

Shelbourne Street Church Short Term Mission Trips Policy

The Shelbourne Street Church of Christ (SSCOC) has a powerful commitment to “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19 NIV). We are called not only to impact people next door but to impact them throughout the world. Short term missions are a great way to get involved in missions for the first time or to get involved when you only have a small amount of time available. Participants have the opportunity to serve God, serve others and get acquainted with another culture in the world.

This policy outlines the process for overseeing short term mission trips of the SSCOC.

Project Approval Process

Proposals for short term missions trips of the church must be presented by the trip team leader to the missions committee at least three months prior to the proposed departure time and must be approved by the elders on recommendation of the missions committee before fundraising commences.

Proposals should include the following:

- Overview of the mission as well as the goals and activities to be carried out,
- Project start and end date, with high level schedule indicating days off,
- Location of the project and responsible contact person at project location,
- Evaluation of risk and health and safety considerations,
- Estimated number of participants,
- Required travel documentation and immunizations,
- Estimated total budget for the trip with major estimated expenses detailed, and
- Outline of fundraising plans and estimate of amount that can be raised.

Proposals will be considered in the context of the church’s overall purposes and missions strategy.

Fundraising

All participants will be required to assist in raising funds for the trip.

All fundraising methods must be approved in advance by the missions committee and be coordinated through the trip team leader.

All donations designated toward the trip will be accepted and receipted in accordance with the SSCOC Fundraising and Designated Donations Policy, available at www.shelbournestreetchurch.com.

In the event that sufficient funds are not raised, the missions committee will determine whether the trip will proceed, in consultation with the church treasurer and elders. In some situations funds may be made available from the church budget, on recommendation of the missions committee, if financial circumstances permit.

Any funds raised in excess of those required for the particular trip for which they are raised will become available for use for other SSCOC missions programs or programs of the church.

Participant Requirements

Each person participating in a short term missions trip must complete an application form to be submitted to the missions committee, which includes:

- Personal and emergency contact information,
- Names of two references, at least one of whom is a member of SSCOC,
- List of relevant experience and skills,

Shelbourne Street Church Short Term Mission Trips Policy

- Personal reasons for participating in the trip, and
- Physician medical note where advisable, and
- Consent from parents or guardians if under 19 years of age.

An interview may also be requested. The missions committee will approve those who will form part of the short term missions team, subject to appropriate funding being in place.

A release of liability form, customized for the trip, will be reviewed with each participant by the trip team leader and signed by each participant.

Team Training and Orientation

Effective short term mission trips require preparation, both spiritually and in practical terms. All trip participants will receive mandatory training. Participants must make every effort to attend all team training and orientation sessions. If a team member is unable to attend all sessions, the trip team leader will determine if that team member will be permitted to participate in the project.

Reporting and Debriefing

The trip team leader is required to complete a written report to the missions committee on the mission trip activities within one month of returning home. Log books and receipts to support expenditures must be maintained by the trip team leader and are to be submitted to the church treasurer, with copies to the missions committee, within two weeks of returning home.

The trip team leader will also debrief with each participant as soon as possible after returning home. The mission committee will also coordinate, where it deems appropriate, a presentation by trip participants to the church on the trip activities.

Expenses and Non-work Days

The following rules exist to ensure that SSCOC complies with all requirements of the *Income Tax Act* and the Canada Revenue Agency with respect to expenses associated with charitable activities.

1. All reasonable expenses associated with the trip, including travel expenses and expenses associated with non-work days, will be borne by the church as part of the trip budget, with the exception of personal expenses such as souvenirs, sightseeing costs, etc.
2. For administrative simplicity, no split-receipting will be permitted in situations where trip participants wish to stay in accommodation or enjoy amenities or meals whose costs are greater than those reasonable to achieve the trip's purposes. In such situations participants must cover the entire expense personally.
3. The number of non-work days, or days off, may not exceed two for every five days of work, as in a normal work week. If personal vacation or days off, whether en route to or in the country in which the mission work is planned, will occur at a ratio greater than two to five, whether taken before, during, or after the mission work component of the trip, travel expenses and all expenses associated with non-work days, including all food and accommodation, will be completely borne by the participant.

Any exceptions to the above must be approved by the church treasurer before the trip's start date.