



Methodist Church of Puerto Rico Hurricane María Recovery Volunteer Guidelines 2018



General:

- Group size: 7 to 10 people
- Group age: 18 yr. or older (18-21 yrs. will need a notarized “power of attorney” and “Permission to travel with someone other than parents” document)
- No one under 18 yrs. Will be accepted – Our mission is re-construct houses & Sanctuaries
- Each group must have a leader
- Team leader will work with the mainland-based Volunteer Coordinator
 - o Mainland Coordinator will coordinate with the Methodist Church of PR
 - o Group should be fully coordinated at least two to four weeks prior to the visit
 - o All communication with the group will be via the leader
- Each group must have two drivers
 - o They will need a valid US license
 - o Need a credit card to be able to guarantee the vehicle rental
- All adults must have current Background Checks and Safe Sanctuaries training

Travel Dates:

- Puerto Rico will receive groups starting January 9th, 2018
 - o No Sunday travel.
- Groups should plan to stay 7 to 8 days including travel dates

Travel Documents:

- Puerto Rico is part of the USA; Puerto Ricans are US citizens from birth, no passport required for US citizens
- Need an official ID – driver’s license or passport.
- If under age (18-21) need a letter of authorization to travel with an adult other than parents

Currency:

- US Dollar

Official Language:

- Spanish is PR’s first language, and English our second. Most people understand English although can’t speak it fluently
- We will provide a translator with each group. Please refer to Estimated Costs



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Medical:

- Everyone should travel with Medical, Accident, and Repatriation Insurance (Submit documents before arrival)
 - o Personal – verify your coverage with your provider
 - o Temporary Insurance from your Conference or Jurisdiction
- Hospitals
 - o We will provide a list of nearby hospitals
 - o Team members must be in good health and prepared for heavy work in warm temperatures and higher elevations. All team members will sign a liability waiver

Transportation:

- Air transportation:
 - o Each group will be in charge of their air reservations and tickets
 - o Arrival Airport: Luis Muñoz Marin Airport, Isla Verde, PR (Airport Code: SJU). Plan to arrive no later than 3:30 PM to allow for travel to host sites
 - o All team members must arrive at the same hour
- Ground transportation: - 15 max per van (More details in the Estimated Cost section)
 - o Need a valid license to be able to drive the van
 - o The group will need 2 vans: (1) passenger (2) luggage
 - o Puerto Rico's *Volunteer Coordinator* will make the arrangements for the vans rentals

Lodging and meals:

- Accommodations:
 - o Depending on the assignment and group size, the group will be staying at a Retreat Camp or a local church
 - o There will be bunks at the retreat sites. Please bring appropriate linens.
 - o Teams staying at a local church will sleep in the sanctuary either on pews or on the floor. Please bring a small air mattress, crash pad, and sleeping bag – depending on your needs.
- Meals:
 - o The kitchen will prepare 3 meals and a snack for the group.
 - o Meals are not made to order, there can be no changes in the menu or special order – except for medical concerns.
 - o If a volunteer requires a special diet because of a medical condition, please request it at least 4 weeks prior to your arrival thru your team leader. All team members must eat together.
 - o If desired, a team may eat at a local restaurant if one is available. These arrangements must be made ahead of time with the Volunteer or Site Coordinator.





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- Power and water:
 - o To this date the three Retreat Camps have tap water. (Only for washing)
 - o Bottled Water: Is included in the daily costs
 - o There is no power. The camps have a small generator for the fridge and fans.
 - o Be prepared to use your flashlight and shower with cold water.
 - o Do not bring any electric appliances.

Activities:

- Sunday Itinerary:
 - o The group will attend the Local Church Worship Service.
 - o All services are in Spanish. Simultaneous translation upon availability.
- ERT's common tasks:
 - o Install tarps, clean debris, "Shelter in Place" repairs (roof, windows, doors), cleaning, etc.





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Methodist Church of Puerto Rico Travel Information



What to bring:

Luggage:

- It is suggested that personal items be kept to a minimum.
- One checked and one carry-on bag per person.

Clothing: Men and Women

- Work pants or jeans on project site
- Always t-shirts on work site – “cami-shirt” or “spaghetti strap shirt” for women or sleeveless shirts for men are Not allowed
- If a volunteer has heat sensitive skin, long sleeve shirts are recommended for work.
- A Hat
- Construction Boots or vibram-sole hiking shoes (Be conscious of the danger of nails in the floor)
- Appropriate outfit for church attendance: men-slacks, women-dress or long pants
- Consider local weather temperature – based on season
- Comfortable clothes for evenings
- Little or no jewelry
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Don't wear any tight or shorts. Long Bermuda-type shorts can be worn at the camp site.
- Flip-flops for shower
- Bathing suit (one piece)

Personal items:

- Linens: Twin Bed sheet set (bunk bed)
- Pillow
- Towel
- Small wash basin
- Water bottle
- Light blanket
- Sleeping bags-those staying in sanctuary
- Hygiene items/toiletries
- Insect repellent



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- Flashlight and batteries
- Sun block
- Work gloves
- N-95 dust masks
- Detergent for hand laundry
- * Do not bring blowers or irons – there is no electric power at camp sites

Optional:

- Tea Bags (If you do not drink coffee)
- Money for buying non-budgeted items such as specific snacks, soft drinks or personal items

Electrical Appliances:

- * Do not bring any electrical appliances. There is no electricity at the camp

Tools:

- Follow your team leader's instructions.
- We encourage teams to bring hand tools (hammers, pry bars, screw drivers, etc..) and cordless drills and saws.
- Consider a donation of your tools to the site to be used by other groups in the reconstruction of PR. This will help build up our inventory.

FINANCES:

- **Estimated cost per person: \$55.00 per person/ per day**
 - Lodging
 - Meals: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner
 - 1 snack
- **Plus: Total estimated cost per group / per week = \$1,840**
 - Transportation 15 passengers van for one week = \$1,100 per van / per week
 - Van for transporting group luggage 2 days (Day In/Out) from \$440
 - Translator/Team host - \$300.00 /week
- **NOT INCLUDED:**
 - Gas for the van
 - Van Insurance
 - Toll expense
 - Personal items



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VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES Culture, Religious, and Local Customs:

All teams will receive a general orientation after arriving at their host site

DO:

- Recognize that survivors own their own recovery, and have ultimate decision-making regarding their residence.
- Have confidence that the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico has done a thorough assessment to identify the needs and available resources.
- Shake hands when greeting someone and when saying good-bye. A kiss on the cheek, or an “abrazo” (hug) is not unusual.
- Take time for polite conversation; don’t just jump right into “business.”
- Give gifts **only** through the local pastor, District Superintendent, or Volunteer Coordinator.
- Learn as much Spanish as you can, and use it every chance you get.
- Expect to participate in charismatic-style worship.
- Smile! Smile! Smile!

DON'T:

- No drinking of alcoholic beverages
- No smoking
- No shorts to attend church
- Do not give money to individuals
- Please do not make judgements.
- Do not proselytize.
- Don’t take pictures of the owners of the house you are working in, except with their permission.
- Don’t drink untreated water.
- Don’t wear expensive-looking jewelry and flashy clothes.
- Don’t smoke or drink alcoholic beverages at any time or place while in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rican culture in church context is more conservative.
- Don’t wear any tight pants or shorts. Long Bermuda-type shorts can be worn at the camp site, but NOT to a church service. Slacks for men, and skirt/dress or long pants for women, should be worn for church activities.
- **DO NOT** give gifts to **anyone**. **Any private of collective gifts**, should be given through the local pastor or the Puerto Rico Volunteer Coordinator.



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