

HONDURAS GOOD WORKS
Minors on Mission Trips
Policies and Procedures

Purpose

A mission trip for a young person is invaluable in reinforcing Christian principles and seeing God's hand at work in His global church. Honduras Good Works welcomes young people on mission trips. That being said, parents, grandparents, and/or guardians taking young people on a mission trip to Honduras, or any third world country, must understand what is expected of the young person, be prepared to assume responsibility for that young person, and adhere strictly to laws in Honduras regarding minors traveling into the country. A mission trip should not be viewed as an *adventure family vacation*. Children must understand the days are long, the work hard, the travel difficult, and the rules strict. They should be emotionally mature enough to understand the expectations, and physically and mentally strong enough to make a contribution to the mission.

We advocate being overly-prepared, in terms of travel documents and in educating your children on expectations and codes of behavior.

Definitions

1. Minor: According to Honduran law, a minor is anyone under the age of 21.
2. Waiver of Responsibility for a Minor Child: A document that must be signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) for the minor child that absolves the Diocese of Honduras and Honduras Good Works from liability resulting from any event, accident, illness, injury or death of that child when on the mission trip, or engaged in work for Honduras Good Works.
3. Letter of Consent for Travel of Minor Child: A document required for anyone under the age of 21 traveling to/from Honduras without both birth parents, or without guardian(s).
4. Guardian: a person who has been appointed by a judge to take care of a minor child ("ward") personally and/or manage that person's affairs.

Policies

1. The minimum age of a minor traveling to Honduras with Honduras Good Works is eight years of age.
2. Minors 8-15 Years of Age Traveling to Honduras:
 - a. Minors between 8-15 years of age must be accompanied by and are the sole responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian(s). The minor *is not* the responsibility of Honduras Good Works.
 - b. The parent(s) must have been on a previous Honduras Good Works mission trip within the past five years to understand travel conditions, mission expectations, risks, rules and regulations for all volunteers on mission trips, and therefore prepared to make informed decisions regarding the minor child.
*Exception: With regard to the requirement for the parent(s) to have participated on a previous Honduras Good Works mission trip within the past five years,

consideration will be given to parent(s) or guardian(s) with minor(s) who have participated on mission trips with other organizations, or who have lived in countries outside the United States. Approval may be granted by the Brigadier Committee to the individual parent(s) and minor(s) and will be determined on a case-by case basis. In all considerations, the well-being of Honduras Good Works, and of the parent(s)/minor(s) are the paramount and deciding factor. (Parent(s)/ guardian(s) will be required to interview with representatives of the Brigadier Committee as part of the approval process.)

3. Organized Youth Groups Traveling to Honduras:
 - a. The minimum age to participate in a youth group unaccompanied by a parent or guardian is 16.
 - b. The parent or guardian must legally assign responsibility for the minor to a youth group adult supervisor on the mission trip.
 - c. Organized Youth Groups must have a ratio of one adult supervisor to every five youth participants.
 - d. Youth group supervisors must have received child protection training within the previous 5 years. (Example: *Safe-guarding God's Children* course or a denominational equivalent.) Documentation of the training is required.
 - e. The supervisor must successfully pass the background check required of all adult Honduras Good Works participants.
4. Volunteers 18-21 Traveling to Honduras:
 - a. Are permitted to travel to Honduras with Honduras Good Works without an accompanying parent or guardian.
 - b. Must possess all documentation (completed) for a minor
5. Minor Volunteers from Honduras:
 - a. Must be at least 16 years of age
 - b. Must be under the supervision of a qualified adult mission participant designated to act as chaperone by Brigade Leadership. Qualifications of the adult include: Current Child Protection training, and willingness to monitor the minor while volunteering for Honduras Good Works.
 - c. The ratio of minor to adult is the same as for organized youth groups.
6. Exceptions to these policies are subject to the discretion and approval of the Risk Management Committee.

Procedures:

1. All minors traveling to Honduras with Honduras Good Works
 - a. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the minor is responsible for obtaining the appropriate travel documents for a minor traveling to Honduras. These documents include passport, copy of birth certificate, and if appropriate, Consent for Travel of Minor Child.

- b. Parent(s) or guardian(s) of minor children traveling to Honduras on a Honduras Good Works must sign a Waiver of Responsibility for Minor Child. (Document attached)
 - c. A minor traveling to Honduras with only one parent or guardian, or without parents or guardians must be traveling with a member of their immediate family, or as a participant in an Organized Youth Group. The parent or guardian not traveling with the minor must provide the necessary paperwork authorizing guardianship of that minor to an adult member of the mission trip (immediate adult family member or Organized Youth Group Leader). Proof of consent from the parent(s) or guardian(s) for the minor will also be required. If one parent is deceased, a copy of the death certificate MUST be included.
 - d. Copies of documents (birth certificate, death certificate, consent to travel letter) must be notarized .
2. Minors 8-15 Years of Age: Permission for the minor between the ages of 8-15 will be determined by the Brigadier Committee. Parent(s) or guardian(s) will be required to participate in a minimum of 2 Interviews (including participation Packing Party if possible) with Members of the Brigadier Committee. This process will include a determination whether the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the minor and the minor can handle the rigors of a mission trip.
 - a. Minors (with parent/guardian) will be required to remain with the parent(s) or guardian(s) during the mission trip, and
 - b. Will be expected to provide a service to the mission.
3. Organized Youth Groups: The youth group must obtain permission from the Brigade Leadership to attend the mission by May 1 of the year in which the youth group wants to participate.
4. Minor Volunteers from Honduras:
 - a. Parent(s) or guardian(s) of the Honduran volunteer must complete the required documentation allowing participation of their minor child and provide it to Brigade leadership. This documentation will be retained by leadership during the Brigade.
 - b. The volunteer minor is to provide a service to the mission trip.
 - c. The parent or guardian is to participate in Mission activities with their child for minimum of four hours. This participation may be in the field or at the housing facilities utilized by Honduras Good Works.

January 23, 2017
Date Approved by Board

Secretary