



Frequently asked questions

How do I apply for a short-term missions trip?

Go to pbctallapoosa.com/short-term-trips and click on the trip you are interested in. From there you will be directed to an application. Please fill out the application, ask two individuals for references, and contact the Missions Coordinator to turn in the required deposit.

Do I need to have any previous missions experience?

No. You do not have to have any previous experience. Some trips require specific skills or professional knowledge (such as music or a medical background). Other than that, these trips are open to anyone who would like to go.

What do you do on a missions trip?

Each trip is different so you will need to contact the missions coordinator to find out the specifics. Generally, we seek to serve church plants around the world. This could involve using your God-given skills (such as using your finance background to lead seminars for business men and women) or participating in a variety of other activities like Sunday School teaching initiatives, serving at an orphanage, evangelism seminars, and more.

What kind of preparation is provided?

Team preparation takes place over several weekly meetings leading up to the trip. We cover topics such as support raising & team- building, we prepare the programs we'll be initiating, and in general prepare to serve as a unit. Attendance is required in order to build team unity and receive the necessary material prior to your trip. Team members are expected to be active participants on fundraising events, team socials and prayer meetings. Only a small minority of Providence members are able to go on missions trips each year. The nature of the work makes it a huge privilege to participate in. If you cannot make the commitment of attending the preparation sessions, we ask that you apply again another year.

What if I feel I have no relevant skills to serve on a Missions trip?

You do. God has blessed everyone with multiple skills and hobbies, and all can be used on a trip. What you can use on a mission trip might surprise you!

How do I pay for the trip?

Each team member has the opportunity to raise his or her own financial support in order to go on a short-term missions trip. While this task may seem daunting, it is a unique opportunity to see God provide in ways that will strengthen the faith of those going on the trip. Each person will be thoroughly equipped and prepared in how to raise support. This is typically done through writing letters, asking people to contribute toward the trip, or through corporate matching gifts.

How is the cost determined?

Each team budget can contain 30 or more major expense categories. Some of these include airfare, vehicle rental and gasoline, housing costs, food, visas, training materials and speakers, ministry

materials, travel & health insurance, and much more. Every effort is made to minimize costs without jeopardizing the quality, effectiveness or safety of the ministry.

Is financial support available from the church?

We have found that most of the time if prayer letters are sent out on schedule and at least 25 copies are mailed, all the funds come in. The church does, however, try to provide finances to help cover the amount you have to raise for the trip based on the available budget.

Are people's gifts tax-deductible?

Yes.

What if more money comes in for me than what I need?

Throughout this ministry you will function as part of a team. Your effectiveness is determined not just from an individual standpoint, but also as a team. Also, each person's ability to raise funds varies depending on who they know, how many people they know, their ability to communicate effectively, and more. Therefore, since the goal is to fund the entire team, any monies given beyond what you will need will go to support other team members who are struggling with their funds.

What if less money comes in for me?

Sometimes God uses a serious lack of support as an indicator that a person should not go on a particular project. The guidelines we follow is that a participant must have 100% raised 15 days before departure. If this does not occur, please discuss it with your team leader and you will be given the option of paying the difference or postponing your involvement.

If I decide to cancel my involvement in the trip, can I get my money back?

These funds will stay in the short-term missions fund and assist other Providence sponsored trips. If you cancel your involvement after travel documents are purchased (airfare, visas, etc.) you will be expected to cover all of the fees, penalties and losses incurred at that point.

How many people will be on the short-term missions team?

Typically anywhere from 2-8 people participate.

Will I need shots?

Most of the places we go do recommend immunizations. In some instances we may go to a country that "requires" immunization against a particular disease. If an immunization is required, you must have proof of that immunization to enter the country or to return to the United States. For the most up to date information on what is needed for the country you will visit, contact cdc.gov or a local travel clinic. Your team leader will provide this information as well.

What is a visa?

A visa is an entry document required by a foreign government in addition to your passport. Not all foreign governments require a visa. For example, **Nicaragua DOES NOT require a visa**. Your team leader will check the foreign entry requirements for the country you plan to visit. If a visa is

required, we'll provide the appropriate visa application forms for you to complete. Most visa applications require two or three passport-size photos as well.

How soon should I apply for a passport?

New passports and passport renewal can be a slow process and should be started as soon as possible. Most countries require that travelers' passports not expire within six months of the end of travel. Please check your passport immediately. If it is set to expire within six months of the end of this trip, please begin the process to renew it now.

What if there is an emergency on the field?

All mission trips have information on the local hospitals and places that our volunteers can be taken to get medical assistance. The mission's ministry has the emergency contact number for the team leader in the field and the ministry they are working with. A phone call chain is created by the team leader to convey information or news from the field to those back home.

Is it acceptable to raise money through car washes, bake sales, rummage sales, etc.?

The key question to ask is, "Would raising money in this way diminish the value of my short term ministry in the eyes of my family and friends?" In light of this possibility, we encourage people to raise funds primarily through prayer letters. Raising funds through prayer letters is also a good experience for you to have in case you take on a long-term mission's assignment.

What is the proper way to explain to people how to give money to my ministry?

The explanation should contain the following information:

- Contributions should be above and beyond normal tithes and offering commitments they have made. Checks must be made out to PBC.
- Your name should be noted on the check and the destination of the trip. Funds that exceed your individual needs will go to assist others on your team.
- Excess funds will not carry over for your participation on another PBC sponsored short term team or a future short term or long-term ministry with a mission agency. Funds that exceed your team's need will go to assist other PBC sponsored teams. Contributions are non-refundable. All funds must be in by the final deadline.

Is it possible for individuals to arrange separate itineraries to visit friends, sight-see before the project, or to use personal frequent flyer miles?

We do not plan separate itineraries for people except when they need to do so to accomplish the goals of the team. Using frequent flyer miles is more work for our Travel Coordinator and many times it will affect the price of the airline tickets. We have found that our travel arrangements go much more smoothly if everyone is on the same itinerary. Having separate itineraries not only makes it more complicated for the travel agents, but also makes it difficult to arrange for group discounts and to maintain quality travel and housing arrangements. Traveling together for the entire trip helps to build the team.

WHAT IF I NEED MORE INFORMATION?

For more information call 404.807.0139 or email joinus@pbctallapoosa.com.