

Know Before You Go



Congratulations on your decision to serve on a mission team!

We are excited to have you share the Home of Hope journey with us and for you to become an integral part of our ongoing vision. The Bible teaches us that we are to go into all the world, preach the gospel and to help the poor, and we couldn't be happier that you have decided to join Home of Hope in that great commission! **Proverbs 19:17, Mark 15:16**

What's Next?

As you begin to prepare for your trip, we are sure you have a ton of thoughts, emotions and questions running through your mind. So, we have done our best to compile a booklet of useful information that will hopefully address many those items, and others you may not have thought about or that we feel are important for you to be aware of. After reading through this, if you still have uncertainties, you know where to find us. Your team leader or someone from the Home of Hope team would be happy to meet with you. Keep in mind, that we will also have a 3-month and 1-month team meeting in preparation for the mission trip, which will cover many other invaluable "know before you go" details. If for some reason you are not able to attend a team meeting, please make other arrangements with your team leader, as there will be important information that you must be made aware of.

- **Application Process:** (You can find these in the "Teams" tab on our website.)
 - Fill out the Online Application Form
 - Sign the waiver form
 - Hand in your Pastoral Reference
 - Watch the Missions Preparation Course

- **Passports:** Please make sure you have a passport that does not expire within 6 months of your departure dates (on your way home after your trip). Home of Hope may need to send passports away for visa applications, so it would be best if you could ensure your passport is ready to **go within 60 days of your team's travel date.**

- **Criminal Background Check:** All team participants over 18 must provide a criminal background check. The Home of Hope/Home Church staff can provide you with a letter, and you will be able to have this completed at your local RCMP office.

- **Vaccinations:** Most vaccinations are not mandatory, but we do encourage you to meet with your local travel clinic professional to discuss the different possibilities for protection for the countries you are visiting. We recommend you do this EARLY as some clinics book months ahead. More on this topic below.
Talk to your team leader about any additional possible vaccines required.

- **Recommended Reading:**
 - Meant 4 More - Brian Thomson
 - Experience Jesus and His Church - Pastor Mel Mullen (Required for anyone wanting to do any preaching while abroad)

Most Asked Questions:

What Can I Do When I'm There?

There are so many ways to help on a trip with Home of Hope. Start thinking about what you're passionate about, your gifts and your talents. Where do you currently serve in the church? What do you do for a job? As you consider these different questions, you will start to uncover ideas as to where you might feel you could be used the best. No matter what, coming with an open heart and being willing to serve wherever needed, is the best way to approach your mission trip. We promise that God can and will use you in ways you never imagined!

How Much Will it Cost?

The cost and budget of each trip is very dependent on several factors, including team size, the time of year you are going, where you are travelling to and what the team will be doing while you are there.

As a standard guide, most trips typically run about \$4,500 in costs, which includes flight, in-country expenses (based on double occupancy accommodations) and administration of the trip. This is the base price but this could be more depending on what countries you are travelling to and what time of year you are travelling. Also if you are wanting to stay in your own room or in a higher class of hotel, those costs will increase accordingly and could also include additional costs for transportation.

Expenses that are not included in the trip budget:

Most trips fall within \$4000-\$4500 which includes your flights, accommodations, food, translators, and transportation. There are additional costs that you will be responsible for such as:

- **Vaccinations:** Yellow Fever is required when travelling to most locations throughout Africa. It is your responsibility to arrange and pay for this coverage and to secure your yellow fever card, as you will need to keep it with you at all times. Any additional vaccinations that you decide to get to eliminate further risks are at your discretion. Malaria pills are **HIGHLY** recommended.
- **Medical Insurance:** Medical/Travel insurance is mandatory, and you will need to confirm you have full coverage.
- **Extra & Oversized Suitcases:** Two 50lbs suitcases are typically allowed at no extra charge when travelling internationally.
- **Airport Meals & snacks**
- **Lunches:** 2 meals (breakfast & dinner) and bottled water are covered for each day. We do not stop for lunch, so it's important to pack meal replacement foods such as protein bars, beef jerky, dried fruit, etc. for the full length of the trip. See packing list for more ideas.
- **Excursions/Safaris:** Any group activities done on a day off are an additional expense.

More Important Information to Know

- **Budget:** The noted cost for your trip is an estimate and will be narrowed down further as the team schedule and expenses are prepared and outlined. Please keep in mind that although it's not required, we do encourage everyone to raise more money to help with projects in the countries that you are visiting, such as feeding programs, shoes, medical cards, conferences, building projects, orphaning & animal co-ops are just some of the ways your additional funds can help.
- **Flights:** You are welcome to look for flights online and let us know if you come across a good deal or plan on using travel points. We try to book all flights together for the team whenever possible, to keep

the team together. We have a great travel agent who does not charge us commissions who typically books the flights. If you want extended leg room or pre-booked seats, there could be additional charges.

- **Team Schedule:** Please understand that although we try to follow a team schedule as closely as possible, we are overseas, and they often have their own time agendas. This can be frustrating for someone who is used to following a rigid schedule, so please allow for grace in this area and try to be as patient as possible when things don't go quite as planned.
- **Moral & Attitude:** Attitude is everything. It's OK to feel tired, irritable or stressed but it's NOT OK to take it out on others. Have fun. If you're feeling overwhelmed, sick or like you're under attack, talk to someone. Don't just bottle up your feelings. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many people, and we want everyone to get the most out of it as possible. Let's make sure we are not carrying any negativity with us or any spirit of offence. Share your concerns, stay positive and let's make the most of this amazing opportunity.
- **Culture Shock:** In Africa and India, things are very different than in Canada. It's exciting to have the opportunity to be submerged into something so different, but in saying that we also have to be very mindful of what that actually means. We need to be careful to not get hung up on our own ideas or ways of doing things - so that it is never seen as an unintentional act of disrespect. Please be mindful of food etiquette or anything that might be different than what we are used to. Being conscious of not wasting food, the way we dress, jokes we tell, etc... are all extremely important to consider at all times. We are visitors to another country, and we want to honour and give respect in every way possible.
- **Safety:** We have several people who have been to Africa & India multiple times and have never encountered any kind of safety issues. However, regardless of where you travel in the world, there is always risks and safety should always be top of mind. Never go off on your own. Let someone know if you must separate from the group. We have a great international team of staff that work hard to ensure we have a safe and enjoyable time while visiting their country. We strive to create the safest travel environment possible, but it's important for everyone on the team to be on the same page. If any potential problems were to arise, always communicate those concerns or risks to your team leader immediately.
- **Prayer:** Take time to pray, have your own personal devotions, and journal/reflect. The enemy will be working overtime on you because you are doing God's work, so it's important for you to be armed to fight against anything he tries to derail you with. We will also be doing morning devotionals & prayer as a team at breakfast. If you are comfortable and willing, you may be asked to prepare and share a devotional for a specific day. We also debrief each day at dinner.
- **Prayer Covering:** We have people praying for the teams before, during and after your trip, but it's important to be covered in as much prayer as possible. Make sure you ask your friends and family to be praying for you and your team daily for very specific things. (Example-Safety, Health, protection, breakthrough, etc.) Collect their email addresses and send them to the HOH Office to include in the regular emails that are sent out when a team is abroad.
- **Relationships/Dating:** Singles, a mission trip is not a time for flirting or trying to win over that special guy or girl. Single, dating or married: there should be no public displays of affection as this could be disrespectful to the culture. We all need to be mindful that we are there to serve and there is always

someone around us watching us. We are setting an example. Let's make sure we are shining Jesus' light at all times.

- **Clothing/Jewelry:** Please dress modestly. Tank tops and short shorts, 2-piece bathing suits, short skirts & low-cut tops should be avoided. Anything at the knee is acceptable. It's important to not draw attention to yourself. Wrinkle-free or light-weight pieces are great options when travelling to Africa or India, as the weather can often be very warm. We would also recommend not wearing expensive jewellery or pieces that might lead someone locally to believe they are worth money, even if they're not. For more detailed suggestions, see 'what to wear/pack'.
- **Photos/Videos:** Make sure you empty your memory cards before you go. We encourage you to take lots of pictures and videos. Please remember to send copies to Home of Hope office when you arrive home. Just be mindful of places and people, where our local leaders may want to keep photography limited due to safety or other concerns.
- **Cash:** It's a good idea to always have some miscellaneous cash on hand, but it is never ok to give anyone local cash: This can cause jealousy & anger and outrage amongst the local people and could do more harm than good. If there is someone you would like to bless with a monetary gift (including the local staff), please see your team leader so they can help them properly and safely. Never mention money or funds privately or publicly - only discuss money within your team or with the leader of the location you are in.
- **Valuables:** Make sure you keep cash, passports and anything of value on you at all times. Even with a lock on your suitcase (which is recommended), it's not a good idea to leave your most valuable items behind at the hotel. A secure **day pack** that you can swing over your shoulder is a good way to ensure these items stay close to you at all times.
- **Phone Plans:** Check your phone carriers travel plans before your departure day if you wish to have a calling or internet plan on your phone. Some lodging locations will have wi-fi, but there is no guarantee of how often and how reliable that connection will be. Sometimes, we are able to purchase sim cards locally, if you have an unlocked phone.
- **Free Time/Days Off:** Most teams will plan for a day or two off, or even plan to spend additional time before or after the trip somewhere else. Please discuss this with your team leader and keep in mind these expenses will be out of pocket and should not be included in your fundraising efforts.
- **Souvenirs:** Normal souvenirs are usually fine to bring back with you. Be aware that some unique souvenirs or consumer products could be prohibited and may be subject to being detained at the border. It's always good to keep this in mind when purchasing anything abroad and ask if you are unsure.
- **Suitcases:** When travelling internationally, two 50lb suitcases are allowed at no extra cost. We recommend you travel lightly and only use one suitcase personally. Then your second suitcase can be filled with items that the HOH office would like to send over with the team, or with anything that would like to bring that you think could benefit the communities you are visiting. Extra luggage costs are quite high, so using up as much space as we can collectively as a team is definitely the best approach.

Packing

We compiled a list of travel items for your convenience. Some items will be must-haves, while others are added in simply as thoughtful suggestions from others who have travelled on trips or are frequent long-haul flight travellers.

In Your Carry-on bag:

Passport, visas, Yellow Fever card, ID, e-tickets, boarding passes, medical insurance card, international driver's license (if required), cash, medications/prescriptions, malaria pills, contacts, headphones, US cash (small bills, no markings), sunglasses, Phone or tablet (make sure you load with music, games or movies) snacks for the plane.

Personal Suitcase:

- **Suitcases:** Please make sure you only use large or extra-large suitcases. As mentioned previously, two 50lb suitcases are typically allowed at no extra charge.
- **Luggage ID Tags:** Easier to identify your luggage.
- **Copies of all ID & Important Documents:** These should not be kept with your originals. It would be a good idea to provide your team lead with these copies to keep in a binder.
- **Day Pack:** Something you can use daily while we are out to protect your valuables, as we always recommend you keep your valuables with you at all times.
- **Money Belt/Passport holders:** A good way to keep your passport, money and credit cards hidden
- **Travel Hand Sanitizer/Wet Naps:** For those not so convenient times you will be wishing you had some. It's recommended to wipe your air vent and seat tray down as soon as you settle in to your seat.
- **Norwex EnviroCloth:** For all the germs you can't see, this cloth will collect and kill the bacteria using only the cloth and water - brilliant! (Someone in the office can hook you up if you're interested in knowing more)
- **Jetlag Pills:** For more info see "How to Survive Long Haul Flights & Jetlag."
- **Sun Screen/Lip Balm:** Protect your skin. We are much closer to the equator where you are going.
- **Hat/Sunglasses:** Consider a hat that can be packed away and won't lose its form when it's in your suitcase
- **Ear Plugs**
- **Power Converter:** This is a must if you want to charge your phone or use any electrical outlets
- **Portable battery charger:** Power on the go so your phone never dies
- **Travel-size first aid kit:** The small ones are very lightweight and take up very little room. (One of those items you hope you will never need but will be grateful if you do.)
- **Water flavour drops:** If you aren't typically a water drinker, these are such a great way to add some flavour to your water.
- **Toilet Paper:** Packing a roll for "just in case" situations is a good idea. It's better to be prepared!
- **Toiletries: (All travel size should do)** Soap, razors, deodorant, female hygiene products, toothpaste, shampoo & conditioner, comb, brush, toothpaste, etc.
- **Hand Towel & Wash Cloth:** These items are often not available in local hotels and lodges.
- **Candy:** A little piece of home can always bring comfort. Don't bring chocolate or anything that can melt. You likely won't find liquorice or Mike and Ikes at your local African or Indian dispensary ;)

- **Healthy Snacks to Replace Lunches:** Cliff bars, packaged nuts, granola bars, fruit cups, beef jerky, fruit bars, trail mix, rice cakes, dried fruit, instant oatmeal packs, etc. Again, avoid anything that can melt!
- **Travel Games/Deck of cards:** Airports and those long flights can offer a lot of time to have some fun breaking out a game or two. It passes time too, so it's a double win!
- **Camera:** Make sure the battery is charged.
- **Phone:** For wi-fi and photos. Phone plans often aren't necessary, unless you need data, as Facetime or Facebook Messenger can be used for calls at no cost where wi-fi is available.
- **Travel Pillow:** Inflatable ones are great for keeping your carry-on luggage more manageable.
- **Neck Cooling Cloths:** These are a low cost, effective way to cool down on a hot day in India/Africa.
- **Anti-Diarrhea Medication:** Imodium and Pepto are a must for tummy troubles.
- **Melatonin:** A natural sleep aid that can help you eliminate jet lag and adjust to the new time zone quicker.
- **Flight Socks/Slippers:** Learn more about this under "How to Survive a Long-Haul Flight"
- **Tea Bags:** For anyone who is a tea drinker, having your favourite kind on hand will be a nice treat. Camomile tea is also great with helping with sleep/jet lag issues.
- **Journal/Book for flights/Bible or Bible App:** Journaling, devotions and a good book are a great way to pass the hours of travel time you will have on hand.
- **(Slum day) Disposable mask, small flashlight, old shoes, rainboots:** You will likely not want to keep these items after and may want to donate the shoes to someone locally or throw them away.
- **Essential Oils:** For anyone who is an avid user, it might be great to consider bringing a couple of your favourites that work to fight off bacteria's and infections, sore joints & muscles, etc.
- **Clothes Detergent:** In case you need to hand wash anything, as laundry facilities typically won't be available.
- **Luggage Locks:** For any daypacks and suitcases you are bringing.
- **Cash:** Please ensure any US cash you bring is kept in small bills with no rips or markings on the bills.

What Clothing Should I Pack?

Remember, we are in nations where it's important to dress conservatively. Please avoid tank tops, tight-fitting or low-cut tops. Dresses, skirts and shorts should not be above the knee. Ladies, if you are bringing leggings, please ensure they are worn with longer, looser fitting tops.

- **Sandals:** Clean sandals are great for indoors and for showering!
- **Comfortable Close-toed Shoes/Runners:** We are on our feet A LOT and conditions are not always the most sanitary, so it's important to bring/wear a comfortable close-toed pair of shoes. If your team is going to the Kenya dump, bring an extra old pair that you could throw away afterward.
- **Light Jacket/Hoodie/Rain Jacket:** There are places and times in both Africa and India when it's not crazy hot and a nice light jacket and hoodie will be valuable. Not to mention on the plane!
- **Swimsuit:** Ask team leader if you will want to bring this or not
- **Pajamas/Bathrobe/Slippers**
- **Dress Shoes/Sandals**
- **Sweater**
- **Shirts/Blouses**
- **Dress**
- **T-shirts**
- **Shorts**

- **Underwear**
- **Comfortable jeans or pants**
- **Socks**
- **Belts/Bandanas/hair bands**

Gifts Suitcase:

- **Balls:** the more colourful, the better! Soccer balls or other deflated balls are ideal because you can fit more in a suitcase when they aren't full of air. Bring a pump to inflate them when you arrive.
- **Durable toys**
- **Flashlights:** Rechargeable or solar panelled flashlights are the best since it gets dark at 6:00pm and there are no street lights in most areas.
- **Shoes:** Crocs and sandals are a good gift because they are light and comfortable.
- **Clothing:** shirts, hats, sweaters are all great gifts and things to give away
- **Patriotic items:** We often bring Canada flag pins, shirts, hats, etc and they love it!
- **Vitamins**
- **Pictures of you and your family**

There is no pressure to go out and buy stuff. As an alternate option, we usually have a stock of donations of toys and clothes that we can fill your second suitcase with if it works.

Tips for Long Flights & How to Avoid Jetlag

Let's face it, travelling across the world for 20+ hours in a confined space on a plane is not on most people's list of top things they want to do in their life. But you have to admit, it's pretty incredible to wake up in your bed one day... and a day later, you land on another continent across the world!

That being said, those long flights can be pretty hard on a person's body. There are simple things you can do, to survive a long-haul flight & avoid jetlag.

Below you will find a list of ideas we put together for you:

- **Flight/Compression Socks:** These socks are proven to help increase circulation and reduce the risk of swelling, due to sitting in one position for several hours.
- **Jetlag Pills:** These all-natural pills can be found at the Travelman store in Red Deer.
- **F.lux on laptop or Twilight App:** An app that blocks blue light according to the time of day for your phone, computer or tablet.
- **Eat healthily**
- **Bring relaxing music or podcasts**
- **Stay Hydrated:** Most planes are only at an average of a 10% humidity level. Water matters.
- **Avoid caffeine**
- **Do Seat exercises:** Sounds funny, but after 15+ hours on planes, you will understand why this is such a valuable tip
- **Adjust your time:** Your body needs to adapt to the new time zone as quickly as possible and the best way to do that is to adapt to local time as soon as you get on the plane. Change your phone and watches to reflect the time where you are going as soon as you board the plane. Do your best

when napping, to nap only if you would be sleeping at that time where you are landing. That's not always easy to do, but if you can, it will help you tremendously.

- **Use a flight pillow and/or eye mask when napping**
- **Sleeping pills are not recommended:** They can be very hard on your body overseas. Try something natural.
- **Relax:** When you land, resist napping or going to sleep too early. Try to stay with the local time zone and head to bed when the locals are also sleeping.
- **Bring a small compact blanket:** While some flights do offer these, airplanes can be quite chilly and having something just in case, will be a life saver.
- **Dress in Layers:** As mentioned above, some flights can be chilly, but they can also be very warm. Dress in comfortable clothes that you can peel off or put back on when needed.

Avoiding Sickness

Getting sick on a trip is not fun. Getting sick on a mission trip is even less fun!

When you aren't feeling your best, it can be hard to focus and give it your all. We generally have very tight schedules where everyone is needed to do their part, in order to be as effective as we can.

Travelling to third world countries exposes our bodies to environments where disease, bacteria and parasites are more prevalent. The more we can prepare ourselves for these conditions in advance, the better chance we have of staying healthy. Sometimes though, it's just unavoidable.

Thankfully, there are still things you can do to minimize that risk.

Below are some simple tips & tricks to help prevent sickness while traveling:

- **Get Vaccinated:** There are special requirements to travel to some places in Africa, but it is always advised that you visit a travel clinic and go through the recommended vaccinations for travelling to a specific area. Most vaccinations are good for several years and will give you the peace of mind most of us are looking for when travelling across the world. Our advice would be to book an appointment with a travel clinic sooner, rather than later, so you can know what to expect and what costs will be associated with each vaccination. If you get them done spread out over a few months, rather than all at once, it won't be as much of a financial burden. The cost can be a bit overwhelming if they are done all at once.
- **Take Malaria Pills:** It is **HIGHLY** recommended that every person sees their doctor or travel clinic nurse to get a prescription for malaria pills prior to departure. This is a serious mosquito-borne illness that can easily be avoided with proper protection.
- **Avoid fruits and vegetables that aren't peeled:** This includes salads, or any vegetables not cooked. If you can peel it yourself, it's likely safe to eat.
- **Avoid fish**
- **Avoid any room temperature foods or sauces**
- **Only drink bottled water:** This includes brushing your teeth with it.
- **Avoid drinks with ice**
- **Use a straw:** Many places in 3rd world countries will not have them; you can bring your own.
- **Wash your hands as often as you can**
- **Carry and use hand sanitizer:** For the places where washing your hands is not possible.
- **Take probiotics:** Up to 30 days prior to leaving. A stronger strain will be more effective.

- **Stay active**
- **Use Insect Repellent:** Protect yourself from mosquito and bug bites. Use a high deet content brand such as Ben's 30.
- **Go to sleep at normal local times and get a full night sleep:** The quicker your body adjusts to the time change, the better you will feel.
- **Stay hydrated**
- Bring **Pepto** and **Imodium**, just in case!
- **Disinfect your flight seat tray & air vent**
- It's also recommended by many travellers to get a 3-day prescription of **Azithromycin**, which is used to treat mild bacterial infections as often used when the above over the counter medications are not effective.

Questions for Your Sponsor Child and/or Other Children

You might be nervous about meeting your sponsor child for the first time or spending time with children that you have never met before. The language barriers may add further to that fear.

But don't worry, we have your back! First off, it's important to note, that just like most kids, the children you will meet are generally just happy to have us there. Many of the kids speak English but don't worry about those who don't. They are excited about these new people (that's you) and by showing a little love through some positive body language and a smile, you have already broken down any potential barriers.

But if you're still struggling, we have a list of questions to help you get going. But first, make sure you introduce yourself and share a little bit about you and your family. That right there will break the ice.

- Do you like school?
- What classes do you have in school and do you have a favourite?
- Who are your best friends?
- What sports do you like?
- What do you like to do with your friends for fun?
- What is your favourite song? Do you like to sing?
- Do you know what the Bible is? Do you have a favourite Bible verse?
- What is your favourite food?
- What do you want to be when you grow up?

For Your Sponsor Child:

- How do you feel about me visiting you?
- Do you like or would you like to receive letters or postcards from me?
- Would you like to take some photos together?

Low/No Cost Fundraiser Ideas for Individuals or Teams

- **Write Sponsorship letters to family & friends** (we can provide a general template for you to use): Family and friends trust you the most and know that whatever they give to your trip, will be used as designated. Plus, you can report back to them about your trip and show them what their money did!
- **Social Media** Fundraiser: Facebook has easy fundraisers, do a buy & sell page, etc
- **Hold a 30-Hour Famine event:** collect pledges
- **Bottle drive**
- **Sell products through fundraising companies:** such as chocolates, cookie dough or numerous other things. There are many options online, so make sure you sell something with a good profit margin.
- **Host a walkathon:** get participants to collect pledges
- **Sell something at the farmer's market:** could be used items/books you've collected or something you personally make
- **Hold a garage sale/community garage sale** with proceeds to you. Bonus: sell hot dogs and drinks
- **Partner with a local business for sponsorship with them:** Ask if they would like to donate with each purchase or a portion of proceeds to go towards fundraising. They can be acknowledged with a video of you overseas.
- **Do an online silent auction:** Collect donated items and services from businesses. Try to collect items that people would purchase anyway, such as restaurant gift cards, hair & spa services, etc....
- **Mylo For Charity:** Making change with spare change (Google it)
- **Hold a bake sale:** Ask family and friends to help you bake or to do the baking. Take orders online.
- **Be creative:** You might just come up with an idea that could fund your whole trip!