

# International Partnership Trips

## Short-Term Trip Information for Mexico City



**flatirons**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Office: 303-664-5524 | [flatironschurch.com](http://flatironschurch.com)

**Weekend Services** | Sat 5:00 & 6:30pm | Sun 9:00, 10:30, 11:55am, & 6:30pm

**Mailing Address** | 1376 Miners Dr., Suite 106, Lafayette, CO 80026

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## General requirements:

- Short-term trips are designed to build relationships. While each trip will potentially have a more specific purpose or focus, the overarching goal is to build relationships.
- Understand the expectation/purpose for the trip and make sure it is in sync with your personal expectations.
- You must have a valid passport to travel to Mexico. Your passport must be valid for 6 months from the date of your return from the trip.
- Physical requirements:
  - Physical requirements will vary according to the purpose or focus of each trip.
  - Mexico City has an elevation of just over 7000 ft above sea level, which can adversely affect some people with certain conditions.
  - The terrain in the slum community of Chimalhuacan is rough and irregular and would need to be considered for individuals with walking difficulties.
  - Mexico City typically has a rainy season from about May through October when it can be muddy and wet. During the dry season from about November to April it can be quite dry and dusty.
- Social/emotional requirements:
  - You will be part of a team and be expected to participate in team activities or assignments.
  - It is important to follow the instructions of our hosts, primarily to avoid unintentional insults.
  - You must be flexible; plans are subject to change due to all sorts of reasons.
  - You will be working with people from a different culture. You need to be comfortable with their culture and respectful of their ways.
  - Short-term trips can be rewarding and life-changing; however, they can also be stressful. Please consider factors in your personal life at this time that may distract and prohibit you from fully committing to the trip and adapting to unusual conditions. A short-term trip should not be viewed as a form of therapy.
- Financial requirements:
  - You are required to cover the cost of the trip which includes air and car travel, housing, food etc. A non-refundable \$150 contribution is required at the first team meeting. The balance of the trip cost is due two weeks prior to departure. In the event the trip is cancelled for any reason, any remaining funds will be transferred to the church's general fund.
  - You are required to cover any personal costs during the trip (snacks or meals en route, coffee, ice cream, any souvenirs, etc.).
  - Possible additional expenses you may incur: obtaining a passport or passport renewal, immunizations.
  - Once you have been accepted to a team, you will be provided with information suggesting ways to raise financial support; however, if full support is not raised, the balance is your responsibility. Do not begin to raise funds until you are notified of acceptance to the team.
  - You are responsible for all trip costs. Monies put towards trips are contributions. By completing the application you acknowledge that the church has full authority to apply your contribution, designated for this trip, to the church's general fund in the event the trip is cancelled for any reason or if you withdraw from the trip.
  - If your fundraising efforts result in raising funds in addition to the expected trip costs, additional funds will be used first for any unexpected costs for the trip you're a part of. Beyond that, additional funds will be used for missions at Flatirons.

## What to do before you go.

- Get immunizations needed as advised by your doctor or a Travel Clinic. [www.istm.org](http://www.istm.org)
- Ensure you have adequate medication for the trip, including prescriptions, over the counter medications, glasses or contacts.
- Some people have suggested:
  - Taking live acidophilus yogurt tablets before, during, and after the trip.
  - Taking *emergen-c* before and during the trip.
  - Using saline nasal spray to combat the dryness on the plane.
  - Bringing Imodium AD or Pepto Bismol in case you have stomach issues.

- Bringing Benadryl in case of respiratory or allergy issues.
- Bringing Aspirin or Ibuprofen in case of soreness.
- Suggested reading
  - When Helping Hurts by Brian Fikkert
- Establish your own prayer team – there will be information provided to your prayer team so they know what to pray about while you are gone.
- Trip cash for personal expenses.
- Packing – the weather in Mexico City can be wet and muddy May through October and dry and dusty November through April. The warmest temperatures are in April and May and typically only reach the low 80s. The coolest temperatures are in December and January when the highs are in the high 60s and low 70s. It typically gets down into the 40s and 50s at night.
  - Men’s and Women’s clothing requirements (see below).
  - Your team leader will coordinate items that need to be packed for transport to Mexico.
  - Understand current TSA regulations for packing <http://www.tsa.gov/311/>.
  - Lost luggage is no fun - plan to pack everything in your carry on luggage.
  - Take medications and spare glasses or contacts.
  - Power cords for computers, cameras, etc.

### **What happens during the trip?**

- Air travel – flights range from 6 to 9 hours depending on connections from Denver to Mexico City
- Guest House in Mexico.
  - Typically teams stay in a guesthouse in a middle class area outside Mexico City.
  - Bathrooms differ from those in the US in that paper is not flushed, but rather discarded in a trash can.
  - Wireless Internet may not be available in the guesthouse.
  - Cell phone service is available, provided you have arrangements with your carrier for International calling.
  - Transportation will be via vans and SUVs.
  - The food is very good. Breakfast is typically cereal and fruit. Lunch may be at someone’s home in the community and is traditional Mexican food. Dinner may also be at someone’s home or out to a simple but safe restaurant.
  - The staff is quite diverse, coming from such places as Switzerland, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, El Salvador, the US and Mexico. You will benefit greatly by taking time to get to know them.
- Customs
  - The customs in Mexico City are not so different than our own customs here.
  - We will be interacting with people living in some difficult living situations in Chimalhuacan. The most important thing is to give them respect and get to know them and their stories.
    - Please do not make disparaging remarks or gestures about their community.
    - There are some cultural differences and observation is the best way to get to know their customs and fit in.
  - Dress is also fairly similar to what people wear here. Team members may wear long shorts though they are not common for community members to wear. Sleeveless shirts are also acceptable, so long as they are modest.
    - You may have other dress requirements depending on the purpose of your trip.
    - During the rainy season a rain jacket or umbrella would be good to bring.
    - It does get chilly in the evenings so a fleece jacket or sweater is good to have.
    - If you get cold at night, some warmer sleeping clothes would also be appropriate.
- There may be an opportunity to see some other parts of Mexico City or the nearby pyramids of Teotihuacan.

### **What happens when you return?**

- Tell everyone about what you have learned. In fact, you will probably have to stifle this a bit. You might want to invite your prayer/support team over for a meal in your home to share your experience, pictures, etc.
- Continue to pray for the people you met in Mexico.
- Take some time to reflect on the things you learned on your trip. The opportunity to go on a short-term trip is a privilege many people do not enjoy. It is best viewed as something to steward well. God has made this possible for you for a reason – take some time to reflect on that and discern what that reason is.