the border to bring everything you will need during your Strategic Alliance Mission Trip. In the event that you still need to pick up additional supplies, you may shop in designated Strategic Alliance work areas. Please let your Strategic Alliance Team Leader know where you are at all times. All travel must be done during daylight hours.**

**Q: May we visit the families we’ve built for in the past?**

**A: If the families live in the area we are working and the area has been deemed safe by Strategic Alliance you may visit the families provided that you travel during daylight hours and return to the hotel before dark. Always communicate to our staff your plans to visit the family.**

**Q: Can we still leave the hotel at night to eat at the street vendors.**

**A: Strategic Alliance mission teams are not permitted to leave the hotel after dark and must stay at the hotel in the evenings. There is one exception: groups of two or more can visit the Seven Eleven across the street with permission of your group leader. It is the responsibility of the team leader to know where each team member is at all times.**

Strategic Alliance has always been diligent in providing for the safety of our teams. For the past 33 years, Strategic Alliance has labored to provide secure work sites for our teams to build and minister. Strategic Alliance considers the safety of our teams its utmost importance.

We aggressively implement procedures that secure the safety of our teams. Security and safety is our first priority.

Strategic Alliance has built strong relationships (strategic alliances) in Mexico over these past 33 years. Through excellent cooperation with the police, the local government and the communities we serve we are very well equipped to handle any safety issues that might arise.

Guidelines for the Safety of our teams in Reynosa Strategic Alliance ministry teams partner with local churches to provide a unique ministry experience. Every outreach is different, every home unique and every team member and family they serve are blessed!

In order to limit exposure to known risks, we ask that groups work within our outlined recommendations to travel and labor safely while in Reynosa, Mexico.

# Safety Procedures for ministry teams in Reynosa, Mexico

## Arrival at the border:

- All teams will be escorted into Mexico by Strategic Alliance staff.
- After going through Mexico's Customs area (Aduana) we will proceed to the hotel.
- Changes in border procedures have increased wait times at Customs at the border. Please bring a detailed typewritten inventory of all gifts to be left with the families on church or company stationery. List separately the tools you plan to take back to the United States.

## Returning to the U.S.:

- A Strategic Alliance Ministry representative will escort teams back into the United States.
- Teams must leave Mexico before dark the day of departure. Wait time on the bridge entering the United States can be very long.
- Ask Strategic Alliance representatives the best times to leave Mexico. In the event of an emergency requiring a trip to the U.S., a Strategic Alliance representative will be assigned to escort your vehicle(s) to the border line.

## While In Mexico, groups should:

- Inform their Strategic Alliance Field Representative at all times of any intended travel, preferably the evening prior to such travel.
- Limit travel solely to the route given to and from the hotel each day. Teams needing to shop at Sorianita will return to the hotel before dark.
- Refrain from traveling in vehicles alone to/from the hotel, stores, or border. Instead, travel in groups of two or more individuals. Return to the hotel each evening by 6pm or dusk, whichever is sooner, and remain at the hotel.
- Avoid going to tourist areas (markets, bars, etc) which represent a safety risk.
- Stay within eyesight of your group at all times and do not allow individuals to walk around the communities or walk alone anywhere off the work site. If walking, travel in groups of three or more and remain within eyesight of the work site.
- Please, do not invite the family for whom you are building or any acquaintances made while in Mexico back to hotel.
- Strategic Alliance is sensitive to our group's needs and will provide, to the best of our ability, anything needed to complete the goal.
- Needs in the poor communities of Mexico are greater than ever. Doors remain open for Strategic Alliance to continue to serve "the least of these"
- as Jesus mentions in Matthew 25:40 AMP. We believe that God has prepared the way for us to share His love and the good news of His Gospel.

Strategic Alliance is called to serve the poor in Mexico.

Proverbs 16:9 AMP says, "A man's mind plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps and makes them sure."

We believe that it is His will that we continue to reach out to those in need in Reynosa. If you would like to join us please ask God His will for where you can serve. He is faithful and will let you know if you are to come with us.