

OPERATION SERVE

TEAM MEMBER GUIDE



THANK YOU for serving on an OSI mission team!

This guide will help you prepare for your experience on the mission field. An in depth orientation will be given on the field to address the rest of the information necessary for serving on an OSI team.

We are excited to guide you through this process. May God bless your time and efforts as you follow Him on this journey.



Team Member Guide

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Operation Serve International
P.O. Box 18070 Fairfield, OH 45018
Phone: 513-939-2000 Fax: 513-939-1999
info@operationserve.org
www.operationserve.org

Dear Friend,

On behalf of the Operation Serve worldwide ministry team, I want to welcome you aboard this exciting journey of faith and service. You are about to embark on one of the most thrilling experiences by serving our Savior on the mission field. Since 1983, OSI has deployed thousands of Great Commission minded believers from many nations to make Christ known among the poor and needy around the world.

This book is designed to better prepare you for the mission field. Since our ministry partners come from all backgrounds, this book provides practical guidelines that will enable us all to serve in unity and harmony. I want you to have the most positive experience possible while serving on the mission field. Many of our team members have discovered their long term calling for missions while serving with us.

As a member of the OSI family, I want you to know that we appreciate you and your heart for missions. We are also grateful to you for the significant role you play in uniting with us to change the lives of many for eternity. It is with great anticipation that we look forward to serving Christ alongside you.

The great missionary, William Carey, once said, “Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God!” Let that theme of ***Faith In Action*** be our motto as we serve Christ on the mission field.

Your partner in ministry,

Dr. Sameh Sadik

Dr. Sameh Sadik

Executive Director



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Congratulations!

You have fill out your Team Application and have now received your acceptance packet. Now what do you do?

Next steps:

1. Make sure your passport is up to date. If you do not have one or if yours has expired, see Pg. 19 for more informaiton on how to take care of this. Important note: you cannot enter Mexico without a passport. Birth certificates and “Passport Cards” are not accepted.
2. Set appointments to meet with Pastors and prayer leaders for spiritual support at least 2 times before you travel.
3. Begin looking for airfare. Use the airport code MEX for Mexico City International Airport. When you book your flight, make sure to e-mail a copy of the flight itinerary from the airline to OSI.
4. Start fundraising!
5. First land fee deposit of \$175 is due 2 months prior to traveling. If this is a problem, please contact the office for options.
6. Continue fundraising!
7. Final land fee payment of \$500 is due 1 month prior to travel.
8. The week before you leave, request prayer from your Pastor and church.

Two important notes for a smooth mission’s experience

Keep in touch!

Our desire is to serve you as you prepare to travel. If you have any problems, questions, or concerns with anything during this process, please let us know. We are here to help you have the most effective and stress free time of ministry.

Keep an eye on the calendar!

Set deadlines for yourself as to what day you want to have things accomplished. Some deadlines to set would be: Passport, Land Deposit, Airline Ticket, Final Payment, Pastoral/Prayer meetings.

Spiritual Preparation:

The most foundational aspect of the preparation process is prayer. Begin praying in advance for your trip. Here are some suggestions to guide you in prayer for yourself, your team, the trip overall, and the ministry of Operation Serve.

Pray for your team:

- For all of the necessary details to come together. Pray for each other by name.
- That God will provide the necessary finances for each person.
- For protection and peace for the families of each team member.
- For smooth travel, clearance in customs, and overall safety.

Pray for yourself and those you will serve:

- For protection against sickness, no conflicts with authorities, favor with believers and unbelievers throughout the ministry week.
- For opportunities to bring new hope and life through Jesus to many people living apart from Him.
- For open hearts, open communication, and the expansion of God's kingdom.
- For the Lord to give you His Spirit of compassion and that He would let you see everything as He sees it.
- For His perfect plan to be in your heart, for flexibility in ministering, and for strength, love, and understanding.

Pray for OSI:

- For the ministry as a whole – for vision, wisdom, and courage to follow where God leads the ministry.
- For financial provision and the heart to carry out the Great Commission.
- For our staff and excellence, wisdom, and compassion in ministry.
- For physical, spiritual, and emotional strength as we continue to run the race set out before us.

Guiding Principles

Relationships

We want to maintain our focus on the Lord and the work we are doing without distraction.

1. There may be no exclusive male/female relationships except for married couples while on an OSI trip.
2. If you are coming as a dating or engaged couple and you are traveling with a church group please speak with your team coordinator ahead of time regarding your interaction while on the field. If you are traveling as individuals, please speak with a staff member at the OSI home office.

Team Diversity

When you arrive in your Mexico City, you will meet the other groups that you will be serving with during the week. You will find that there may be many different denominations represented in the team as a whole. Our goal for this week is to serve as one body united in Christ. Therefore, we encourage all team members to embrace the diversity of the team and to enjoy the opportunity to serve as the body of Christ. Please avoid any conversation that might cause division or take away from the group's unity. We want to be committed to serving the Lord wholeheartedly with one purpose and goal – the Glory of Jesus Christ!

Leadership

Ultimate authority for the entire group is given to the OSI leadership. OSI Interns may be assigned certain responsibilities under the direction of the OSI leadership. Each individual is asked to respect the leadership by following all directions given. This is for your safety as well as the safety of the team.

General Principles for Serving with OSI

The most important concept for your time on the field is:

Be Patient.

Be Flexible.

Be Unified.

Logistics

Travel

1. PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED to enter Mexico.
2. **DO NOT** purchase your flights until you have been accepted and have confirmed your trip date with OSI.
3. Flights should be booked to arrive and depart from Mexico City International Airport (Airport code: MEX). Arrival should be between noon and 5pm on Saturday. If you have a problem with this schedule, please let us know before you purchase the ticket.
4. Wear your OSI shirt on your day of arrival. This is so we can find you when you get off the plane in Mexico City.
5. Most airline regulations allow each passenger to check one bag. Check with your airline to confirm their luggage regulations.
6. Check up-to-date airline security measures at www.tsa.gov.
7. Flight Changes: notify OSI as soon as possible using the contact card that was enclosed in your acceptance packet. We will be tracking your flight progress through the use of confirmation codes and ticket numbers that are on the flight itinerary. Don't forget to forward your flight itinerary from the airlines to OSI.

When do you need to call:

- a. You are rescheduled on a different flight
 - b. You have a flight cancellation
 - c. Your flight is delayed more than one hour
8. If you are unable to reach anyone from the contact card, call the home offices, and listen to the recorded message, press 0 for the staff person on duty. Leave us a message.
 9. **DO NOT** leave the Mexico City airport to look for us. If you don't see someone with an OSI t-shirt on after you leave the security area then stay where you are and we will find you. Use the contact card to let us know if you don't see us.

Hotel Details

1. There are safety deposit boxes available free of charge for the storage of passports, cash, and valuables. Use them.
2. Do not drink directly from the faucets. We will provide plenty of bottled water.
3. You are not obligated to tip the maids or hotel staff. This is included in your land fees.
4. The hotel does not have air conditioning.

Rooming

There will be 2 or 3 team members in each room. Each person will have his or her own bed. We always try to put you in a room with the person you requested on your application, however there are times when this is not possible. Single rooms are available upon request for a fee and are subject to availability.

Dress - Please dress modestly.

Worksite:

1. **NO** shorts, sleeveless tops, clothing with holes, Capri's, sandals, or open toed shoes may be worn at the work site.
2. **NO** tight or revealing clothing.
3. Bring enough long pants, t-shirts, and boots/tennis shoes for 5 work days.
4. You will not be allowed to wash any clothes out in the hotel bathroom. There is no access to laundry facilities.
5. See the suggested packing list for more information.

Free Time:

1. There will be very few opportunities to wear shorts, if you bring them they must be longer than your fingertips with your arms down.
2. No sleeveless shirts of any kind.
3. Skirts must be knee length or longer.
4. Capri's and sandals are okay for places other than the worksite.
5. See the suggested packing list for more information.

If you show up for the mission's trip without proper clothing for the worksite you will not be allowed to go out with the team. This is for your safety.

Food and Water

1. You do not need to bring water with you. Plenty of bottled water and soft drinks will be provided.
2. You will be served a minimum of two meals each day. On most days we will not be eating lunch, so please come prepared with snacks for those days (granola bars, crackers, trail mix, etc.).
3. The OSI staff will assist you in ordering your food when eating out.
4. Please, **DO NOT** eat food sold by street vendors. Again, this is for your safety.

Ministry Areas

1. We will be assigning the team members to serve in areas based on the information we receive on the applications.
2. Individuals will be placed based on their preferred area of service, occupation, skills, where they can best be used or wherever the needs of the overall ministry team lie.
3. The most important element is that each individual have a willing heart to serve, no matter where they are placed!

Typical Schedules

Weekly Schedule		Daily Schedule	
Saturday	Arrival in Mexico	7am	Breakfast
Sunday	Orientation, training, and shopping	8am	Morning Devotional
Mon-Tues	Serve at first location	9am	Leave for worksite
Wed-Fri	Serve at second location	5:30pm	Leave worksite and Dinner
Saturday	Depart for home	7pm	Free Time

Mexico FAQ's

Safety

How safe is a mission's trip with OSI?

Your safety is our number one goal. We use the same private bus service and hotel that we have used for over 20 years. Our activities are tightly secured and scheduled. Mexican nationals travel with the team to help ensure safety. No one ever travels alone in the city, even during free time.

Health

What if I get sick?

OSI has a physician on staff that travels to the worksite and stays at the hotel with the team. If you have a problem just let us know and we will do everything in our power to help.

While a lot of the food served will be very authentic (you will be in Mexico!), there are often other choices as well. We will do our best to take care of each person's dietary needs but we also encourage you to be open to new things!

We encourage all of our team members to use caution and not drink the water. Plenty of bottled water and soda is provided. While we will do everything in our power to keep your team healthy, sometimes the body needs time to adjust to a new culture.

Work Conditions

What can I expect to find at the work site?

We will be working at local churches and in the community. It is very important for people to be connected to a church body after receiving services from our teams. All of the people we serve have great physical and spiritual needs.

Please be aware that:

- The work days will be long and intense. Bus rides will take anywhere from 45 – 90 minutes to get from the hotel to the worksite.
- Actual working conditions vary. You may be working under tents, in a building, or in the open air.
- We will usually stop for dinner on the way home.
- There is a lot of physical work and heavy lifting involved. No one with physical limitations is expected to do more than they are capable of doing.
- This is not a vacation! Please be prepared for the intense serving experience that lies ahead.

Entering Mexico

Paperwork

1. A valid passport is required to enter Mexico.
2. The name on your passport must match the name on your ticket.
3. No special visa is required for U.S. citizens. Your tourist visa will be obtained upon arrival in Mexico City. For citizens of other countries please verify with the OSI office the visa requirements for your country. Some countries need to obtain a visa prior to your departure from the Mexican Embassy located in your country.
4. The immigration officer will give half of your visa back to you. You must keep this copy in order to leave Mexico.
5. All minors (under 18 years old) must carry a notarized guardianship form if they are traveling without one or both parents. See the Guardianship Form Information in the reference section for more details.
6. Always state the purpose of your visit as tourism.

Customs

1. You may be stopped in customs. If you are stopped, calmly allow your luggage to be searched.
2. If you are asked about any materials you are carrying, say that they will be given away free to the poor. Make sure you have your Supply Carry Letter from OSI on you.
3. You are in Mexico as a tourist. You are not there to work.

Arrival Zone

1. Please wear your OSI shirt on the day of arrival.
2. An OSI representative wearing an OSI shirt will be waiting for you after you exit the customs area. You must go through the doors to the waiting area to see them. **DO NOT LEAVE THE AIRPORT** to look for us.
3. If you do not see us right away, wait in an open space inside the terminal. We will be there!

Bringing Money

1. The land fees you paid will cover all land expenses (hotel, meals, ground transportation, taxes, gratuities, and airport departure taxis) while in Mexico City.
2. Any additional items you may want to buy (gifts, film, personal items, etc.) require that you take extra spending money.

Exchanging Money

1. Please do not bring Traveler's Checks. Bring cash for easier exchange.
2. It is best to wait until you reach Mexico to exchange money.

Money Safety

1. A traveler's wallet can be used to carry your money, ticket, passport, etc. until you reach the hotel.
2. Once at the hotel, you may request a safety deposit box (at no cost) for your important papers and excess money.
3. To help with the availability of safe deposit boxes, please plan on sharing one box between 2-4 people on your team. Bring envelopes to separate each person's belongings.

Phone Calls

- Mexico City is Central Standard Time.
- It will be best if your family calls you at the hotel while you are in Mexico instead of you calling them. Calls made from the hotel are significantly more expensive than calls originating outside Mexico.
- The hotel does not charge for received calls.
- Families should investigate their international calling rates to Mexico before calling.
- If your families plan on calling you, let them know that you will only be at the hotel in the morning and at night. The best times to call are before 7:30 am or after 9:00 pm, CST.
- If you do want to call home, you may buy a phone card when you get to Mexico. Do not bring phone cards with you they usually do not work properly in Mexico. Toll-free numbers are not toll free from Mexico.

Our staff in Mexico will be in touch with our home office in Fairfield, Ohio on a daily basis. In case of an emergency, a message may be relayed to Mexico by calling 513-939-2000.

Immunizations

OSI does not require any immunizations to travel with us; however, we do recommend that you talk to your doctor about his/her recommendations for travel to Mexico City. You may want to look into a tetanus booster.

Professional Licenses

- All medical professionals should bring a photocopy of their professional license to Mexico (doctors, nurses, dentists, dental hygienists, etc.).
- Please send a photocopy of the license to the OSI office.

Packing List for Mexico

The Basics:

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Tickets or E-ticket itinerary
- ✓ Personal prescription medications in original bottle
- ✓ Bible, pen, and note paper
- ✓ Lunch/snacks for each day
- ✓ Alarm Clock
- ✓ Backpack, hip pack, or day pack
- ✓ Sunscreen /Aloe
- ✓ Hand sanitizer or anti-bacterial wipes
- ✓ Kleenex or Travel size toilet paper
- ✓ Mosquito repellent
- ✓ Wash cloths (towels are supplied by hotel)
- ✓ Outlet Adapter (to adapt to 2 prong outlet)

Clothing:

- ✓ Work clothes: long pants and t-shirts without holes
- ✓ Hat and sunglasses
- ✓ Work boots or tennis shoes for worksite
- ✓ Extra pair of casual or tennis shoes
- ✓ Light jacket or rain poncho
- ✓ Capri's/sandals may be worn in places other than the worksite.
- ✓ Skirts must be knee length or longer.

- ✓ Sleeveless shirts of any kind may not be worn.
- ✓ No tight, revealing, or low cut clothing
- ✓ There will be very few opportunities to wear shorts (must be longer than your fingertips when your arms are at your side).

Personal Items:

- ✓ Imodium Advanced (diarrhea medicine)
- ✓ Personal toiletries
- ✓ Spending money for personal items

Recommended:

- ✓ Copy of insurance card
- ✓ Copy of health care professional's license
- ✓ Small travel sewing kit
- ✓ No expensive jewelry
- ✓ Camera and extra batteries
- ✓ Throat lozenges
- ✓ Lip balm
- ✓ Eye Drops
- ✓ Extension Cord / Power Strip
- ✓ Small Fan
- ✓ Shower shoes (flip-flops)
- ✓ Back Brace for heavy lifting
- ✓ Multi-tool (do not pack this in your carryon luggage)

Mexico History and Culture

The History

Mexico is an ancient city filled with history and mystery. The modern city rests on top of the ruins of Tenochtitlan, the central city of the Aztec empire. Hernán Cortez and about 500 Spaniards landed in Mexico in 1519 and by 1521, they had completely conquered and destroyed the Aztec capital. The Spaniards Christianized Mexico and ruled it for the ensuing 300 years, until the revolution in the early 1800s, which put the government into Mexican hands.

For a century after the revolution, there were many political conflicts, including a political power struggle between the Catholic Church and the government. The dictator, Porfirio Díaz, ruled for 30 years. France and America (in which the U.S. annexed over half of Mexico's territory from Texas to California) have both invaded Mexico.

The Mexican constitution was established in 1917. Although it guaranteed a multi-party system, there has essentially been only one political party (PRI) from 1930-2000. During the historical presidential election of 2000, a multi-party system began when Vicente Fox, a member of the PAN party was elected to the Presidential office, and a member of the PRD party became the Governor of Mexico City. In 2006, a controversial presidential election took place. Felipe Calderón was elected as president and served in office for the usual 6 year term. After 6 years, presidents in Mexico may not seek re-election.

Some places to visit within walking distance include Alameda Park, Benito Juárez Monument, Bellas Artes, The Zócalo, Metropolitan Cathedral, The National Palace, and Sanborns House of Tiles.

The Statistics

Mexico is one of the most populated countries in the world with approximately 122 million inhabitants. Its capital, Mexico City, is one of the largest cities in the world. This sprawling metropolis houses the country's federal government as well as most of its industry. Over 30 million people live in Mexico City and the State of Mexico, which comprises nearly one third of the population of the entire country.

- 21.2 million people live in Mexico City and the surrounding areas
- Life expectancy at the time of birth is 70 years
- In the country of Mexico 20 million children under the age of 18 (53.8% of the population) live in poverty, and of these, 4.7 million (12.1%) live in extreme poverty
- 45% of the population in the state of Mexico live below the poverty line

The People

Family is very important to the people of Mexico. They are welcoming and hospitable, valuing relationships, and community. Life in Mexico often moves at a slower pace than many visitors are accustomed to. The phrase, “Hurry up and wait,” is a reality in many situations. Good ways to start conversation with Mexicans are to compliment their country and their food, or to ask about their families. Do not say anything negative or condescending toward Mexico and avoid asking questions regarding politics or the living situations of the poor.

The Weather

Because Mexico City’s elevation is a mile above sea level, its climate remains relatively cool, even in the summer time. Summer temperatures are typically in the 70’s during the days and in the 50’s at night. The city’s hottest time is in April, just before the cooling rains begin. The spring tends to be windy and dry, while June through September is the rainy season. Although the summer is the rainy season, the rains usually occur in the afternoon or evening and are a quick heavy downpour that subsides leaving the mornings and most of the day bright and sunny. You can expect to need sweaters and jackets for the mornings and evenings throughout the year.

See the weather chart below for specific month highs, lows, and precipitation (temperatures are in Fahrenheit):

Month	Average Low	Average High	Precip	Month	Average Low	Average High	Precip
Jan.	42	70	0.40	July	53	73	7.20
Feb.	45	73	0.40	Aug.	53	74	6.80
March	49	77	0.50	Sept.	53	73	5.70
April	52	79	1.10	Oct.	50	72	2.40
May	54	79	2.30	Nov.	47	72	0.20
June	54	76	6.30	Dec.	45	70	0.30

More Ways to Help

Ministry Supplies

As an individual or along with your church, family, and friends, you can help meet the various needs of the people you will be serving. If you would like to bring items for ministry with you, please refer to the list of needed supplies below. You may be able to obtain samples of prescription drugs from your family doctor. An excellent way to help the ministry is for your group to contribute funds to purchase medical supplies or new eyeglasses. OSI has registered with Blessings International, MAPS International, and International Aid, which allows us to purchase medication at approximately 10% of the cost of Medications. Contact the offices if you would like to help in this way.

Medical Supplies (No expired or short dated medications)

- Broad spectrum antibiotics - adult and children ie: amoxicillin, ciprofloxacin, cephalixin
- Topical creams - antibiotics, anti-fungal, and antiseptics
- Decongestants/antihistamines
- Non-steroidal/anti-inflammatory and analgesics - ie: acetaminophen, ibuprofen, naproxen
- Antacids

Hair Care / Hygiene Supplies

- Shampoo, conditioner, lotions, soap - ideal is the sample size of shampoos, lotions and conditioners to create hygiene kits as giveaways
- Ribbons, barrettes, hair ties
- Mirrors, combs, and brushes
- Nail polish and remover
- Washcloths

Dental Supplies

- Mouthwash and dental floss
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste

Optical Supplies

- Reading and distance glasses (in good condition and not extremely out dated)
- New or like new small frames in good condition
- Eye glass cases
- Non-prescription eye drops - natural tears or liquid tears

Children's Ministry Supplies

- Face paint
- Balloons and pumps
- Coloring books, crayons
- Crafts, activities, stickers
- Sports equipment

Resources

The 1, 2, 3's of Fundraising

I really want to go on a mission's trip but it is so expensive, I just can't afford it.

You're not alone! Many people want to go on a mission's trip but feel that it is too expensive for their budget. What you need is a support plan!

Fundraising is a part of your journey and a part of your ministry. You need both the financial support and prayer support from your family, friends, and church. Fundraising is about not only finding and getting finances; it is about connecting the Body of Christ; sharing, teaching, telling, proclaiming, loving, and doing. Ask for support because you want to invite someone in to be a part of your calling.

*** 1 - Your Home Church**

Always, always, always seek the support of your home church first. By contacting your church first, you recognize the authority that they have over you and seek their approval on fundraising through the church. You need to have your church on board and you **NEVER** plan to seek support from church members without the churches approval.

*** 2 - Identify the fundraisers that will work best for you**

After you speak to your church, you will have a better idea of what you will be able to do. Many people start with a support letter but here are some other ideas:

- Have a spaghetti dinner
- Host a dance
- Set up a bake sale or hot dog sale outside a local market
- Have a yard sale! (gather donated items from family and friends)
- Host an auction, ask local retailers for items that can be auctioned off
- Create and sell cookbooks
- Sell unwanted items on EBay
- Set up a loose change collection station at the entrance way of the sanctuary (collecting Change to make a Change in the world)
- Do an envelope collection: Have 50 envelopes each one numbered in order (1, 2, 3 ...), see if anyone would like to support you for the dollar amount listed on the envelope. If all the envelopes are taken, you just raised \$1,275 and no one person gave more than \$50.

* 3 - Write a support letter

There are six components you will want to include in your letter:

1. Right away, you need to grab their attention. Most people will skim over a letter and pick out key points. Make your first sentence count or someone may miss the whole point of your letter.
2. Make sure you tell who you are. If people have to go searching for who is sending them a letter then they are now looking at the end of your letter and have missed everything you want to say. Give a brief update on what you have been doing. Something quick like “Wow! I can’t believe that **I’m a Senior** already!” tells a lot.
3. Tell them why you feel called to go on this trip. By sharing your burden for this mission’s trip, you make them a part of your team. Reach out and be open about what God is doing in your life.
4. Make sure you tell everyone a little bit about OSI – this gives reassurance that we are a legitimate organization. You can mention our website: www.operationserve.org, so they can “**check it out**.”
5. Tell the reader how they can help. You are responsible for raising your own support, let them know exactly how much money you need and give a time limit. Make sure that they know if they can’t support you financially, you can use all the prayer you can get!
6. Include a pre-addressed, stamped envelope and response device* in your letter. A small investment that can yield big rewards.

Keep the letter as short as possible, again many people will just scan the letter to see what you want, to make it easy on them to find the important information try underlining key words or **Bold** where you think you may need it.

Obtaining a Passport

If you have questions about passports, to apply for a passport, or to renew a passport go to www.travel.state.gov/passport. Original documents as evidence of US citizenship (which will be returned to you after your application is processed), photo ID, and a photocopy of that ID need to be presented with your passport application. More information is available on the www.travel.state.gov website.

*** It may take 6-8 weeks to receive your passport, allow for adequate time when choosing a travel date.

For travel to Mexico City, you will need a passport book. The passport card is not valid for air travel into Mexico.

Guardianship Forms

What does the Federal Government say about minors traveling?

Federal Law requires that all minors (under the age of 18) traveling internationally must be accompanied by a legally appointed guardian if traveling without one or both parents. It is required that the guardian carry the ORIGINAL GUARDIANSHIP PAPERWORK THAT HAS BEEN NOTARIZED BY A NOTARY PUBLIC AND SIGNED BY ALL LEGAL GUARDIANS.

Who needs a guardianship form?

A: Any child under the age of 18 traveling with only one parent or a legally appointed guardian.

Situations to be aware of when filling out the Guardianship Form

If parents are married:

1. If both parents are traveling with a minor child, no guardianship is required
2. If only one parent is traveling with a minor child, the guardianship form is used to establish that both parents are aware of the trip and that one parent is being listed as the sole guardian of the minor during the stated period of time. Both parents need to sign the form acknowledging that this arrangement is approved by all current legal guardians
3. If neither parent is traveling with a minor child, the guardianship form is used to establish that both parents are aware of the trip and they are legally naming a third party as the guardian of the minor during the stated period of time. Both parents need to sign the form and acknowledge that they are aware of and approve of the legal guardian.

If parents are divorced:

1. If parents are divorced and share custody of a minor child, the same rules apply as above.
2. If parents are divorced and cannot appear before the same notary public, two separate forms can be used to establish a common legal guardian for the trip. The same legal guardian and trip date must be named on both forms.
3. If parents are divorced and sole custody is established: the minor can travel with the parent who has custody without the need for a guardianship form (however, it may be wise to have a copy of the court papers showing sole custody in your carryon luggage in case you are asked to provide legal documentation for your claim to the child).
 - a. If the minor is not traveling with the parent who has custody the guardianship form needs to be filled out by the parent with sole custody only.

If you have any more questions, you can call the Operation Serve International offices at 513-939-2000 for more information. A COPY of the guardianship form needs to be submitted to the main offices.

Because it is required that minors be accompanied by their guardian at all times while serving, we suggest that more than one person be named as a guardian for each minor. If a guardian is ill, the secondary guardian can assume custody for the minor without any interruption to the services that the team provides.

Avoiding Culture Shock

Helpful Tips for Serving in a New Culture

1. Smile! Be the first to smile when you meet new people.
2. Shake hands! Handshaking is an expected manner of greeting. It is very important to greet the nationals every time you see them and to say goodbye as you leave.
3. Learn a little of their culture! Understanding the culture you are serving in will enhance your experience with the people.
4. Learn a little of their language! The people you serve will be delighted even if you can say only a few words in their language.
5. Remember YOU are the foreigner! Be careful not to make remarks that could be offensive to the culture. The nationals take a lot of pride in their country and customs.
6. Be compassionate, but do not pity! You will see poor sanitary conditions, suffering, and extreme poverty. Remember that in God's eyes you are no different from the people you serve.
7. Be courteous and gracious! Even though you may not speak the same language, your body language will communicate a lot of what you cannot say.
8. Do not hesitate to say "NO" to anyone trying to sell you things you do not want or like.
9. Keep your wardrobe and makeup compact and simple. Please do not wear fancy clothes, flashy jewelry, or excessive makeup.

Last Minute Check List

- ____ Land Fees have been paid
- ____ Flight Itinerary has been sent to OSI
- ____ Passport is valid
- ____ Transportation to the airport has been arranged
- ____ 7 days worth of clothes
- ____ Personal prescriptions are filled
- ____ No unnecessary valuables (jewelry, electronics, keys) are packed



Operation Serve International

*P.O. Box 18070 * Fairfield, OH 45018*

www.operationserve.org

info@operationserve.org

513-939-2000