



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC MISSION TRIP GUIDE

MISSION OF
Hope
HAITI
HOPE FOR A NATION



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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

ABOUT MISSION OF HOPE

As an organization following Jesus Christ, Mission of Hope exists to bring life transformation to every man, woman, and child in Haiti. There is a large Haitian population in the Dominican Republic, and we are committed to serving them, as well as other underserved communities.

With over 20 years of experience coordinating international mission trips for churches, families, and individuals, Mission of Hope believes that sustainable transformation is possible by partnering with the local churches and indigenous leaders so that ongoing ministry continues long after you go home.

Thank you for serving with us as we partner with the local churches and indigenous leaders to reach their communities for Christ. Providing hope to the people of the Dominican Republic is a worthy goal, and we are thrilled to have you be part of our Mission of Hope family.

ABOUT YOUR MISSION TRIP

Short-term mission trips are an incredible opportunity to grow spiritually, to cultivate an awareness of the world and needs around you, and to respond to God's call to share the gospel through personal, servant-minded ministry. As part of our mission of seeing lives transformed through Jesus Christ, we look forward to introducing visitors from around the world to all the work God is doing in the Dominican Republic.

Trips will be planned by Mission of Hope to involve team members in all the different facets of outreach ministry. Your team will have an opportunity to impact the Dominican Republic, just as much as the trip itself will have a long-term impact on you and your team members' lives. Team members will be a part of building intentional

relationships in communities through work projects, ministry activities, and mobile medical clinics.

Empowering indigenous leaders leads to sustainable change. When your team works alongside these local churches and ministry partners who know the needs of their communities, you are helping these ministries serve more efficiently and effectively as we share the love of Christ together.

Each mission trip is unique and can be tailored to match the skills of your group with the needs of the village in which you are serving. Two core components of our mission trips are Strategic Village Time and Church Advancement projects.

STRATEGIC VILLAGE TIME

Teams will spend two full days of Strategic Village Time (SVT) ministry. As we work with the local pastors and leaders, we ask the question, “What does your village or community need to be transformed?” Strategic Village Time allows us to build and maintain meaningful relationships with the people of the Dominican Republic, train families in basic hygiene, and gather significant demographic information of the homes we visit that will be used to better serve each community. Through this time, we can model Christ together in all we say and do to ensure that every member of the community has a chance to hear and respond to the gospel.

CHURCH ADVANCEMENT PROJECTS

At Mission of Hope, we work to serve local communities through the local church in the Dominican Republic. Teams will spend two days doing Church Advancement projects. Church Advancement projects are used as a ministry tool to share the gospel through meeting the everyday needs of the people.

Showing people the love of Christ through Church Advancement projects demonstrates that the local churches care about the individual needs of the people in their communities, and it creates an openness to the gospel. You can be a part of meeting both the physical and spiritual needs in the Dominican Republic.

MISSION TRIP COST (\$895 + \$25 RESERVATION FEE)

Upon request, children (12 and under) \$495/child + \$25 reservation fee

Price Includes:

- Lodging
- Transportation in Dominican Republic
- Mission of Hope expenses
- Beach day
- Food (Teams will also be given a small required food/supply list to bring.)

MEDICAL MISSION TRIP COST (\$945 + \$25 RESERVATION FEE)

Price Includes:

- Lodging
- Transportation in Dominican Republic
- Medical translators
- Mission of Hope expenses
- Beach day
- Meals

In an effort to be good stewards of our resources, we have initiated a required reservation fee and payment system for all mission trips. Please see the below guidelines regarding trip payments.

- \$25 fee per spot reserved
- 50% of total team payment due 90 days out from trip departure date
- 100% of total team payment due 30 days out from trip departure date

Note: Team payments should come in collectively as one payment, not individually. Airfare is not included in the cost of the trip.



PART 2: COMMITMENT

BOOKING FLIGHTS

Teams and individuals are responsible for their own airfare. We ask that all flights arrive and depart from the Puerto Plata airport (POP) on Saturdays ONLY. This allows us to be good stewards of transportation expenses and ensure your team is met by one of our staff members. If you are unable to find a flight that meets our request, we may allow you to book flights into the Santiago airport (STI), for an additional fee of \$50-\$150 for the team. If you cannot find flights that arrive on Saturday, please call the stateside office before booking for approval. There will be a fee associated with the off-day travel pickup.

When at all possible (and the cost is reasonable), we ask that you please purchase flights that arrive into POP or STI before 6:30PM. However, when the savings are significant, we do permit teams to purchase flights that arrive later.

Be sure to check with the airline for current restrictions, embargos, luggage weight limits, etc. prior to traveling.

HOW TO PAY FOR YOUR TRIP

Your first payment of 50% is due 90 days before departure. Payment is due in full 30 days out from departure date. You will need to have your reservation number on hand. Your reservation number is provided to you via email after you submit your reservation request.

Trip Payment

Payments should be made online in lump sums if you are traveling with a team, not by individual team member payments. You will need your reservation number when making payments. Your reservation number is provided to you via email after you submit your reservation request.

Payments can also be made via check by sending it to:

Mission of Hope
P.O. Box 171500
Austin, TX 78717

Please include your reservation number on the memo line.

PREPARING TO TRAVEL TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

For complete information on travel to the Dominican Republic, refer to the Dominican Republic page on the U.S. State Department Travel Site at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>.

PASSPORT

All North Americans traveling to the Dominican Republic are required to have a passport for entry into the country. You can check with your local post office for a passport application. You can also go to the U.S. Department of State's website: <http://travel.state.gov/passport> or the [Passport Canada website](#).

If you are applying for a new passport, allow 4–8 weeks to receive it. All travelers should bring a photocopy of the first two pages of their passport in their carry-on luggage in the rare event that a passport is lost. All passports must be valid for at least six months after the first day of your trip, or you will be denied travel.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND GENERAL HEALTH INFORMATION

All groups are encouraged to have the following vaccinations prior to traveling to the Dominican Republic:

- Tetanus toxoid (DT or Td) (required)
- Typhoid immunization
- Hepatitis A

Team leaders, we strongly suggest that either you or your team members carry some of these basic health supplies for use in the event of common conditions seen while working in the Dominican Republic:

- Gatorade and/or electrolyte replacement tablets
- Ciprofloxin 500 mg tablets (prescription; for diarrhea)
- Azithromycin 250 mg tablets (prescription; for illness)
- Pepto Bismol
- Tylenol, Advil
- Benadryl 25 mg tabs (for an allergic reaction)
- Band-aids and Neosporin
- Hydrocortisone cream/ "itch relief" cream
- ACE compression wraps
- Chemical cold pack(s)

In addition, team members should carry a larger-than-normal supply of any prescription medications and should bring medications that they might have to use at home on an as-needed basis, such as:

- Inhalers
- Sinus/allergy medications
- Cough/cold medicine
- TUMS, Zantac, or Pepcid
- Cold-sore medication
- Canker-sore medication

PREGNANCY DISCLAIMER

As a precaution, we recommend that any women who are pregnant or think they might be pregnant NOT travel with Mission of Hope until further notice due to the potential risk of the Zika virus. While the infection is generally mild, it can be very dangerous to a

developing fetus and has been linked to microcephaly in babies when the mother is infected with the virus during the first trimester.

PHYSICAL CONDITION AND MEDICATIONS

If you are over the age of 50 or have any health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma, lung problems, severe allergies, mental illness, etc., have a thorough medical evaluation before traveling to the Dominican Republic, and communicate those conditions and needs to Mission of Hope before arriving. If you have a newly diagnosed condition or become ill before the trip, you should delay or reschedule your trip. Medical identification, such as tags, bracelet, card, etc., must be carried by anyone with chronic illness, such as diabetes or heart conditions.

Trips to the Dominican Republic can be moderately stressful physically and mentally, and sometimes further strain comes with high temperatures, intense sun, mosquitos, hilly terrain, and lots of walking. People with mental illness or physical disabilities are required to disclose such information to us before being approved to travel. Be sure to carry all prescriptions and required medications in your carry-on luggage. If you have a history of asthma or sinus and allergy problems, bring your medication, even if you haven't used it in a long time or don't need it at home.

INTERNET AND COMMUNICATION

Mission of Hope staff carry working cell phones, to be used in emergencies only. These are not to be used for any other communication by team members. Some American cell phone companies work in the Dominican Republic. WiFi is available where you will be staying.

PLANNING FOR EVERYDAY IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Once you arrive in the Dominican Republic, your team will be given a printed itinerary for your week. We take care of all the in-country traveling logistics. Your team will be escorted at all times when off-campus by our staff or interns.

BUNKING/ELECTRICITY

Team members will stay in a mission guest house or a hotel. Your team members will be separated by gender into separate rooms, each with up to seven twin bunk beds. You may want to bring earplugs, if you are a light sleeper. There is air conditioning.

Standard US three-pronged electrical outlets are available in all rooms. Each room has a standard bathroom with running water. Mission of Hope, or the hotel, will provide a pair of clean sheets for you, as well as a pillow. All rooms are locked, and team members are given entry codes.

WATER

Please do not drink or brush your teeth with tap water. Purified water will be provided for you. We encourage you to drink as much purified water as possible. Make sure you are drinking continuously, even when you do not feel thirsty. You will need to bring a reusable water bottle for the week.

SHOWERS

Please shower with as little water as possible, as water is very precious in the Dominican Republic. It is strongly encouraged to turn the shower on to rinse, off to lather, and on to rinse again. The same is suggested for the washing of hands: on, off, on.

FOOD

You may be given a required materials list, depending on your accommodations, from the stateside Mission Trips Coordinator. We will prepare most of the meals for you and other visiting groups' meals throughout the week with these items. This is an effort to reduce overall trip costs, as it is more cost-effective to purchase these items in North America. If you are serving as a medical trip participant, you are only responsible for the medical needs list.

HANDOUTS TO LOCALS

Please do not hand out any items to locals. This includes but is not limited to money, candy, toys, or water. We, as an organization working for lasting change in the Dominican Republic, are trying to discourage locals from seeing or expecting handouts from visiting North Americans. Mission of Hope is striving to encourage a culture of locals helping locals.

LOSSES

Mission of Hope and/or its employees, agents, or volunteers are not responsible for any team member's lost money, stolen money, damaged luggage, lost luggage, or loss of any other personal property. We do everything possible to prevent these unfortunate incidents; however, they sometimes occur despite our efforts.

OTHER POLICIES

Mission of Hope is a smoke-free environment. However, if you must smoke, inform the stateside Mission Trips Coordinator prior to leaving for the Dominican Republic. All alcohol, drugs, and firearms are prohibited by all Mission of Hope guests.

PART 3: BEFORE YOU GO AND DEPARTURE

Your trip is right around the corner, and we have a bit more information to share with you before you're on the ground in the Dominican Republic!

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

- Passport
- Personal size water bottle (One-quart that can be used all week is recommended.)
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Bible, journal, and pen
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo)
- Towels (bath/beach) and washcloths
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Personal snacks (e.g. Clif bars)
- Anti-diarrhea medicine

INSECTS

Extra-strength insect repellents and insecticide sprays are useful for repelling mosquitoes and spraying sleeping quarters. Be sure to place this in your checked baggage.



DRESS CODE

The local Dominican pastors have requested that, in order to respect the culture and be most effective in ministry, we abide by the following dress code. Our staff on the ground reserves the right to ask you to change if you do not comply. Thank you for your understanding!

Women:

Skirts

- Bring 2-4 skirts that are at least to the knee or longer
- Must be worn for church on Sunday
- Must be worn during SVT
- Leggings can be worn under skirts that are to the knee or longer

Shorts/Pants/Capris

- Bring 1-2 pairs of shorts to the knee, loose-fitting pants, or loose-fitting capris
- Can be worn in the village on CA project days
- No yoga or workout pants outside of Guest Housing

Shirts

- Bring 4-6 simple, solid, light weight, breathable shirts
- Shoulders, chest, and back must be covered
- No tank tops or spaghetti straps outside of Guest Housing

Swimsuits

- One-piece or tankini

Shoes:

- Durable sandals (e.g. Chacos/Tevas)
- Tennis shoes
- Shower flip-flops

Men:

Shorts

- Bring 2-3 pairs of shorts
- Athletic shorts can be worn for CA projects
- Khaki, Cargo, or Hiking Shorts (non-athletic) can be worn for Strategic Village Time in the village

Pants

- Bring 1-2 pairs of pants for church on Sunday and Tuesday

- Nice jeans recommended, and dress pants are preferred

Shirts

- Bring 4-6 simple, solid, light weight, and breathable shirts
- Collared shirts for church on Sunday and Tuesday
- No tank tops outside of Guest Housing

Swimsuits

- Trunks – No Speedos!

Shoes:

- Durable sandals (e.g. Chacos/Tevas)
- Tennis shoes
- Shower flip-flops

ARRIVAL FLIGHT INFORMATION

When travelling into POP or STI, you will be asked to fill out a customs declaration form and an immigration form. You will need to fill out these forms with a blue or black ink pen.

The forms will ask for the address where you will be staying. It is listed below:

Sosua by the Sea

Avenida Proyecto #1

Sosúa 57000

Dominican Republic

IMMIGRATION

At the immigration department, you will be asked for your passport and immigration form. If you did not get an immigration form on the plane, you can get one at the service counter.

To ensure a smooth transition through the immigration line, please have your passport and completed immigration form readily available for the immigration officer.

BAGGAGE CLAIM

Once you pass through immigration, you will move directly to baggage claim. You may be approached several times by airport employees seeking to help you. If you do not need assistance, kindly tell them “*No, gracias*” which means “No, thank you.”

Keep your group together in one area, and assign two or three people to get the luggage off the carousel for the whole team. In some cases, the luggage will have already been pulled off and will be lined up in the large open area to the right of the carousel.

We recommend tagging your team's luggage in a unique way for easy identification. For example, tie the same color ribbon on each luggage handle. Once your team has secured its luggage, you can head to the customs checkpoint.

CUSTOMS

Once you have your luggage, you will go through the customs checkpoint. Have your completed customs form readily available for the customs agent. The customs agent will take the form from you and then clear you to leave the airport.

When you pass through customs, you will exit the airport. Once you exit the building, start looking for our Mission of Hope staff member, who will be waiting just inside or outside of the exit doors, if you have not already met them inside the airport. If you have trouble finding our staff, please call **+1 (849) 855-7707**.

DEPARTURE FLIGHT

On the day of your departure, you will leave for the airport approximately 3-5 hours before your flight departs either the POP or STI airports. Please have your luggage packed and ready to go before then.

IMPORTANT! Have your passport with you before you leave. **Please let us know if you have lost your passport before you leave our campus.**

AIRPORT DROP-OFF

A Mission of Hope driver will transport you to the airport. You will be dropped off at the front of the airport. It is possible that there will be locals who want to assist you with your bags into the airport. If they help you with your bags, you are expected to tip them. It is acceptable to tell them, "*No, gracias*" or "No, thank you."

You will need to show your passport before you will be allowed to enter the airport. Once inside the airport, your bags will be screened by airport officials. When you get through the initial security checkpoint, you will then proceed to your airline's counter to check your bags and get your boarding papers.

DEPARTURE CUSTOMS

After you check in with your airline, you will proceed to customs where you will show them your passport. When you pass through customs, you will proceed to another security checkpoint. At this checkpoint, you will be asked for your boarding pass. Everyone will be patted down at this checkpoint. You cannot have any liquids at this checkpoint.

FLIGHT HOME

On the flight back to the States, you will be given a customs form to make any declarations for items you purchased in the Dominican Republic and are bringing back to the States.

CONTACTS AND EMERGENCY NUMBERS

For changes or delays on the day of your travel, please send a **text message with updated details**: team name, flight number, and new arrival time to the Mission of Hope travel day cell phone: 512-599-2144. You will receive a confirmation reply from our team, and they will notify our Mission of Hope airport pickup team.

After arrival in the Dominican Republic, if you experience issues at the airport, please call our staff at +1-849-855-7707. For all other inquiries, please call the US office at +1 (512) 256-0835 during normal business hours M-F 8:30am-4:30pm CST.

TEAM LEADER CHECKLIST

- Share Mission Trip Guide with team
- Make reservation and pay \$25 non-refundable, non-transferable deposit per individual
- Mark two trip payment deadlines on calendar:
 - Initial 50% due 90 days prior to trip start date
 - Final 50% due 30 days prior to trip start date
- Check in with team to ensure passports are current for travel

- Book team flights, and send itineraries to your trip coordinator
- Each participant must complete their Individual Trip Forms (due 60 days from departure)
- Pass out the Mission of Hope 21 Day Devotional Books (sent approximately one month prior to departure)

Discuss with team:

- Strategic Village Time Training Packet
- Dress code
- Suggested Packing List
- Required Materials List
- Extra spending money for gift shop or souvenirs

CONCLUSION

We are committed to ensuring you and your team have an excellent mission trip experience in the Dominican Republic. If you have any questions, please reach out to our Mission Trip Coordinators. We believe God is going to do amazing things in and through you as you serve on your mission trip. We look forward to seeing you in the Dominican Republic!