



Team Leader Handbook

(Last Update: ber 201)

We would like to welcome you on your way to the mission field!! We appreciate the effort that it takes to make such a trip and know the Lord will bless you for it! Below information we hope will help you and your team prepare for your 1-week journey. If you have additional questions, please contact the Tree of Life

Ministries stateside office at (810) 750-5433 or email us in Honduras directly at tolm@tolm.org. We look forward to serving with you.

PASSPORT: A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and depart Honduras. A Visa is also required, and will be issued in flight. All visitors must provide proof of return or onward travel. For information in obtaining a passport please click the following link: <https://www.usps.com/shop/apply-for-a-passport.htm>.

Note: If your passport has expired or will expire 6 weeks PRIOR to your trip you must renew your passport prior to departing the United States. Inquire at your local U.S. Post Office or courthouse about expediting procedures if you don't have much time before your trip.

SHOTS: Shots are not required to enter Honduras; however, we do recommend you contact your family physician or immunization clinic for specific recommendations. If your trip will include time in the Mosquito Coast we strongly recommend Malaria treatment. For additional medical information please visit <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/honduras.htm>.

FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS: Each group is responsible for purchasing their own plane tickets. Your destination is to San Pedro Sula, Honduras. The airport code is SAP. Flights should be scheduled to arrive Not Later Than 2:30pm. No flights should be scheduled to arrive or depart Honduras on Sunday, without prior approval by Director.

COST: Aside from your airfare, we request the following fee per person to cover your stay in Honduras. This fee covers lodging, ground transportation, 3 meals per day for your 1-week stay at Plan Escalon and other expenses associated with the project your group will be assigned during your visit.

Group Size	Cost per person
1-5	\$0.00
6-10	\$.00
11-20	\$.00
21-40	\$.00

To facilitate greater latitude in your group's objective, projects, and ability to meet needs encountered, we humbly request your group prayerfully consider a \$1000 team effort offering.

We also recommend that you bring along extra cash for spending on snacks, souvenirs, emergencies, as well as any offerings that you may want to give during local church services and visits to mountain village churches.

IN-FLIGHT DOCUMENTS: Each member of your team will be required to complete a(Registro Migración) and a **Customs Declaration** form. Both these forms will be given by your airline in flight to San Pedro Sula. These forms are printed in English and Spanish requesting basic information about you and your travel. These

forms must be completed prior to landing in Honduras, since they will be required immediately once you deplane and report to the immigration and customs agents. our destination address is: Ministerio Árbol de Vida, La Entrada de Copan.

UPON ARRIVAL: All flights into Honduras must be scheduled to land at the San Pedro Sula International Airport. San Pedro Sula is the industrial capital of Honduras and is a very large, busy, and fairly modern city. What may make for a slight culture shock for many of you will be the extreme poverty mixed with extreme wealth. A missionary along with a driver representing TOLM, will greet you and your team at the airport once you've cleared customs. If your luggage is searched, please do not be intimidated, the customs agents and police on hand are there for your protection. We suggest you consider Team Shirts, as this quickly identifies you to the custom agents as a group of missionaries. NEVER let your suitcases, carry-on, purse, et cetera out of your sight. ALWAYS STAY TOGETHER WITH YOUR GROUP!!! Once you have cleared the customs area you will then begin the last leg of your journey... another two hours drive and you'll be at Plan Escalón!!!

MONEY EXCHANGE: Due to extreme poverty, the people have become exceptionally desperate. For this reason we ask that you NEVER attempt to exchange your American currency on your own. The Honduran money is known as the Lempira and although they do have denomination similar to those in the U.S. there are differences in value, especially with coins. You could easily be cheated and run the risk of being robbed. The best way to exchange your dollars is through the aid of our Tree of Life representative that will await you at the airport.

We have been a part of the culture for over 20 years now. This time has allowed us to become established with several agencies that will fairly exchange money for us at the going rate. Keep your cash in a safe place! NEVER display all of your cash publicly when making a purchase. We recommend that you fold your cash placing the smaller bills on the outside while keeping larger denominations on the inside. Also keeping some smaller bills in a separate pocket making it readily available will help, so that you will not have to take out everything you have in order to pay for something.

DESTINATION: La Entrada de Copan - Tree of Life is located in the Copan region in the Southwestern part of Honduras. It is only about an hour from the border of Guatemala. It has been aptly named "La Entrada/The Entrance" because it is the first city one would encounter traveling from Guatemala. For this reason there is a high volume of traffic and the city itself has grown and prospered as a result in the past years. There are several hotels, restaurants, privately-owned grocery stores, and typical indoor markets as well as street vendors. Keep in mind that what you may be accustomed to as modern or prosperous is very different from what you may see!

ACCOMODATIONS: Everyone will be staying on Plan Escalon property. We have a guesthouse on campus that accommodates up to 28 individuals, 14 on each side. The men will occupy one side, while the women will live in the other. Each side has 7 metal bunk beds. We apologize for having to separate husbands and wives but because of space we have no choice!

Each side of the guesthouse has a bathroom with two showers. The water may be cold at times but the water pressure has definitely been improved! We also have electricity on campus: the same as the USA, 110 AC. There are blackout periods when we are temporarily without electricity; so be sure to bring a flashlight and extra batteries.

MEALS: You will be served three delicious meals per day. We will do our best to supply you with a variety of foods: delicious native cuisine, fresh fruit, and other delicacies; however, if you think you will have a hard time with the typical cuisine please pack some snack foods such as granola bars, tuna, crackers, beef jerky, chips, etc.

** Please Remember: Let's strive to show the love and compassion of Christ and keep our dislikes to ourselves! Be gracious and please try the food first—almost everyone enjoys it! If it disagrees with you, simply smile and say, "No, gracias", which translates into "No, thank you". In the event you choose not to eat, please fellowship with your other teammates during the meal and eat your snacks privately in your room later, so as not to insult the students and leaders who work tirelessly to prepare your meals.

Be sure to ALWAYS drink plenty of water throughout the day. Purified water will be provided for you in the upstairs dining area and living quarters. Remember that this is a mission trip and not a vacation, so expect things to be different, perhaps a bit awkward and inconvenient at times! This can be a life-changing experience for you if you allow it to be! Our prayer is that you will all return home with a renewed heart and a vision of the many needs in the world as well as the need to support missionaries serving in the field.

MICRO-BUSINESSES: Be sure to stop by and visit with our former students who are now operating and managing mi-businesses on campus to help raise funds off-set the cost of school expenses for students currently enrolled. As of 2011 we have a bakery, (Advertised on our site)

TRANSPORTATION: All transportation will be provided for you by our ministry and is included in the Escalon fee as well. The cost of gas is more than \$4.00/gallon here and therefore a big part of our expense!

PHONES: Once you leave Miami you will have very little to no access to a phone and therefore contact will be extremely limited. In case of an emergency where you need to be contacted, a message can be sent by E-mail to tolm@tolm.org. This email is checked throughout the day every day. We will do our best to get the message through however it can take a day or two depending on internet availability and/or electricity. . Please inform your family that they may not hear from you during the time that you are away, so that they will not be worried. If you are interested, some America phone companies offer international services to existing members, which would enable you personal communication with your family. Check with your carrier for details

DEPARTURE: Each traveler is required to pay an airport fee, prior to gaining access to the boarding area. This fee/tax is normally including in your airfare; however, since Honduras does not access this fee in the price of your ticket, it is collected in person prior to your departure. (**Note:** *This amount is not included in the Plan Escalon fee.*)

PASSPORT SECURITY: There will be checkpoints along the way, where you may need to present proof of identity. Your passport along with a second piece of identification such as a valid US driver's license should be sufficient. Please be sure that the name on the second piece of ID matches that on your passport to avoid any hassles. Do not be alarmed! The checkpoints are routine. Honduras has been very effective in

maintaining peace within its borders despite the fact that Guatemala and Nicaragua are its neighbors. National Geographic has called Honduras “The Eye of the Storm”. The Lord has certainly given His favor to this country and the government as well has worked at maintaining peace and not allowing “rebels” to infiltrate. If we are stopped, understand that it is for safety and protection. For this reason, you will not be allowed to go anywhere accompanied one of our staff. Once arriving at Escalon, the Team/Group leader should collect and keep all passports in a safe place. We recommend a locked suitcase. A Stolen passport could sell on the black market for up to \$5,000! So please adhere to our recommendation. Never carry your passport on your person during your stay here at Plan Escalon. We also strongly encourage team leads to consider making copies of each traveler’s passport .

FOOD & WATER SAFETY: Please don’t drink the water! Thankfully, the water on Escalon property is pure. Because it comes from a well that we dug ourselves, we do have clean water and have it tested periodically. Anywhere else is a no-no!! Even when brushing your teeth be careful to spit and not swallow! Wear flip-flops in the shower to avoid fungal infections.

Please don’t eat from street vendors! If you are new in the country and not well acclimated to the food, you could surely come into contact with some unfamiliar bacteria. We want to do everything possible to prevent you from getting sick! If eating out, allow your guide to select the place. They will know how to best direct you. Please don’t eat fruits directly from the market or bought on the street! Honduras has many awesome fruits: pineapples, mangos, papaya, bananas, etc. Everything must first be washed in a water and bleach mixture before being eaten. (That includes lettuce!) Anything that can be peeled is usually safe, but better to ask one of our kitchen staff to prepare it for you. All of the food and drinks at Escalon will be properly cleaned and prepared. There is no need to worry about the food or water—Eat and enjoy!!

** One note of caution. Because of the delicious fruits: mangos, papayas, etc., many guests eat their fill and later regret it, since these types of fruit tend to loosen your stool! This happens in any country so just remember: Everything in moderation!

FORBIDDEN GIFTS: Please do not give money or things away to students or leaders of Plan Escalon! This sounds cruel and hard and many people misunderstand. There is so much of a need that can be seen here that many are overwhelmed and willing to leave everything they brought. We appreciate your compassion! We ask, however, that you would leave it in our care and allow us to distribute it for you. It is the tendency that the kids with the most outgoing personalities are always noticed and receive time and again from groups. The ones who may not stand out as much or may be a little shyer are often passed over and neglected when they are often the ones with the most need.

** If the Lord lays on your heart a particular person or family and you feel as though you are being directed by the Lord to give something in particular to someone, please let one of our staff members know. We do not want to interfere with this leading and will be glad to arrange an opportunity for you to present the gift to that person or family through an interpreter. We certainly hope this information is both helpful and informative to you in planning your trip to Honduras! We want to express our sincere appreciation for your willing heart in making yourself available to come and serve for this short time along with tree of Life Ministries. It will have long-lasting benefits and blessings! More importantly, we are grateful for your heart

to reach out to the world with the love the Christ! Together, the Lord will use us all to make a difference in someone's life!

TRAVEL WARE: Team T-Shirts, comfortable shoes and clothing, no flashy jewelry, and bring old clothes to work in.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact us in one of the following ways: Home Office: Phone (407) 725-3663 Our Field Director: Guy Henry E-mail: tolm@tolm.org.

To help us to better prepare for you and your teams' arrival, request that you complete the attached TOLM Short-term Missions Group/Team form. We use this form to organize and prepare for your arrival and to establish projects that fit your team.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in all that has been discussed in this handbook. It is our desire at TOLM that your missions experience is one that will always be remembered in years to come.

Sincerely,

Guy Henry

Dr. Guy Henry

Director, Tree of Life Ministries

TOLM Short-term Missions Group/Team

Enter Church Full Name: _____

Pastor's Name: _____ Team Leader Name: _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____

Contact Phone Numbers:

Team Leader: _____ Emergency (Stateside): _____

Team Members Information

Note: Please indicate if anyone on your team is a pastor or fluent in the Spanish language or special medical concerns.

Member's Full Name

Ability/Skills

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----- Do not write below this line. To be completed by TOLM Project Manager -----

The following project(s) are assigned to the above referenced team.
Lo siguiente proyectos están asignado a el grupo listado arriba.

Firma de Gerente de Proyectos / Project Manager Signature

Fecha / Date