



**Friends of  
Barnabas**

**MOUNTAIN MEDICAL TEAM  
TEAM MEMBER HANDBOOK 2025**

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## Overview of Honduras

Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the western hemisphere and has one of the highest levels of economic inequality in Latin America. Over 60 percent of the population lives in poverty and three out of five households in the rural areas live in extreme poverty.

Four out of five Hondurans have inadequate healthcare. Especially in rural areas, healthcare is difficult to access. The Ministry of Health is responsible for the care of almost 90 percent of the population, but offered services are mainly available in cities, making it hard for rural populations to receive good care. The rural and indigenous people in the south, west, and along the eastern border, far from industry, are especially isolated from key necessities such as healthcare.

For more than 20 years, Friends of Barnabas' Mountain Medical Teams have served rural communities located south of San Pedro Sula and west of Tegucigalpa, in the surrounding areas near Lago de Yojoa. In addition, Friends of Barnabas staff have provided direct medical services, case management, and educational workshops for families with children who have extended care needs from all areas of Honduras. In many cases, Friends of Barnabas is the only source of medication or specialists for a family.



## Our Mission

The mission of Friends of Barnabas is to empower families in Honduras through healthcare and education.

## Our Vision

The vision of Friends of Barnabas is a strengthened Honduran healthcare system, where all have access to quality care.

## Our Goals

1. Deepen programming so that families can manage their child's long-term healthcare issues with a sense of empowerment, confidence, and hope.
  - 1.1. Create satellite clinics for Healthy Kids Program.
  - 1.2. Increase capacity to address caseload demand.
  - 1.3. Expand services (ex. nutrition, social work, etc.).
2. Research key health issues and respond appropriately.
  - 2.1. Expand data collection and analysis.
  - 2.2. Determine opportunities to fill gaps in health services.
  - 2.3. Expand strategic partnerships.
3. Provide training within the Honduran healthcare system to improve patient outcomes.
  - 3.1. Identify the greatest area of need through collaboration with Honduran health professionals.
  - 3.2. Determine appropriate education/training to address gaps.

## Our Values

Friends of Barnabas believes that:

- Children deserve a healthy start with a strong support system.
- Self-reliance with dignity is the goal, not dependency on outside aid.
- Sustainability must be a central component of all programs.
- The education and empowerment of parents and caregivers promotes child advocacy, understanding, awareness, and improved quality of life for children.
- Focused efforts in medical services and preventative health education lead to healthier children, families, and communities.
- Community focused efforts bring about significant change in the quality of life for children families.
- The empowerment of community members promotes community ownership.
- Empowering local leaders, teachers, medical providers, and other service providers to serve their community (and country) will bring about significant and sustained changes to Honduras.
- Local capacity building will strengthen Honduran communities well beyond any organization's interventions.

## FOB Program Overview

FOB programs address components of the Honduran healthcare system from individual and community initiatives to system wide endeavors. Friends of Barnabas implements three programs in Honduras: **Healthy Communities, Healthy Kids, and Healthy Honduras**. All FOB programs incorporate health education and training of parents and caregivers, increasing the capacity of local health care professionals, collaboration & partnership with local organizations and NGOs, and monitoring & evaluation to maximize program outcomes.



## Healthy Communities

In the mountains of central Honduras, in the region surrounding Lake Yojoa, communities are selected as part of FOB's Healthy Communities Program.

### HOW ARE COMMUNITIES SELECTED?

Communities are selected annually based on the following criteria:

- Community has no health center and/or limited access to a health center.
- Community has a lack of infrastructure and/or is without sanitary systems and clean drinking water.
- Community is not presently served by others offering services which would duplicate FOB's efforts.
- Community has been identified as poor and has significant health care needs as presented through poverty studies and/or FOB's previous work experience in the area.
- Reliable access for security purposes exists in and out of the community.
- Community leaders express genuine interest and commitment to the program and agree to sign a formal document of partnership and commitment.

### HOW ARE MEDICAL SERVICES PROVIDED?

Health care services delivered by traveling Mountain Medical Teams, serving each community two times a year provide:

- general medical care
- vision care for adults and vision screening for children 2-18 years old
- dental care
- services for children (anti-parasite medications, fluoride)
- prenatal and child vitamin distribution
- referrals for other FOB services



### WHAT TYPE OF EDUCATION IS PROVIDED? WHAT ABOUT OTHER COMMUNITY NEEDS?

Communities partner with FOB for a 3-5 year period of time. During this time, communities received monthly health education. This two-year curriculum focuses on general health education, reproductive health, general hygiene and the environment, women's health, and specific community needs. Rural Health Volunteers may be identified and trained in first aid and simple emergency response. Partnerships are formed with other organizations to meet the needs of stoves, wells, latrines, etc.



### Healthy Kids

The Healthy Kids Program (formally known as Extended Care Program) was developed for children whose medical needs go beyond the care provided by field clinics. Children referred to this program suffer from cardiac defects, neurological disorders, cleft lip and cleft palates, Sickle cell anemia and other defects and illnesses. Care is provided through FOB's Barnabas House and through a network of partner organizations.

Referrals to Healthy Kids are generated from Mountain Medical Teams as well as NGOs, hospitals, and agencies throughout Honduras. Partner facilities with various medical specialties are utilized whenever possible and children enrolled in the Healthy Kids Program are provided with patient case management; home visits by FOB's physician and nurses; transportation to appointments with specialists and hospitals throughout Honduras; medications and medical equipment; and treatments and surgeries deemed necessary.

Educational workshops for parents and caregivers of special needs populations are held through the Healthy Kids Program, such as coping with neurological disorders, palliative care, nutrition, support for families of children with Down's syndrome, and medication safety and administration.



### Healthy Honduras

The Healthy Honduras Program focuses on the continuing education of the Honduran medical community. We work to provide educational opportunities on a wide variety of topics that address the care and wellness of pediatric patients.

#### Program Goals:

- To improve the standard of care.
- To provide both current theory and hands-on clinical education.
- To empower care providers.
- To encourage advancements in the Honduran healthcare system.

## Serving on a Mountain Medical Team

### Good Health

Travel in Honduras can be strenuous at times. Bus rides can be rough and team members are occasionally required to hike in the mountains. During much of the year, it is extremely hot, and the working days are long. You must be in good physical shape to be a contributing member of a team. Please discuss these conditions with your physician before committing to a team.

### Travel Funds

Each team member is required to pay \$2250 toward their mission trip. All Friends of Barnabas volunteers traveling to Honduras MUST have their travel contribution PAID IN FULL by the stated team deadline. Please have your funds in by all required deadlines so that the FOB staff can make all the needed arrangements for you.

### Medical Provider Qualifications

All medical professionals who are interested in serving on a Mountain Medical Team in the role of Medical Clinic Provider must have the following qualifications:

- 1) Current provider's license in the state in which they reside. A copy of this license must be provided to FOB.
- 2) Must be an RN, PA, NP or MD. LPN/LVN, Paramedics and Medical Technicians cannot provide care at a clinic medical station but can serve in another clinic area.
- 3) RNs who have been retired for longer than 3 years and/or have not actively practiced for 3 years are not eligible to serve at a medical station. They may work in any other clinic area.
- 4) If a retired RN has been serving a Mountain Medical Team on a yearly basis, she/he may run a clinic medical station only if paired with the advanced practitioner or MD on the team.

### Team Meetings & WhatsApp Chat Group

Each team member is required to attend Team Meetings scheduled by their team leader. Our hope is that these meetings will help you feel more prepared for your mission trip, learn more about Friends of Barnabas' work, and allow you to interact with your team prior to heading to Honduras.

Leading up to your trip, FOB will create a group chat on WhatsApp for the team to use to communicate before, during and after your mission trip. WhatsApp can be downloaded to your phone by visiting the Apple App Store (for iPhone users) or Google Play Store (for android users). Group chat messages can be silenced to limit the notifications you receive by clicking on the 3 dots at the top right of the group chat and selecting "Mute notifications." If you choose to mute notifications, please check the group chat daily in the weeks leading up to your trip so that you don't miss any important announcements. Please limit group chat messages to questions or comments that benefit the entire team as to not overwhelm the group chat.

### Mosquito-borne diseases

Due to the high risk of mosquito-borne diseases in Honduras, travelers are encouraged to wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, and socks, as weather permits. Also, insect protection containing DEET (25-50%) is strongly encouraged. We VERY STRONGLY suggest that you use a bug spray or wipes with DEET each day, reapplying throughout the day to all exposed skin areas and applying after the use of sunscreen. (REI and Dick's Sporting Goods carry long lasting bug repellent wipes.) Be careful with products that contain extremely high DEET percentages, as these may irritate your skin.



Significant Malaria, Dengue, and Chikungunya activity continues in Honduras. Symptoms generally appear within a week of exposure. We encourage you to visit the WHO website to learn about the symptoms of each disease. ([http://www.who.int/neglected\\_diseases/vector\\_ecology/mosquito-borne-diseases/en/](http://www.who.int/neglected_diseases/vector_ecology/mosquito-borne-diseases/en/)) Should you have symptoms of any of these illnesses after returning to the US, please see your primary care physician and contact FOB's Medical Coordinator at [patti@fobf.org](mailto:patti@fobf.org).

## Passport

Secure your passport NOW! If you have one, find it. *Check the date, making sure that it is valid at least 6 months past your return date.* If you do not have your passport, please start the application process as soon as possible.

## Immunizations

The following table lists the most often recommended immunizations and preventive medicines for travel to Honduras. *However, you should seek the advice of your local physician for specific recommendations.* Upon selection as a team member by your Team Leader, this activity must be an immediate priority.

Item	Recommendation
<b>Routine Vaccines</b>	Make sure you are up-to-date on routine vaccines before every trip. These vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, and polio vaccine.
<b>Hepatitis A</b>	Injection consisting of two shots, five months apart.
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	Injection consisting of three shots, the first two given one month apart, followed in six months by the third.
<b>Malaria Prevention ***</b>	Needed each trip; multiple options are available.
<b>COVID-19 Vaccine***</b>	A completed course of the COVID-19 vaccine.
<b>Yearly Influenza Vaccine</b>	Influenza viruses change yearly, as do the vaccines used to prevent the illness. One injection needed.
<b>Traveler's Diarrhea</b>	Needed each trip; Azithromycin can be used with moderate diarrhea (Moderate (acute): diarrhea that is distressing or interferes with planned activities), or as your doctor recommends.
<b>Typhoid</b>	Single dose, oral or injection; every two years..
<b>CDC recommendations</b>	May include more than what is contained in this list.

\*\*\*Highly encouraged.

## Insurance

The Friends of Barnabas provides medical travel insurance through United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM), Southeastern Jurisdiction. Please note the following procedure to ensure that each team member has adequate insurance. This policy begins on the day of travel and covers the following:

- accident *and* medical coverage of \$25,000;
- a pre-existing condition waiver up to \$15,000;
- medical evacuation and repatriation up to \$100,000;
- lost luggage up to \$250;
- trip interruption in the event of the death of an immediate family member (spouse or child) or serious damage to the insured member's home up to \$5,000;
- emergency medical reunion;
- the return of a minor child.

You may wish to arrange and purchase personal travel insurance on your own (Allianz, Travel Guard, Travelex) in addition to the UMVIM medical coverage provided by FOB. You can use the date of your initial deposit payment to FOB as the first payment on your additional insurance application.

## E-journals

Friends and family can follow your experiences through team e-journals. Published daily, technology permitting, the e-journals can be found on FOB's website ([www.fobf.org/blog](http://www.fobf.org/blog)) or on FOB's Facebook and Instagram page.

## Registering with the US Embassy

The process of registering with the US Embassy in Honduras is a very important part of our security protocol and a requirement for all team members.

- Go to <https://step.state.gov/step/> to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) of the US Department of State
- If you have not previously created a STEP account, go to "Create Account" and click on "Create Individual Account" and follow the directions.
- If you already have an STEP account, sign in and click "Add a Trip"
- You will follow a Wizard Guide through the process.
- Click "Next".
- Complete the "Destination Information"
  - Country: Honduras
  - Local Embassy or Consulate: San Pedro Sula
  - Type of Visit: One Time Visit
  - Destination Date of Arrival and Departure: Insert your team's dates
  - Purpose of Visit: Mission Trip
  - Address:
    - Destination Type: Other
    - Address Line 1: Casa de Bernabe
    - City: Peña Blanca
    - Province: Cortes
    - Country: Honduras
    - Phone Type: Other (011-504-9766-5740) (*This is the team phone.*)
- Click "Next".
- If a family member is traveling with you, please complete the "Travelers" section and then click "Next". If not, click "Next".
- If you would like to have travel updates, make sure that your email and country selection are made in the "Travel Information Email Distribution List".
- Don't forget to check the box if you want to receive emails about travel updates.
- Click "Next".
- Read any Public Announcements and click "Next".
- You will see the page to confirm your trip.
- Click "Finish".
- You will be returned to your Profile page. Make sure all information is correct.
- Click Logout on tab above your information.

## Honduran Customs Form

Honduran Customs requires travelers to complete an online form prior to entering the country. They also require that you provide them with the QR code that populates once you submit your immigration form. We suggest completing this the day before your flight.

Go to: [https://sisglobal.aduanas.gob.hn/Pech/#/plataforma/otra\\_gestiones/formularioDJRV](https://sisglobal.aduanas.gob.hn/Pech/#/plataforma/otra_gestiones/formularioDJRV)

Here is how you should answer the questions:

(Lenguaje (in red): switch to en\_US for the form to switch to English)

- 1) Entry: Air
- 2) Date you fly into Honduras
- 3) 0013-SAP, AEROPUERTO LA MESA
- 4) Enter your name
- 5) Enter your passport number
- 6) Document type: choose passport
- 7) Nationality: US- Estados Unidos
- 8) Sex: Female & Country of Birth US- Estados Unidos
- 9) Date of Birth: put the day before the month
- 10) Reason for Travel: choose tourism
- 11) Enter your flight number
- 12) Country of Departure: US-Estados Unidos
- 13) Country of Residence: US- Estados Unidos
- 14) Country of Destination: Honduras
- 15) Foreign Address: Amigos de Bernabe, Pena Blanca
- 16) Number of Relatives traveling with you
- 17) Quantity of luggage traveling with you: (enter how many bags you have)
- 18) Quantity of luggage not traveling with you: 0

Questions 19- 23: no

Click Register – a pop up will say: Esta Seguro que desea registrar la declaración? – click Si, Continuar

Click Save and/or Print :

**IMPORTANT: SAVE & SCREENSHOT THE QR CODE THAT POPS UP! You will need to show this to the customs agent.**

## Accommodations

Mountain Medical Teams spend the majority of their time at Alfredo's House within the FOB complex in Peña Blanca, approximately an hour and a half south of San Pedro Sula. Team members share rooms equipped with air conditioners and fans and utilize hall bathrooms with showers. Linens, pillows and mosquito nets are provided. A common area allows teams to fellowship and eat together. Delicious local foods and dishes are served by FOB cooks.

## Credit Card Use

Credit cards can be used in Honduras in the airport and at some restaurants and select stores; however, **DO NOT USE YOUR CREDIT CARD AT GAS STATIONS IN HONDURAS!** Having a credit card with you for emergency situations is suggested. PLEASE remember to call your credit card company prior to departure and let them know you are traveling out of the country. Debit cards cannot be used in emergencies.

## Use of Cash

The US \$20 bill is widely counterfeited and is thus NOT ACCEPTED in Honduras. It is not accepted in shops, restaurants, or at FOB. Also, US bills with tears or writing on them are also not accepted. Pay close attention and bring "clean" US bills. We suggest going inside the bank and asking for new \$10 bills.

## Social Media & Wifi

Cell phone service is widely available and international usage rates can be reasonable from US providers. We are connected more than ever from even the most remote locations. A mission trip is a life changing event and we are pleased that you will want to share photos online. While this is allowed, please remember to use the same courtesies in Honduras as you would in the US. For example, you should ask a parent or child permission before taking their photo. Also, **it is NOT PERMITTED to "check in" or list ANY LOCATIONS other than "Honduras" in your social media posts.** Doing so, could impact your safety and that of other team members or staff and would be in violation of FOB's Safety and Security Policy. As a general rule, it is widely discouraged to use unsecure WIFI networks. Please keep this in mind in the airport, coffee shops, and various locations with free WIFI in Honduras.

## Video & Audio Recording

- Filming patients without consent is a violation of the patient's privacy.
- Video or audio recording in a clinical setting breaches the confidentiality rights of patients and infringes on the privacy rights of physicians and other medical providers.
- To ensure confidentiality and privacy, any type of electronic recording (video or audio) is strictly prohibited in FOB's Mountain Medical Clinics (general, vision, dental, etc.).
- The posting of ANY video (clinical or not) to any Social Media site is prohibited without advance permission from FOB's President, Honduran Director of Programs and Operations, or Director of Development.
- Any individual wanting to engage in video or audio recording needs advance permission. Permission in writing must be granted by FOB's President, Honduran Director of Programs and Operations, or Director of Development.

## Packing List

### High Priority Items

- Passport
- Photocopy of passport – must be with you at all times
- Screenshot of Customs Form QR Code
- Driver's License
- Pocket Cash \$100-\$150 is plenty. Keep only needed items in your wallet. You will be able to exchange \$50 into lempiras once you arrive. DO NOT BRING \$20 BILLS. THESE CANNOT BE USED IN HONDURAS. The \$50 you exchange must be in the form of 5 brand new \$10 bills. You will need to ask for these at a bank.
- Credit Card- for emergencies. Do not use your credit card at gas stations in Honduras.
- Tip money for Honduran Staff (*Your team leader may collect this before or during your travels. This money is divided among the entire Honduran staff.*)
- 2 weeks of Personal medications in their original bottles. (*do not bring medicines for the clinic*)
- Leave jewelry at home

### Personal Items

- An extra set of prescription glasses or contact lenses (if needed)
- Phone and charger (download a Spanish translation app)
- Hat and sunglasses
- Flip flops/ shower shoes
- Water bottle- FOB provides safe drinking water
- Surgical Masks (to be worn during clinic)
- Mosquito repellent
- Toiletries
- Pepto Bismol/ Imodium
- Toilet paper- In Honduras, this goes in the TRASH CAN, not the toilet
- Clothes for tourist activities and sleeping. (*Casual clothes are fine, including shorts. Review Safety and Security Policies regarding appropriate clothing. Scrubs will be loaned to you in Honduras. Laundry Service will be available.*)
- Sturdy close toed shoes
- Lightweight jacket/ rain poncho
- Hand sanitizer or hand wipes
- Plastic bag for dirty clothes and trash

### Other suggested items

- Notebook/ pen
- Snack food
- Small flashlight
- Reading material

### Medical Professionals

- Please bring your own stethoscope and otoscope
- Bring instruments/equipment (not medications) that you would be uncomfortable without

You must pack all personal items in your carry-on luggage. Remember that you may carry one carry-on bag (size varies by airline) plus one personal item, such as a purse, a small backpack, or a tote bag. FOB will provide your team with 1 checked bag for team member footwear and liquids. Upon departure, if you wish to check your personal baggage, you are responsible for paying any baggage fees (paid with credit card).

## My Role on the Team

There are various roles in which you can serve, depending on your skills and interest. We'll ask you to take on at least one, if not multiple roles depending on the make-up of your team. Most FOB mission teams have 10-14 members.




- **Devotion Leaders** plan or assign devotions for the week.
- **Physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and registered nurses** will most likely staff a clinic station with the help of a translator. Upon occasion, physicians serve as a floating consultation, supporting all clinic stations. Medical professionals may be asked to support other clinic areas.
- **Fluent Spanish speakers** and local Honduran translators will be assigned to individual stations. FOB staff determine the clinic area in which translators serve.
- **Dentists, oral surgeons, and dental hygienists** will work with a local Honduran dentist in the dental clinic.
- **Optometrists and ophthalmologists** will work with FOB staff in the vision clinic.
- A **Photographer** and **Team Journal Keeper** are needed to capture the stories and special moments of the week.
- For non-medical or non-Spanish speakers, there are a wide variety of jobs to do, such as providing vitamins, anti-parasite medications, and fluoride treatments to children; assisting in the dental and vision clinics; and more.




# Travel Contribution Donation & Team Support Funds

**PERSONAL TRAVEL CONTRIBUTION & TEAM SUPPORT**



**\$2,250 per team member**

Covers flights, accommodations, ground transportation, meals, security, insurance




**\$11,500 per team**

Covers medications & supplies used in clinics

Some team members pay their own \$2250 travel contribution, while others fundraise to cover both their travel contribution and support funds for their team. When you register to join a team, a fundraising page will automatically be set up for you based upon whether you are just fundraising for the team funds or if you are fundraising for both your travel contribution and team support.

**TWO OPTIONS AT REGISTRATION:**

**Fundraise for your \$2250 travel contribution**

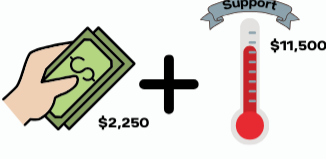


Your fundraising page will be automatically set up to raise funds for your \$2250 travel contribution.

If you have not raised enough funds by the due dates, you will need to cover the balance. If you have not raised the full amount by the final due date, your payment method on file will be charged for the balance plus the transaction fee.

Once you have raised \$2250 for your travel, additional funds raised will go towards your team's \$11,500 support goal.

**OR**



Your fundraising page will be automatically set up to raise funds for your team's \$11,500 support goal.

You are to make your payments by the due dates either by check or credit card through our website at [www.fobf.org/donate](http://www.fobf.org/donate), NOT through your fundraising page. If you have not paid the full amount by the final due date, your payment method on file will be charged for the balance plus the transaction fee.

Your travel payments will NOT appear on your fundraising page. They will be tracked by FOB staff separately.

Donations made by check will be entered into your fundraising page by FOB staff weekly.

Your payment method on file will NOT be charged if your team does not meet the \$11,500 support goal.

Your personal **\$2250 minimum donation amount** is required to cover the expenses for your trip and stay. This payment may be broken into 3 smaller payments:

- \$500 is due upon registration to reserve your spot on the team.
- \$500 is due approximately 4 months prior to your trip to book your flight.
- \$1250 is due approximately 2 months prior to your trip.
- Check exact due date here: [www.fobf.org/resources](http://www.fobf.org/resources)

This \$2250 donation covers:

	2025
	Per Person Cost
Ground Transportation	\$200
Approximately 20 Meals at Alfredo's House & 1 Dinner Out	\$250
Lodging for 7 Nights at Alfredo's House	\$175
Airfare/Insurance/Background Fee *	\$1,120
Additional Logistical Support and/or Security	\$80
Emergency Fund	\$150
Administrative Fee	\$275
	<b>\$2,250</b>

\*Airfare allotment is based on group ticket price average of all teams. Group ticketing allows FOB to reserve seats by making a deposit well before the first travel payments are due. Group ticketing also allows us to make name changes up to 48 hours before departure should a team member have to drop off unexpectedly.

The team's **\$11,500 shared support fund goal** covers the cost of medications and supplies that will be used during the clinics on your trip.

	2025
	Team Support Fund
Medications Purchased in the US	\$5,500
Vision Clinic Supplies	\$950
Supplies & Support for Dental Clinics	\$1,100
General Team Supplies	\$500
Shipping supplies to Honduras	\$700
Medications Purchased in Honduras	\$1,500
General Team Supplies	\$1,250
	<b>\$11,500</b>

Many Friends of Barnabas volunteers raise well above the necessary funds for their trip which help your team meet the team's fundraising goal. The more you can raise, the greater the impact on the communities you will visit!



## Tips for Fundraising

Before we jump into details, we'd like to share with you thoughts on fundraising from one of our own nurse volunteers, Jo Ellen Nutter:

*Does fundraising make you uncomfortable? Me too.*

*I have been doing short term mission work since 1990 and spent two years as a full-time missionary for which I needed to do sufficient fundraising to live and work for an entire year at a time.*

*Fundraising was my least favorite part of mission work. The sentiments I have heard and felt span a wide variety of hesitations such as, I should be able to take care of it myself, it will make people feel uncomfortable, I just don't like it.*

*Over my years I have gathered helpful tidbits regarding fundraising. Each and every one was a gift from someone else, today, I share these gifts with you in hopes you will become more comfortable with fundraising.*

*Non-profit organizations must cast a wide net and consistently broaden their outreach to be able to continue to offer the services they provide; therefore, fundraising is vital for the work to continue. Each time you tell the story, share the adventure, share the need, the efforts are expanded, you are doing much more than gathering dollars for the plane ticket.*

*There is a deep spiritual principle in being interconnected, interdependent. I watched a friend plan to serve on a mission team and insist he could and would finance it himself, ultimately, he lost his job, and still felt led to go on the trip, he had to ask for support. After his return while sharing lessons learned he said, I needed to learn the lesson that it is ok to ask for and receive assistance, that doing things in community is good, very good for both the giver and the receiver.*

*On one occasion a friend from my church family got very emotional when I mentioned how hard it is for me to fundraise, he took me aside and said, "I don't think you understand", he proceeded to explain he desperately wants to help folks and doesn't have medical skills, with tears in his eyes he said this is the only way I can 'go' the only way I can 'do' this work is to send you through my donations, please give me that gift.*

*I began to realize there are many facets to the fundraising assignment. The humility to ask for and receive help, the gift of giving someone the opportunity to give a meaningful gift, being willing to do something that is hard for me, to share the load, share the lessons and the blessings of a life lived in Him.*

*It is true that it is more blessed to give than receive, but we cannot always be the giver, sometimes we need to take a turn at receiving so someone else can have the blessing of giving.*

*As I (reluctantly, nervously) do my fundraising, I ask who wants to go with me through prayer, finances, or boots on the ground. In the spirit we are all working together as time and place are not factors in the spirit. I am hoping you will find a tidbit in here that helps you be more comfortable with the idea of fundraising and the joy it can give someone to support the work.*

*~jo ellen*

- **START NOW!** Once you register, your fundraising page will be ready to share!
- **Ask for money!** The first rule in fundraising is if you don't ask for money, you won't get it. Send your fundraiser via email, text, social media to your friends, family, and co-workers.
- **Be confident in your mission!** You are committing yourself to an outstanding cause and should convey your energy and excitement about the trip to your donors.
- **Thank your donors.** It is important to send sincere thank you letters in a timely manner. Donors for your trip will also be thanked by Friends of Barnabas when they contribute to your trip or team.
- **Learn about Honduras and Friends of Barnabas** at [www.fobf.org](http://www.fobf.org) and promote the website as a source of information for your donors. Beautiful color brochures about FOB are available for you to use. Ask your Team Leader or call the FOB Central Office.
- **Ask successful fundraising members of your team or FOB for help.** If you are having difficulties, ask what others have done to be successful or call FOB for suggestions and assistance.

## OTHER IDEAS

### DIRECT SOLICITATION TO A GROUP

The best thing about requesting support from a group of people is that the small amounts of support that each person contributes add up to a large sum. Take advantage of community events, family gatherings, church services, etc., and reach out to large, new networks of people.

### FUNDRAISING EVENTS

In the past, teams have held chili cook-offs, auctions, spaghetti suppers, raffles, the list goes on. As a team, come up with ideas on how you can work together to host a fundraising event.

### Sample Letter/Email

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

*I have been blessed with the opportunity to travel to Honduras this year and I would like to invite you to join me on this extraordinary experience. In [Month], I will be departing on a mission trip to Peña Blanca, Honduras, where I will be volunteering with Friends of Barnabas.*

*Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the world. More than half of the people live in poverty and over half of that half live in extreme poverty. The country is also prone to hurricanes and flooding, particularly in the areas close to the Caribbean coast.*

*The mission of Friends of Barnabas is to improve the lives of impoverished children in Honduras by providing high quality sustainable health care and enabling communities to become self-sufficient through health training and education.*

*As a team member on a Friends of Barnabas trip to Honduras, I will serve on a [medical mission team]. Our team will travel to remote community in the mountains of rural Honduras, providing health care to children and their families. We will provide general health care, dispense vitamins and medications, and offer dental and vision care. These children will have access to good health care which would be difficult or impossible to receive without us coming to them. I hope to make as big of an impact on the people I serve as I know they will have on me.*

*I would truly appreciate your financial support for me to join this mission trip. I will need to raise \$1965 for Friends of Barnabas in order to be eligible to participate. A gift of [\$50] will go a long way and make a tremendous impact.*

*All donors to the mission will receive blog updates from my team while we are in Honduras, so they can be a part of this experience from afar. If you would like to support the mission, please fill out the attached donation card and send it to me at [address] by [specific date]. Please make your check payable to "**Friends of Barnabas**." Your contribution to Friends of Barnabas is tax-deductible and you will receive a receipt for your tax records.*

*If for any reason I am unable to participate in the trip, your donation will be used to support the programs of Friends of Barnabas.*

*If you have any questions about the mission, I would love to hear from you--please contact me at [phone number] or [email address.] I am so grateful for your friendship and encouragement. Thank you and may God richly bless you as you consider your support for this mission trip!*

*Sincerely,  
[Name]*

## What do I do if...?

[...there is a crisis in my family back at home in the US?](#) In cases of EMERGENCIES, the quickest way for your family to get a message to you is to call FOB's Central Office (804-744-5624), Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm. After working hours, family members may call FOB's President (804-338-0163). Our US staff members have the best resources to reach our Honduran staff members who can quickly get you to a phone to call home. Please be courteous and instruct your family members to utilize this in EMERGENCIES only.

[...I lose my passport?](#) If you are still in the US, call Grazyna as soon as you realize that your passport is missing at 804-873-1451. If you are in Honduras, please notify Lidia Cano. We can advise you as to how to secure a new passport and we can help you do it quickly! Team Leaders and the US Office staff keep a copy of your passport in case you need it, but you should also carry a photocopy in your backpack.

[...something happens and I cannot make it the day I am supposed to depart?](#) Call Grazyna as soon as possible at 804-873-1451. Actions need to be taken to cancel your ticket BEFORE the actual time of departure. We can help save the ticket and there is always a possibility of traveling to Honduras on a different day.

[...I need to call home or send an email?](#) Alfredo's House is set up with a wireless internet connection as well as a computer for team use, so feel free to check your email, send notes home and call using wifi apps such as WhatsApp, FaceTime or Messenger.

[...I have dietary restrictions?](#) Please make a note of this on your online team registration form and also discuss your specific needs with your Team Leader. FOB's Central Office staff will work with Lidia to determine if we can accommodate your needs, if you need to pack special food items for yourself, or if your needs cannot be met and thus, an FOB trip might not be appropriate for you. FOB can accommodate some but not all dietary restrictions. Please be clear about your needs and develop a plan as to how they will be met prior to joining a team.

## What Is Required of Me?

Thank you for making the commitment to travel with FOB to serve the people of Honduras. After thoroughly reviewing the contents of this Handbook, please complete the following according to the deadlines provided by your Team Leader.



### Registration and Form:

- Online Registration found at [www.fobf.org/register](http://www.fobf.org/register)
  - You will need to upload a copy of your passport, a signed volunteer agreement (provided in the registration, and your medical license (if you are a medical professional).
- Notarized Medical Release Form – Give to your Team Leader
- Register with the US Embassy
- Complete the Honduran Customs form online and take a screenshot of your QR code (to be done a day or two before you leave for Honduras).

Make payments for your \$2250 team fee by either:

- Mail: Friends of Barnabas  
PO Box 4804  
Midlothian, VA 23112
- Online: [www.fobf.org](http://www.fobf.org) (please check the box to include the processing fee)
- Fundraising

### Training Preparations:

- Attend Team Meetings scheduled by your Team Leader
- Join Team WhatsApp group

### Team Fundraising

- Help your team reach the \$11,500 support goal by sharing the team's fundraising page with your friends, family and colleagues.

## Thank You!

**Thank you for your service to Friends of Barnabas and to the people of Honduras. Thank you for being an integral part of FOB's Community Health Development Program, providing services and preventative health education to 30 rural mountain communities in Honduras. Your support is invaluable!**

## FOB Policies

### Handling of Positive COVID cases on an MMT

#### Purpose Statement:

To provide clinical guidance for the handling of a MMT member with a positive COVID test while in Honduras.

#### Responsible Persons:

Dra. Maria del Carmen Moncada, Martha Lidia Cano, Team Leader(s), Lead Medical Professional on the team.

#### Policy Statement:

The disposition of a positive COVID case on a Mountain Medical team will be handled by a pre-determined set of the leadership team.

#### Procedure:

1. Any team member who is suspected of having COVID or presents possible COVID-like symptoms should be tested immediately. Tests are available in the medication bodega.
2. If the test is positive, the team member should be isolated in a room at the Barnabas House or an unused room at Alfredo's House. They must have meals delivered to them.
3. Any team member testing positive must remain at the Barnabas House compound and not go out to clinics.
4. If a second team member develops symptoms and tests positive, the entire team and Honduran staff/supporting team staff should be tested before going out on the next day's clinics.
5. If the team has three or more team members testing positive, the team can no longer go out to hold clinics for the week.
6. Masks must be worn in Alfredo's House if a team member tests positive, only to be removed for meals.
7. Tasks will be given to a team to do if the team or team members have to stay back at Alfredo's House.

### PPE Policy for Mountain Medical Teams

#### 1. Purpose Statement:

To provide guidelines for all Mountain Medical team members concerning the appropriate use of and minimal requirements for the use of PPE in a clinic setting.

#### 2. Responsible Persons:

All Mountain Medical team members, including Friends of Barnabas staff and in-country volunteers.

#### 3. Policy Statement:

All Mountain Medical team members, Friends of Barnabas staff and volunteers are required to wear the appropriate PPE for the clinic area for which they are assigned to work.

#### 4. Procedure:

- a. The minimally required PPE to be worn indoors in all clinic areas is a surgical face mask.
- b. All team members working in the dental clinic should wear a N95 or KN95 mask due to the exposure to saliva.
- c. When a team member must touch a patient in the providing of care, gloves should be worn.
- d. Team members are free to wear more than the minimally required PPE, if they so desire in any given clinic area.
- e. Taking mask breaks is highly recommended throughout each day.

## Blood Exposure Protocol for Mountain Medical Teams

Standard Precautions: "Standard precautions are meant to reduce the risk of transmission of blood borne and other pathogens from both recognized and unrecognized sources. They are the basic level of infection control precautions which are to be used, as a minimum, in the care of all patients. Hand hygiene is a major component of standard precautions and one of the most effective methods to prevent transmission of pathogens associated with healthcare. In addition to hand hygiene, the use of personal protective equipment should be guided by risk assessment and the extent of contact anticipated with blood and body fluids, or pathogens." (WHO)

**First aid:** For a potential exposure to HIV, "first aid" refers to the actions that should be taken immediately after the potential exposure. The aim of first aid is to reduce contact time with the source person's body fluids (including blood) and tissues, and to clean and decontaminate the exposure site to reduce the risk of infection.

### **IF SKIN IS BROKEN AFTER AN INJURY WITH A USED NEEDLE OR SHARP INSTRUMENT:**

- Wash the injury immediately, using soap.
- Encourage the puncture wound to bleed freely under running water for several minutes or until bleeding ceases.
- If running water is not available, clean site with a gel or hand cleaning solution.
- **Do not** use any strong solutions, such as alcohol, bleach or iodine, as they may irritate the wound and make the injury worse.
- **Do not** squeeze or rub the injury site.
- **Do not** suck a puncture wound.

### **FOR A SPLASH OF BLOOD OR BODY FLUID ON UNBROKEN SKIN:**

- Wash the area immediately. If running water is not available, clean the area with a gel or hand rub solution.
- **Do not** use any strong solutions, such as alcohol, bleach or iodine, as they may irritate the affected area use mild disinfectants, such as Chlorhexidine gluconate 2–4%.
- **Do not** rub or scrub area.
- **Do not** use a dressing.

### **FOR A SPLASH OF BLOOD OR BODY FLUID IN THE EYE:**

- Irrigate the exposed eye immediately with water or normal saline. Sit in a chair, tilt the head back and have a colleague gently pour water or normal saline over the eye, gently pulling the eyelids up and down to make sure the eye is cleaned thoroughly.
- If wearing contact lenses, leave them in place while irrigating, as they form a barrier over the eye and will help protect it; once the eye has been cleaned, remove the contact lenses and clean them in the normal manner, which will make them safe to wear again.
- **Do not** use soap or disinfectant on the eye.

### **FOR A SPLASH OF BLOOD OR BODY FLUID IN THE MOUTH:**

- Spit the fluid out immediately.
- Rinse the mouth thoroughly, using water or saline, and spit out again. Repeat this process several times.
- **Do not** use soap or disinfectant in the mouth.

### **EVALUATION OF THE EXPOSURE SOURCE**

- When feasible, the person whose blood or body fluid is the source of potential exposure should be evaluated for HIV.
- If an exposure source is known and available, testing the source person for HIV is recommended as soon as possible, or testing the suspected exposure material (blood, tissue, etc) if the person is unavailable.

- Procedures that should be strictly followed for testing the source person include:
  - **obtaining informed consent (included with this protocol),**
  - referral if positive for appropriate post-test counseling, care and treatment. This will involve FOBF staff making transportation arrangements and providing written referral to clinic in San Pedro Sula or Tegucigalpa, whichever is closer for the person/family.
- A rapid HIV-antibody test is preferred in situations where enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) tests cannot be completed within 24–48 hours.
- **Two positive ELISA or rapid HIV-antibody tests (the rapid tests are what the team will have available in the field) are considered to be highly suggestive of infection, whereas a negative result is an excellent indicator of the absence of HIV antibody.** In the event of an exposure, the exposure source should be tested twice if first result indicates a positive test.
- The exposure source should also be tested for hepatitis C and B viruses (HCV and HBV). These tests will need to be run at a lab in Honduras. The Friends of Barnabas Staff will make arrangements for these test at the expense of FOB. **In the event there is a positive result/exposure – Patti Wagner – Medical Operations Coordinator for FOB should be notified by email ASAP.**
- Information to consider when evaluating an exposure source includes:
  - clinical symptoms - acute syndrome suggestive of primary HIV infection and history of possible HIV exposure within the last three months or personal history suggesting possible exposure to HIV.

#### **EVALUATION OF THE EXPOSED PERSON**

- Evaluation of exposed persons has to be done as soon as possible if indicated by test results of exposure source. Ideally, this would happen within hours after an exposure. The following evaluations are recommended: **In the event this becomes necessary, Patti Wagner will make arrangements with Cemesa Hospital to have the testing completed. Exposed person will be transported to San Pedro Sula for the testing that is indicated below.**
  - an HIV serological baseline test to establish infection status at the time of exposure
  - baseline laboratory testing to monitor for adverse reactions:
    - complete blood count (CBC) with differential and platelets
    - liver function tests (LFTs) (aspartate aminotransferase (AST), alanine aminotransferase (ALT), bilirubin)
    - urea or serum creatinine; and baseline serological tests for hepatitis C and B (HCV antibodies and Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg)).

**Please email any concerns/questions to Patti Wagner and Erin Caldwell ([patti@fobf.org](mailto:patti@fobf.org), [erin@fobf.org](mailto:erin@fobf.org)).**



## **Informed Consent Form for Source Person**

*(Informed consent to perform an HIV test and authorization for release of HIV-related information for purposes of providing post-exposure care to a person accidentally exposed occupationally or non-occupationally\*)*

A person has been exposed to your blood or a body fluid in a manner that may pose a risk for the transmission of a blood borne infection. Many individuals may not know whether they have a blood borne infection because people can carry these viruses without having any symptoms. We are therefore asking for your consent to test for the presence of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). You will also be tested for Hepatitis B virus (HBV) and Hepatitis C virus (HCV). HIV testing is voluntary and requires your consent in writing; consent can be withdrawn for the test at any time. Your blood will be tested by a rapid or enzyme immunoassay serological test. The test result will be used to help determine whether the exposed person is actually at risk for HIV and requires treatment for that exposure.

We will inform you of the test results, helping you understand their implications as well as assisting you in accessing any services you may need.

**I understand the purpose for which I am being asked to submit a specimen for HIV testing. My questions about the HIV test were answered. I agree to be tested for HIV.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person to be Tested Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person to be Tested (or of the person consenting if different from the person to be tested)

**I provided pretest counseling and have offered referral services through the Friends of Barnabas Foundation. I answered the above individual's questions about the test and offered him/her an unsigned copy of this form.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of witness (FOB Staff) \_\_\_\_\_

## Healthy Kids Program Referral Policy

The Healthy Kids Program (formally known as Extended Care) was developed to be an extension of our Community Health Development Program and attends to the medical needs of **children**, whom you may encounter as a volunteer on a Mountain Medical Team. The needs of these children, whether acute or chronic, cannot be met in the daily clinics set up in the rural communities of Honduras that we serve. Our staff at the Barnabas House provides the necessary arrangements for follow up care and referrals as indicated for each individual child. We provide transportation, home visits, medications, medical equipment, and any surgery or treatment deemed necessary at no cost to the family.

### 10 Important Things to Remember About HEALTHY KIDS:

1. Referrals to the HEALTHY KIDS can only be made for children. (However, in the communities our medical staff can write referrals to the public health care system for adult patients.)
2. Referrals can be made to the HEALTHY KIDS for children with Down syndrome. We work with another organization to provide workshops twice a year specific to this population at the BH.
3. Referrals can be made to the HEALTHY KIDS for palliative care.
4. Referrals can be made to the HEALTHY KIDS for children with surgical needs.
5. Referrals can be made to the HEALTHY KIDS for children who are unable to purchase medicines needed for chronic disorders or diseases (i.e. seizure meds).
6. Referrals can be made to the HEALTHY KIDS for children who are thought to have chronic or poorly managed respiratory issues (i.e. asthma/allergies).
7. Referrals can be made to the HEALTHY KIDS for children with severely stunted growth, chronic malnutrition, or any developmental delays.
8. Referrals can be made to the **HEALTHY KIDS/BH** for children who present **severely ill or compromised and need further medical attention ASAP**. If needed, the community leader will organize transportation for a child directly from the community to the closest hospital.
9. Referrals can be made to the **HEALTHY KIDS/BH** for children experiencing an acute asthma exacerbation with little response to intervention. These children will be enrolled in the HEALTHY KIDS program - nebulizers & education will be provided to the community and family.
10. Referrals are made from the pediatric eye screening station for children who have a "referral" reading. These could be a need for glasses, corrective treatments or surgery. These patients will see the Honduran physician for instructions on how to proceed for further assistance through FOB.
11. Our hearts are heavy often times in the communities we visit as we experience the unimaginable daily suffering of so many. Our heart and our gut can always make a referral to HEALTHY KIDS for a specific family follow up/home visit just because our heart and our gut tell us to. Never leave a community or end a day wondering if something else for a child can be done....don't be afraid to ask.

## Air Travel Policy

Depending on where all your team is coming from, you may be booked on a Group Ticket or with Individual Tickets. The benefit to booking with Group Tickets is that if a team member drops off, we can submit a name change up to 72 hours before departure and still use that ticket. Individual tickets do not allow for name changes, so if a team member with an individual ticket drops off the team, then we cannot apply that ticket to another team member. Please report cancelations of team members as soon as possible so that we can either request a name change or a travel voucher for future use. If a team member with an individual ticket cancels before the trip, they will not be refunded. They can apply their team member fee and flight credit to a future trip within 6 months of their original trip.

## Video and Audio Recording Policy

Filming patients without consent is a violation of the patient's privacy. Video or audio recording in a clinical setting breaches the confidentiality rights of patients and infringes on the privacy rights of physicians and other medical providers. To ensure confidentiality and privacy, any type of electronic recording (video or audio) is strictly prohibited in FOB's Mountain Medical Clinics (general, vision, dental, etc.) The posting of ANY video (clinical or not) to any Social Media site is prohibited without advance permission from FOB's President, and/or Development Director. Any individual wanting to engage in video or audio recording needs advance permission. Permission in writing must be granted by FOB's President, Development Director or Director of Programs & Operations in Honduras.

## Gift Giving Policy

Indiscriminate gift-giving is quicksand. It sucks complacent Americans into a quagmire of dependency that alters or even destroys relationships built over years; the long term negative effect can seldom be reversed.

For Hondurans who are offered special advantages or who seek out team members for favors, gifts, money or special treatment, eventually integrity and self-respect are forfeited along with the mutual bonds of friendship. Along with this there are dire consequences within their own community; distrust and images of favoritism that we cannot see. Over the years, we have seen cases of indiscriminate gift-giving on the part of FOB team members to staff members and to other Hondurans who translate on a part-time basis. **This is not acceptable.**

People of faith have a giving heart, especially those who serve on FOB mission teams. Often, we see needs that the staff have that we want to provide for separately from the work of the team, as a gift. So what's wrong with a gift to someone you've worked with all week by your side, who helped, sometimes heroically to make our mission successful? Why can't we give them a gift of a few dollars or something that we brought (sometimes just for them, requested the last time we were there)? Or why can't we respond to a need voiced in a private conversation with one of the local people that we could easily meet with little or no effect on ourselves?

The answer to these questions is the same...it's wrong. Just because we can give a gift doesn't mean we should. Every time a personal gift is given, or a gift is requested, the fabric of carefully nurtured mutuality and equality begins to unravel. The giver receives a sense of feel-good, a natural response, when giving. The receiver may be getting a gift, but he/she now knows that the giver and the receiver are no longer equals, creating an atmosphere of dependency rather than one of mutuality and equality.

Here are some **GUIDELINES** to keep in mind when serving as a missionary on FOB mission teams:

- Gifts (money, computers, shoes, clothes, toys, or anything else) are not to be given or promised either during your time in Honduras or sent later.
- A request for favors from staff members (including translators) in private conversations is a serious breach of protocol and should be reported to the Team Leader and/or FOB Honduras Director.
- Promises of future gifts are inappropriate.
- Asking staff members to tell you what they need is inappropriate.
- Giving toys to children in the communities is inappropriate.

What is the best way to celebrate equality in a manner that encompasses the principles of generosity and compassion without creating bad feelings and partiality? Here are some **SUGGESTIONS**...

- Smiles, high fives, handshakes, hugs
- Play games, color with children
- Offer to listen, to sit, to pray; eat together, share food together
- Be inclusive; Hondurans traveling with the team are team members too; don't leave them out of activities and devotions if they are present.

**THE GREATEST GIFT  
YOU CAN GIVE  
SOME ONE IS YOUR  
TIME, YOUR ATTENTION,  
YOUR  
LOVE, YOUR CONCERN...**

**\*\*\*FOB POLICY \*\*\* The only non-formulary items permitted to be distributed by FOB mission teams are as follows: (1) Flip flops, baby slings, and diapers will be utilized and disbursed from the medical stations as they are needed. (2) A soccer ball/frisbee will be used to bridge the gap between cultures, allowing team members and community members and children to play with one another. These will be given to the school teacher at the end of the day for future use.**

## Volunteer Safety and Security Policies

Since our founding in 2000, Friends of Barnabas has not had a single act of violence towards our volunteers during their time with us. Safety is a priority and we expand our efforts in this area each year. Our security measures do not, however, eliminate the possibility of Honduran crime and violence for every team member. Just as no one can guarantee one's safety in the United States, we cannot guarantee one's safety in Honduras. We can guarantee that the safety of our team members and our staff is our first priority. We have safely sent over 4,000 team members to and from Honduras over the last 22 years. We routinely monitor the safety conditions in Honduras and we will make needed changes, including the cancellation of teams, should the need arise.

We acknowledge that much of the information that follows may be intimidating. We have a moral and ethical obligation for you to know all of these facts and make your decisions accordingly. We take security very seriously and always will. We fully appreciate the faith that many have put in our ministry with Honduras and the Honduran people. We will continue to honor that faith with constant vigilance and appropriate security measures. We remain available to answer additional questions from prospective volunteers and their families and can be reached at [erin@fobf.org](mailto:erin@fobf.org) or 804-338-0163.

### Day to Day Safety: Where We Work

FOB's complex is located in Peña Blanca, a small town in central Honduras, approximately 85 kilometers south of San Pedro Sula. Our complex consists of the Barnabas House (a training center, clinic, and preoperative/postoperative center for children), Alfredo's House (a dormitory for teams and patients), and gardens providing food for our patients, staff, and teams. We currently have 20 staff members in Honduras.

The main entrance to our complex is through a metal gate accessible from the gravel road that leads to our property. The gate is in plain view of both the Barnabas House and Alfredo's House. The gate is locked at all times. We have an armed security team who patrol the grounds both day and night. Their presence is to protect our patients and their parents, volunteers, staff, and our property. Our guards have not had any incidences to date and serve as a deterrent to thieves or others who wish to enter the property illegally.

FOB mission teams serving communities within central Honduras do so within the communities in our Community Health Development Program. These communities have been carefully selected and are all within a reasonable driving distance by bus from FOB's complex. Each community within our program signs a letter of commitment with FOB and we have found that they have adopted us as much as we have adopted them. We embrace the security arrangements available in every community we visit. Local *delegados* provide an additional level of security for our teams, including crowd control. We cannot provide your team with the names of communities you will visit prior to your travel.

Parts of our work take us in and around the city of San Pedro Sula. We advise all team members to be extremely cautious in this area. FOB staff seek out the safest hotels and accommodations, all of which have armed security both day and night. Our teams travel together at all times within the city and to preapproved locations only. The restaurants utilized by FOB have security at all times.

### Risk and Safety Concerns

There are risks and concerns inherent to daily life in a developing country such as Honduras. We minimize as many risks as possible. With that said, however, we cannot eliminate all risks. This section discusses the risks associated with travel in Honduras, and the following sections provide tips and strategies to minimize these risks as well as the policies of Friends of Barnabas to deal with these issues.

## Health

Honduras is a developing country with most of its residents living in extreme poverty. This creates health risks that are typically not found in developed countries.

Illnesses: Mosquito-borne diseases such as Malaria, Dengue Fever, and Chikungunya exist in Honduras and are more common during the rainy season (October to February). The use of bug repellent, in whatever form you choose, cannot be emphasized enough. Parasites from contaminated food and drinking water occasionally occur. It is each volunteer's decision whether to take malaria medication and/or obtain vaccines prior to arrival in Honduras and we recommend that they consult with their primary care physician in the US to advise them thoroughly on these options. Although drinking water is filtered and safe at the FOB complex, many communities do not have safe drinking water or safe sanitary conditions. FOB provides a large container of safe drinking water for all traveling teams. If you are older than 65 years old or have a pre-existing health condition that would make you vulnerable to a more severe form of any illness, please discuss your participation on a medical team with your personal physician. FOB cannot be held responsible for any illnesses contracted during the trip.

COVID-19 will continue to be a health issue. All preventative measures should be taken to include, but not limited to, social distancing, wearing a face mask and frequent washing of hands. FOB does highly recommend that you have completed the full course of COVID-19 vaccine before travel.

Dehydration: The heat and humidity of Honduras can put people at risk for exhaustion and dehydration. Volunteers are encouraged to hydrate and be aware of their body's reaction to the weather conditions of Honduras, taking breaks if necessary.

Medical care: A volunteer who becomes sick or ill will have difficulty immediately accessing high quality medical care. The nearest hospital comparable with U.S. standards is a minimum of 90 minutes away from FOB's complex and may be as far as four or five hours away from the clinic locations of our traveling teams. Volunteers are encouraged not to engage in risky activities that may result in injuries requiring emergent care.

## Natural Disasters

The tropical location of Honduras puts it at extreme risk for natural disasters, particularly hurricanes and earthquakes. While FOB has well-constructed, safe buildings, a natural disaster could cut us off from food, medical care, and the possibility of safe evacuation. FOB pays close attention to weather patterns and makes every effort to delay teams or bring teams home early as is necessary. We acknowledge, however, that advance warning is not always available.

## Man-made Risks

Violent Crime: Crime (including murder, rape, gang violence, armed robberies, and assaults) is endemic in urban areas of Honduras and is not unheard of in rural areas. As such, we encourage all volunteers to employ a high degree of caution. As in any country, foreigners may be targeted due to the perception that they may be carrying money and valuables. Police coverage is often sparse outside of major urban areas, and police throughout the country may be ill-prepared or corrupt.

Civil Unrest & Protests: Political and/or economic issues may give rise to demonstrations or protests. They usually take place in urban areas with little or no notice and can cause serious traffic disruptions. Although most demonstrations are peaceful, they can turn confrontational and escalate into violence, particularly the ones in large cities. We require our staff and volunteers to stay as far from these as possible.

Vehicle Accidents: Honduras does not have the same safety and prevention habits that most volunteers are used to in the United States. Roads are poorly maintained, and many drivers do not practice safe driving. Traveling in a vehicle in Honduras can be dangerous. Crime, poor road conditions, and lack of traffic law enforcement increase the risks. Traffic rules are generally ignored. Speed limits are rarely enforced. With few exceptions, roads (other than major highways) are often in poor repair, potholed, poorly lit, frequently narrow, lack shoulders, and may have unmarked hazards. Road

travel after dark is especially hazardous due to limited visibility and incidents of carjacking and highway robbery. Thus, our teams are not permitted to travel at night. You must also be very careful as a pedestrian for all the reasons mentioned above.

## Risk Assessment and Reduction

FOB always strives to make certain that volunteer safety, security, and well-being are our foremost concerns. However, each volunteer who joins our teams must also take steps to reduce their own personal risk. To increase the likelihood of remaining safe and healthy, the following steps are required:

### Health

1. Consult with the Centers for Disease Control or an appropriate medical professional for recommendations on vaccines, preventative treatments, and other health safety recommendations. Each volunteer is responsible for her/his own decisions on what steps to take with regards to preventative medicine. We recommend you err on the side of caution. A completed course of the COVID-19 vaccine is highly recommended before travel to Honduras, as well as documentation of a negative at-home COVID test 24 hours prior to travel.
2. Practice self-care during your time with FOB. This includes practicing proper hydration and eating habits and seeking medical care when necessary. This also includes the use of bug spray each day, as well as the use of PPE.
3. Inform your Team Leader of any allergies, dietary restrictions, or other medical needs and take initiative to ensure that needs in this area are met.

### Natural Disasters

1. There have been earthquakes, hurricanes, and floods that have affected Honduras. Be attentive to weather reports and other local news regarding warnings and potential natural disasters provided by FOB staff.
2. Follow orders of the FOB staff to evacuate, relocate, or stay put in the event of a natural disaster, even when such orders seem overly cautious.

### Man Made Risks

1. Familiarize yourself with the *Honduras Country Specific Information* on the US Department of State website at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1135.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1135.html).
2. Refrain from bringing jewelry. At most, a volunteer is permitted to wear a simple pair of earrings and a band ring only. Volunteers should not wear diamonds, gemstones, or anything flashy.
3. Upon arrival, all electronics should be packed in backpacks or carry-on luggage before exiting the airplane. This includes but is not limited to: computers, tablets, readers, cell phones, and iPads. These should not be unpacked until you reach FOB's complex. These should NOT be used on the bus.
4. When using social media, it is not permitted to "check in" or list any location other than HONDURAS in your social media posts.
5. The use of unsecure WIFI networks is highly discouraged.
6. Team members should refrain from taking photographs of security guards, police, and soldiers as well as any large gathers of people such as in a form of demonstration or protest.
7. Alfredo's House and hotels selected by FOB are secure and theft has not been an issue, however, keep all valuables inside bags and not openly lying about in the rooms.
8. Avoid public displays of wealth and foreign status, particularly when off the grounds of FOB's complex. This includes but is not limited to: iPads, cell phones, and laptops in public.
9. Wear scrubs (tops and bottoms) at all times while serving in the communities, either issued by FOB or those of your own.
10. Please refrain from bringing or wearing short skirts, short shorts, shirts with spaghetti straps, or halter tops.
11. Do not leave your belongings unattended while serving in the communities. FOB cannot be responsible for retrieving items left in the communities.

12. When working in the communities, do not leave the work site without the approval of your Team Leader and an FOB staff member. In such a case that a deviation is presented (ex. a house call for a patient in need), a group of three is preferred and one of the security guards must accompany you.
13. Missioners are not permitted to leave FOB's complex or hotel without a staff member and the approval of Lidia Cano. Volunteers will not be permitted to leave the complex for exercise purposes such as jogging or walking. Volunteers will not be permitted to leave the complex with non-staff Hondurans unless it is previously approved by Lidia Cano and a member of the Central Office staff.
14. Volunteers are cautioned from participating in high risk, adventure activities. While outdoor activities for teams are made available upon team leader request, volunteers should remember that safety standards are much different and lack oversight commonplace in US facilities for similar activities. Volunteers should know that the insurance FOB provides for all missioners does not include zip line activities or other adventure activities. Volunteers should consult their own personal insurance and should read all waivers clearly before participating in any high risk activity in Honduras. As acknowledged in the Volunteer Agreement, FOB is not responsible for accidents of any kind, including death.
15. Team members are required to ride in the bus to/from mountain communities. It is not permitted for FOB volunteers to stand in the aisle of the bus, ride in the back of the bus, ride in the bed of a truck, or sit on anything other than a traditional vehicle seat. Volunteers are also restricted from driving FOB vehicles.
16. Seat belts should be used at all times.
17. While traveling in urban areas or when stopped on a highway for any length of time, all windows must be closed in the truck, van, or bus.
18. In tourist areas or markets, please remain in pairs or groups at all times, only going into areas approved by Lidia Cano.
19. Be cautious at all times and aware of your surroundings. Report any concerns to your Team Leader and an FOB staff member.
20. No gifts (monetary or otherwise) should be given to FOB staff members or those you meet in the communities or elsewhere. Please adhere to our Gift Giving Policy and discuss needs with Lidia Cano.
21. Refrain from sharing your telephone number, email address, or mailing address with anyone in the communities or elsewhere, as sadly we cannot guarantee the motives of each person who might desire your contact information.
22. Do not intervene in crimes in progress.
23. Do not resist robbery attempts and do not be vocal in such attempts.
24. Should the team or a team member become accosted in any way, work with FOB staff to notify the proper authorities. FOB staff members are aware of the proper channel for the best result, be it local police or the US Consulate. All FOB cell phones are programmed with the number for the US Consulate in Tegucigalpa.
25. Lock vehicle doors at all times, while traveling and while the vehicle is parked, and avoid leaving any items that can be seen from outside the vehicle.



## Friends of Barnabas Safety Policies

These policies are subject to change based on the current situation of Honduras.

### Logistics

1. Volunteers must provide complete the online registration and provide their Team Leader with their notarized Medical Release Form.
2. All volunteers must register with the U.S. Embassy via the State Department website (<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>) prior to arrival in Honduras.
3. All volunteers will be registered with UMVIM (United Methodist Volunteers in Mission – FOB’s insurance company) by FOB’s Travel Coordinator.
4. All volunteer travel is booked by FOB’s Travel Coordinator through a group department at a travel agency. **VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO MAKE CHANGES TO THEIR OWN FLIGHT SCHEDULES WHILE IN HONDURAS** without the approval of a representative from the US Central Office. Doing so can jeopardize the entire group reservation and is strictly prohibited.

### Day-to-day On-site Safety

1. Guests of volunteers are not permitted on the grounds of the FOB complex unless approved by Lidia Cano Operations in advance.
2. Notify an FOB staff member of any unknown, unfamiliar, or suspicious individuals on or near FOB’s grounds.
3. Immediately report sightings of children, staff, or others in possession of weapons or objects that can be used as weapons.
4. Do not leave Alfredo’s House unlocked if unattended.
5. Do not leave the FOB grounds without permission from Lidia Cano.
6. Each team member will be expected to adhere to ALL additional safety protocols deemed necessary by FOB’s Medical Coordinator and Medical Advisory Committee based on current environmental threats.

### Health Emergencies

1. A volunteer who is sick or injured should immediately contact the Team Leader and Lidia Cano.
2. Minor or common ailments may be treated by the volunteer physician on the team or FOB’s staff physician. When symptoms mimic common signs of Malaria, Dengue Fever, Chikungunya, or COVID, FOB’s staff physician will serve as the chief medical advisor.
3. Emergencies or serious injuries or illnesses will be treated at Hospital Cemesa in San Pedro Sula, approximately 90 minutes from FOB (<http://www.hcemesa.com/>). However, in the case of an emergency for which a 90 minute drive is too long, volunteers will be treated at the closest facility. FOB staff will work with emergency contacts of volunteers and local medical professionals to determine the best option.
4. The medical insurance offered by FOB (through UMVIM) requires payment for services which is then reimbursed.
5. The medical insurance offered to FOB volunteers (through UMVIM) offers medical evacuation to the nearest appropriate location for needed medical care.
6. Please report any illness you may have developed while in Honduras, or immediately after returning home, to FOB’s Medical Director ([patti@fobf.org](mailto:patti@fobf.org)).

### Natural Disasters

1. In the event of an impending natural disaster, Lidia Cano, in conjunction with FOB Leadership, will make all decisions regarding evacuation, housing, and food rationing.
2. As soon as it is safe and possible, communications will be attempted first with FOB’s U.S. Central Office, then with volunteer emergency contacts.
3. In an evacuation, volunteers should take only the basics with them, but must take their passport.

## Political & Civil Unrest

1. Volunteers are strictly prohibited from interacting with any type of strike, demonstration, or other political activity.
2. In the event of widespread civil and political unrest, volunteers may be ordered to not leave the FOB grounds and must comply with this order.

## Off-site Policies

1. Travel after dark is not permitted.
2. A detachment of the Honduran security guards will travel with mission teams traveling into the communities. Local community *delegados* will also be utilized as an extra level of security.
3. A security team escort will follow FOB's bus from the airport to the FOB complex.
4. A cell phone will be available to every mission team and is programmed with the numbers of staff members as well as the US Consulate.
5. If and when FOB staff concludes that a police escort or additional security is needed for staff or team members at other times, it will be requested and provided.
6. The FOB staff members who travel with the mission teams into the communities will maintain close communication with the staff at the Barnabas House. A call system will be used for reporting arrival and departure times as well as emergencies. The emergency plan at the Barnabas House will be put into action when calls are not received by the designated time (ie local authorities will be contacted as well as the U.S. Consulate, if necessary).
7. The FOB complex will be guarded by an armed guard at all times.
8. All FOB vehicles will be maintained to avoid breakdowns in inconvenient locations.

## Limitations

The foregoing recommendations and policies are meant to provide guidance and as such are for informational purposes only. These recommendations do not constitute an assumption of legal liability on behalf of the Friends of Barnabas Board of Directors, employees, or volunteers in the event of an evacuation or medical emergency.

## Additional Safety and Security Measures for Travel

The safety of Friends of Barnabas staff and team members is a priority, and we constantly work to expand our efforts in this area. We routinely monitor the safety conditions in Honduras, and we will make needed changes, including the postponement of teams and activities, where appropriate.

In recent years, rainstorms have often intensified and led to flooding, road closures, and dangerous travel to/from mountain communities. Therefore, FOB will take certain additional precautions prior to the movement of staff or team members.

- FOB's President will stay in regular, close communication with FOB's Director of Programs & Operations in Honduras, and local Honduran board members regarding the safety of the areas in which FOB staff and team members work. This group will serve as a Safety and Security Team. Local media outlets will also be regularly monitored.
- Weekly, FOB's President will receive brief reports on safety and security concerns from FOB's Director of Programs & Operations and Transportation Coordinator regarding the Lake Yojoa area and any other concerns. She will receive reports separately from FOB's Country Director regarding San Pedro Sula and any other concerns. The President will consult with other members of the Safety and Security Team as needed.
- Monthly, FOB will circulate a list of routes and alternative routes for upcoming travel needs. This list will be evaluated by FOB's Transportation Coordinator, drivers, contacts with the local police department, and two other security groups. This evaluation will include comments regarding the frequency of protests or disruptions and suggestions for alternative routes not included.

Based on the above information, FOB leadership and/or the Safety and Security Team will determine a level for travel to Honduras for teams:

- **Level 1 – Normal team operations are permitted.**
- **Level 2 – Additional precautions will be taken to move teams throughout Honduras.**
- **Level 3 – Team travel will be postponed.**

During times when FOB's Transportation Coordinator and/or the Safety and Security Team deem that the weather, health, social, and/or political climate is **at Level 2**, the following measures will be utilized:

### **REGARDING AIRPORT PICK UP OF TEAMS:**

- Prior to leaving Peña Blanca, all vehicles headed to the airport will have full tanks of gas (*paid by FOB, not team funds*) to eliminate stops between the airport and the Barnabas House.
- FOB's bus will be utilized to pick up teams at the airport. All team members will ride in the bus along with all duffels and baggage.
- FOB drivers will depart Peña Blanca at 4:00 AM to arrive at the airport in San Pedro Sula prior to potential protests in the airport area.
- FOB drivers will be in contact with FOB's Director of Programs & Operations with the news of their arrival at that airport or regarding any disturbances along the road. Drivers will have cell phones as well as long range radios.
- Security guards will travel in FOB's bus with the team.
- The bus will be equipped with the following:
  - Cooler of ice,

- Emergency Tub with ponchos, box of heavy-duty trash bags, bottles of vinegar and towels (to give each team member in case of teargas), first aid kit (in addition to the standard box carried on the bus), and large box of granola bars,
- Oxygen tank and masks,
- Large bottle of water and cups (sufficient for the team).
- Before leaving the airport, team members will be asked to:
  - Purchase lunch food and water,
  - Use restrooms.
- An FOB staff member will drive the Isuzu truck and will depart at least 10 minutes ahead of the bus. They will report back to the driver of the bus should they encounter any problems along the route.

In the case that FOB staff determine that it is unsafe to leave the airport area due to protests on the roads leading in/out of airport, the team should:

- Purchase water and food in the airport shops,
- Use the restrooms,
- Find a seat at the far end of the airport, near departures, to sit and wait for instructions from FOB.

In the case that FOB staff determine that it is unsafe to leave San Pedro Sula due to protests on the roads leading in/out of the area, the team will be accompanied by FOB to a safe, local hotel.

#### **GENERAL REMINDERS FOR TEAMS:**

Prior to departure from the US:

- Each team leader will be contacted by the FOB Central Office with an update on the current safety and security situation in Honduras and again close to the date of travel should circumstances change.
- Team members will be encouraged to adjust expectations from previous trips and to remain flexible. They will be reminded of the importance of their service in Honduras and of FOB's priority of safety.
- An FOB Honduran cell phone will be provided for each team.

Upon arrival:

- The Team Leader should contact the number listed on the FOB Honduran phone to notify of arrival time and to receive any pertinent instructions.
- Team members will each have a minimum of \$50 US dollars, all medications, and their passports in their backpacks.
- All phones, electronic devices, and cameras MUST stay packed in backpacks at all times during travel on the bus. No pictures are to be taken of any security officers, soldiers, or police nor of protests or demonstrations.

During stay in Honduras:

- All team funds will be exchanged and received at Alfredo House upon arrival.
- It may be necessary to adjust planned schedules and even postpone visits to planned communities. It must be understood that safety comes first, and that FOB staff will manage services to planned communities at another date.
- If needed, support activities will be planned for the team at Barnabas House. The team members should understand that these efforts are also needed by FOB.

### **REGARDING COMMUNITY EVACUATIONS:**

At times, the team will be asked to depart early from a community due to weather or other circumstances:

- FOB staff will make the decision to leave and will inform the team leader.
- The team leader should then go to each clinic station and ask that the team members quickly finish seeing the patient(s) they are with and then close up their station as soon as possible.
- Team members should understand that no discussion about the events is appropriate at that time.
- As soon as stations are pack up, supplies should be carried to the bus. Ponchos are available in the Emergency Tub in case of rain.
- If conditions consist of severe rain, heavy duty trash bags from the Emergency Box should be used for all pharmacy tubs.
- Once all tubs are loaded on the bus, the team leader and FOB Director of Programs & Operations should complete a final review of all clinic sites as well as a headcount.
- Should road conditions be difficult, the team should be quiet on the bus.

### **REGARDING GENERAL COUNTRY EVACUATIONS:**

Should the team require an early departure from Honduras:

- FOB staff will make the decision to leave and will inform the team leader.
- The team leader should then inform the team and ask that they pack all of their belongings as soon as possible.
- Team members should understand that no discussion about the events is appropriate at that time.
- As soon as possible, bags should be loaded onto the bus.
- After the bus is completely loaded, the team leader and FOB Director of Programs & Operations should complete a final review of rooms as well as a headcount. They should confirm that passports are on the bus.
- Should road conditions be difficult, the team should be quiet on the bus.

**While every effort will be made to avoid areas with demonstrations and protests, should environments change after travel has begun, additional security can be provided. FOB vehicles should not attempt to move across protest ridden areas.**