

SERVE THE CHILDREN SHORT TERM MISSION POLICIES AND TEAM COVENANT

(Please sign and return with your application and emergency release form)

I realize that the following principles are crucial to the effectiveness, quality and safety of our mission together.

As a member of the short-term mission team, I agree to adhere to these policies:

1. Remember that I am a representative of SERVE THE CHILDREN (STC) and the church I attend, and as such I will seek to represent good spiritual values, moral conduct and a likeness to Christ that is embraced in that assembly.
2. Remember that I have come not only to teach, but also to learn. I may be exposed to procedures and practices that I feel are ineffective or insufficient. I may also be confronted by attitudes that I feel are narrow or close-minded. As this occurs I will resist the temptation to "correct" my hosts and inform them about "how things are done back in the United States."
3. Respect my host's culture and distinctive practices of Christianity. I recognize that the Christian faith has many different faces throughout the world, and that one of the purposes of my trip is to witness and experience faith lived out in a different culture.
4. Develop and consistently maintain a servant's attitude toward all nationals and my teammates.
5. Respect our team leader(s) and their decisions and the guidance of our host country staff.
6. Refrain from gossip and keep my promise of giving only good reports. If there are policies and decisions made by the leaders with which I disagree or do not understand, I will go to the team leaders in private and make my concerns known to them rather than to other team members. In so doing I will avoid the possibility of sowing seeds of dissension and division. If someone on the team offends me I promise to remain silent and forgive the person before God in my heart (Mk. 11:25), allowing love to cover a multitude of sins (1 Pet. 4:8), or go to the person privately and seek reconciliation. I will resolve to approach an offender in the spirit of gentleness and genuine love, having first corrected my own attitude and actions (Gal. 6: 1, 2). Only if I am unable to restore an offender will I share the problem with others according to the principles of Matthew 18: 15-20. When I violate these aforementioned principles, I resolve to ask the forgiveness of my brother or sister and the Lord, knowing that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). By doing all these things I will seek to promote harmony on my team.
7. Be patient, forbearing and forgiving toward the short-comings of the other members on the team.
8. Refrain from complaining. I realize that travel can present numerous unexpected and undesirable circumstances, but the rewards of conquering such circumstances should be my goal. I will resolve to be flexible, supporting and adaptive on such occasions rather than grumbling when circumstances are difficult.
9. Respect the work that is going on in the host country with its pastors and leaders. I realize that our team will be there for just a short time, but the local church and ministry is there long term. I will respect their knowledge, insights and instructions.
10. Refrain from negative comments or hostile discussions concerning the host country's politics and culture.
11. Remember not to be exclusive in my relationships with the team. If my best friend or spouse is on the team we will make every effort to interact regularly with all team members of the team.
12. Refrain from activity or undue interest that could be construed as a romantic interest toward a national. I realize that certain actions that seem innocent in my own culture may be inappropriate in another culture.
13. Refrain from any consumption of alcoholic beverages, including beer, wine, and liquors. While this is not an attempt to bind the conscience, I understand that such indulgence may cause another to stumble. I realize and accept that failure to adhere to this mandate will result in my exclusion from further short-term trips with STC.
14. Refrain from use of any tobacco or tobacco related products while on this trip. This is due to the different cultural or religious views of tobacco usage the team may encounter and I do not want to hurt my witness or the team's testimony.
15. Remember my financial commitment as a team member and to STC in choosing to be a part of this team.
16. Attend team meetings in the US and in the country where I am serving.
17. I will help with fundraising activities for the team as much as my schedule will allow. I understand that if I cannot abide by this covenant, I may be asked to return home early at my own expense and will not have any funds that were spent on this mission trip returned to me.

Signature _____ Date _____