Team Leader Packet

Questions? teams@eahonduras.org **/** eahonduras.org

What We Believe about Short-Term Missions

At El Ayudante, each *short-term* team fulfills an integral part in the bigger picture of our *long-term* ministry. Teams are our work force, the energy and encouragement that helps us change lives by equipping our local Honduran community. Serving at El Ayudante is not about satisfying ourselves, just completing a task, or 'fixing the poor.' We ask our teams to come with a humble attitude of service, ready to learn and grow. Come join what God is doing in our local Honduran community.

Why Your Team Matters

You are the hands and feet of our ministry here. The mission of El Ayudante is *to grow committed followers of Christ by meeting the needs of our community* and your team is helping us achieve that mission. We can't do it without you. We're so excited to change lives and transform communities together!

Why Preparation Matters

Just as we are working hard to prepare for your team, we hope you will give your best to prepare your team for your time at El Ayudante as well. Here is why we believe preparation is so important:

1. *The quality of your experience in Honduras will greatly depend upon your preparation.*
2. *Spiritual growth in your team members begins now, not when you arrive in Honduras.*
3. *Excellence honors God and we ask our teams serving at El Ayudante to demonstrate this value too.*

Here are a few important areas of preparation we expect before your time in Honduras:

- **Regular Team Meetings** - preparing the hearts and minds of your team
- **Projects and Programs** – preparing all necessary details for your service projects in Honduras
- **Logistics** – preparing all necessary details of paperwork and travel, etc., *on time*
- **Spiritual Development** – preparing times of spiritual growth for your team while at El Ayudante;
- training team members in how to share the gospel and evangelize

Why This Packet Matters

In the following pages, you will find valuable information about planning your trip, paperwork and releases, passports, immunizations, packing, arrival into Honduras, and more. *Please use this packet!* An El Ayudante staff member will be contacting you regularly to work through this information together as each item becomes applicable on the timeline.

Next in this packet, you will find the "Planning Timeline" which is a basic checklist to prepare for your time in Honduras. Detailed info is found after this timeline. Please honor our deadlines, and take advantage of this valuable information as you prepare for an awesome time of service and growth at El Ayudante.

We are praying for you, and are excited to serve together soon in Honduras!

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart,
as working for the Lord, not for men."
Colossians 3:23

Planning Timeline

12 to 9 months before your incredible week of ministry:

- Pray for your trip! Ask God to lead you in preparation, finances, and decision-making.
- Confirm team dates.
- Secure your trip with a $1000 non-refundable deposit. Make all checks payable to *"El Ayudante Missions USA, Inc*." with your team name in the memo line. Mail all checks to:
  --- ***El Ayudante Missions USA, Inc. - PO Box 154, Rodeo, CA 94572***
- Provide trip information for those interested, and begin selecting team members. Consider using a simple application or interview for selection. (A sample application is available by request.)
- Ask team members to secure their place on the team with a deposit to the team leader.
- Hold your first team meeting - give info for expenses, paperwork, vaccines, meetings, packing, etc.
- Research airline tickets into XPL(Comayagua airport) and confirm flights and times with El Ayudante.
  DO NOT reserve airline tickets without confirming flight times with El Ayudante first.
- Purchase, hold, or create a group reservation for your airline tickets…the sooner, the cheaper!
- Make a plan for raising funds for your service projects. (plan on $150 per team member)
- Begin fund-raising for your trip!

9 to 3 months before your amazing week of ministry:

- Meet regularly as a team to prepare your hearts, plan for programs, and complete logistical tasks.
- Ensure all team members have, or have applied for, passports. *(*Note: passport expiration date must be at least 6 months after return travel date or you will not be allowed to board the plane.)*
- Ensure that all team members are in the process of getting all necessary vaccines for the trip.
  **Note – some shots are taken in a series and need multiple shots over the course of several months.*
- **Each team member *must* complete an *EA Release of Claim* and an *EA Medical Release.***
  **Note - please bring these completed forms with you to Honduras and give to El Ayudante.*
- Work with El Ayudante to clearly define your service projects and your team schedule.
- Depending on what your ministry will be at El Ayudante, begin collecting supplies to bring.
  **Note - as you collect supplies, keep in mind airline baggage allowances and fees.*
- Complete your purchase of airline tickets (if using a group reservation through the airline).
- Purchase travel insurance for all team members.
- Send in the $300 per person non-refundable deposit. **This is due 3 months prior to arrival.**
- Continue to fund-raise and collect team money.

3 to 1 month before your life-changing week of ministry:

- Send Team Roster spreadsheet to El Ayudante ***no later than 1 month before your trip.***
- Finish collecting any necessary supplies you are bringing with you. Prepare new donation paperwork that EA provides you and return it no later than 2 weeks before you come.
- Prepare for team meetings in Honduras / prepare personal devotion material
- If part of your schedule, send completed VBS and Family Church Night activity planning sheets to El Ayudante. **These are due 1 month before your trip.**
- Register your trip with the US Embassy at https://step.state.gov/step/.
- Send remainder of team fees and project money minus deposit. **This is due 1 month prior to arrival.**
- You will get an email to confirm amount due. Please mail checks to: *PO Box 154 Rodeo, CA 94572*

Preparation Details

Physical Check-up

Your week at El Ayudante will be in a different environment doing physical things you may not normally do. For this reason, we suggest a medical check-up prior to coming. *If there is a medical condition you have that may affect your time in Honduras, please let EA know in advance so we can be prepared to best assist you!*

Immunizations

Immunizations (including Covid) are not required for travel to Honduras. However, we highly recommend them, and advise all team members to ensure they have a current tetanus shot. Contact your physician or health department for immunization recommendations. **Note – some shots are taken in a series and need multiple shots over the course of several months; plan accordingly.* Additional information about immunizations may be found from the Center for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov. (Click on "Traveler's Health.")

Insurance

Purchasing international health and travel insurance for your team is a requirement. Also, be prepared with a credit card to cover a medical emergency. You may use any travel insurance you prefer. If you need a place to start you can check out the following websites: Many teams use IMG.

imglobal.com/mission-insurance or geobluetravelinsurance.com

Team Meetings and Spiritual Preparation

Meeting regularly is vital for your preparation; we suggest meeting monthly to plan for each aspect of your trip. Included in your monthly meetings, please have at least one training on evangelism, maybe asking your pastor to provide this. We provide training as part of your orientation here at EA but having some exposure and practice before you arrive will make your team members more comfortable with this often new experience. You will also use your team meetings to show the cultural training videos.

In addition, we encourage teams to spend time team building and forming relationships with each other. Most importantly, spend time preparing the hearts of your team. Consider teaching how to have personal devotions, committing to a daily Bible reading plan together, teaching the purpose of international missions, giving a mission story/book to read, praying for each other, and more. Also, have your team prepared to share their testimony at Tuesday night church in the community.

Educate Yourself

Do a little homework! Take some time to Google information about Honduras, the culture and history, Catholicism and Christianity here, and also about El Ayudante (eahonduras.org) to share with your team.

Donation Items & Our Current Needs List
If you or your team members would like to bring additional donations or items, there is always a need at El Ayudante and in our communities that you can help provide for. You can ask for a medicine and/or a general donation list. Feel free to share the lists with your team members or your church. THERE IS A NEW PROCESS IN PLACE TO GET DONATIONS THROUGH CUSTOMS. We will send you the paperwork instructions 1 month before you come.

For our most current Needs List, visit the "Resource Links" section of eahonduras.org

*This is a great way to involve your entire church in your trip to Honduras!

Paperwork

Team Roster & Control Sheet
Please complete our Team Roster spreadsheet so we have the information we need for your team. Please send to admin@eahonduras.org ***1 month before*** you come. (Don't miss the food allergy section!)

Release Forms
Each team member must complete an El Ayudante ***Medical Release*** form and ***Release of Claim*** form. Please bring these completed forms with you to Honduras and give to El Ayudante upon arrival.

Note: the medical release for minors requires a notary– please plan accordingly for your team.

Supplies Declaration (There is a new process in place. We will work with you to complete it)
Before your arrival into Honduras, EA will declare the supplies you are bringing into the country. You will receive an email from the teams coordinator one month before your trip with the forms that you are required to fill out. An itemized list of what donations you are bringing and a separate list for medication will be required. (anything outside of your personal belongings).

Passport & Visas
A valid US passport is required for travel to Honduras. Every passport must be valid for at least 6 months after your return flight date to the States. *If your travel date is less than 6 months before the expiration date of your passport, you must renew your passport before your trip, or TSA will not allow you to fly.*

US citizens are granted a 90-day visa into Honduras upon arrival in the airport. **Non-US citizens may be required to request their visa before arrival – contact the Honduran Consulate in the US for more info.**

Other Team Information

Communication
El Ayudante provides a phone for emergency calls to the States.
Phone calls to the States may be made on this phone per the team leader's discretion. One shared, public computer with internet access is also available in the mission house at El Ayudante for team use.

Emergency contact
Persons in the US that need to contact a team member in Honduras may send emails to admin@eahonduras.org or call 541-662-0373 (US number that WILL ring in Honduras). Messages will be delivered promptly to the team member.

Technology
El Ayudante requests that teams use their week in Honduras as a 'technology fast.' As our daily lives are so full of the distractions of constant communication via smart phones, email, text messages, and Facebook, your week in Honduras is a great opportunity to focus more intently on relationships and spiritual growth. We do have a public computer available for brief usage in the El Ayudante mission house. Please remember that this is a shared computer with all team members.

We do understand that access to the internet can be necessary for work or for checking in with family. Team members will have access to the WIFI on campus, **HOWEVER**, we ask that you respect the limited bandwidth and limit usage to before breakfast, during lunch and after dinner when our office staff is not using it.

Alcohol & Tobacco
The use of tobacco or alcoholic drinks during your week of ministry with El Ayudante is ***not permitted***, on or off our campus. This is an important aspect of living above reproach as a Christian ministry in Honduras.

Teams Packing List:

Luggage Reminders

- *Pack all basic necessities in a carry-on bag, as sometimes baggage is delayed or lost.*
- *Laundry service is not ordinarily available – please pack enough clothes for your entire trip.*
- *Mark your team's bags with a bright tag of some sort so it's easier to find when you arrive.*
- ***Check with your airline for current EMBARGO baggage regulations for travel to Honduras.***

What TO Bring:
(Adjust this list according to your week's work detail – construction / medical / etc.)

- Clothing – **See dress code below**
- Tennis shoes or work boots / shower shoes or flip-flops/church shoes or sandals
- Hat and / or bandana
- Sunglasses / sunscreen
- Bug spray with at least 25% DEET
- Work Gloves
- Toiletries & personal items
- **Refillable Water bottle** (we will have purified water to refill your bottles throughout the week)
- Bible / journal / pen
- Small bag or backpack
- First Aid Items (El Ayudante also has first aid items)
- Small flashlight or headlamp
- Cash for souvenirs (US cash is accepted everywhere; small bills are preferred, ***NO*** **torn bills and no coins**) **THE EA STORE ACCEPTS CREDIT CARDS!** (it will look like a US transaction so your bank will never know you are in Honduras)

- Prescription medicine – must be in original bottle with pharmacist's label for travel

{Advise your team that if customs asks if they have prescription drugs, they are likely asking about prescription drugs to be used for ministry. If you are not a medical team, team members can answer "no."}

Dress code: Please note: OUR DRESS CODE IS NOT A SUGGESTION. IT IS A REQUIREMENT.

- Mission House
  - T-shirts or tank tops (no inappropriate slogans, please)
  - Shorts, sweatpants, pajama pants, jeans, leggings etc
- Church
  - Ladies – dresses with sleeves or skirts (at least knee length)
  - Men – long pants, collared shirts and shoes (no flip flops)
- Trip to town
  - Ladies – skirts or pants
  - Men – pants or cargo shorts (no athletic shorts)
- Family Night
  - Same as church as these 2 activities are combined now.
- Working in the community(VBS, Learning Center, Filters, Adobe, Latrines, Pilas, etc)
  - Ladies – long pants or capris NO SHORTS, shirt (no tank tops) and closed toe shoes (no sandals on construction projects or filters).
  - Men - Long pants or cargo shorts, shirt (no tank tops) and closed toe shoes (no sandals on construction projects or filters).
- Weddings
  - Ladies – Dress to at least the knee with sleeves and sandals (no flip flops)
  - Men – Dress shirt with tie and closed-toed shoes.
- 5th & 6th grade afternoon activity or Sports Camp
  - Pants or knee-length shorts (if sports or games are on the agenda)
- Clinic
  - Pants or skirts for spiritual care. If you need scrubs for medical or dental work, please bring your own. NO sandals.
- Tattoos and Piercings
  - No pierced body jewelry other than earrings should be visible. Men should not wear earrings.
  - Tattoos will need to be covered when attending an event at a church or a school.

Ladies – no shorts or leggings can be worn off campus!

What NOT to Bring:

- Expensive jewelry and watches, laptops, or electronic games—anything of value that could be stolen, damaged *or* anything that might prove to be a distraction to your team or ministry. (El Ayudante does not assume liability for missing/damaged items.)

Towels, pillows, sheets, and blankets are provided by El Ayudante – no need to pack them!

Arrival into Honduras:

Arrival into the airport in Honduras, immigration, finding your luggage, and customs can be a bit stressful. Hopefully the following information can help with this part of your journey.

- The "paper" customs form that you used to fill out on the plane is now an electronic process. EA will give you the info to complete that process ahead of time. In addition to your passport number, use the following info for this form: Customs: Palmerola Destination: Mision Internacional El Ayudante Address: Aldea Lo De Reina, Comayagua Phone: 9762-5869 Purpose of visit: Tourist
- **If you are missing a checked bag –** report it to the airline representative before leaving baggage claim. You should receive a phone number and information about how to retrieve your bag. Give them this cell number of El Ayudante to call: **9752-8879.**
- An El Ayudante staff member will be waiting to meet your team as you exit customs.
- **Change of flight:** if your flight has been delayed or changed please try your best to contact us. You can send an email to admin@eahonduras.org or call (541) 662-0373.

(El Ayudante is not responsible for additional transportation or hotel expenses due to airline problems.)

Teaching Your Team - What to Expect in Honduras

Honduran Culture

- **Remember to watch the cultural videos with your team!**
- Please avoid flirting of any kind and withhold displays of romantic affection— including within your own team (with the exception of spouses).
- Please ignore any stares, whistles, or comments from Hondurans.
- No pierced body jewelry other than earrings should be visible. Men should not wear earrings.
- Tattoos will need to be covered when attending an event at a church or a school.
- Hondurans are extremely gracious and giving – be cautious to not unintentionally suggest you would like something as they will quickly sacrifice and give you whatever they think you want.
- Hondurans are extremely relational – slow down and take the time to talk, ***it's more important than your agenda or task.***

"*We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited." 2 Cor. 6:3*

Regardless of your stance on non-Christian music, movie choices, alcohol & tobacco, etc…due to the cultural differences between the Honduran Christian church and our US churches, we err on the side of caution. Please be aware of what you say or advertise, and we ask that you refrain from alcohol, tobacco, and non-Christian music so we will avoid any chance of offending the Christian community in Honduras.

Weather

Honduras has a tropical climate, and many days will be hot and humid. However, the evenings may cool off or we may have a rain-storm, so a light jacket or sweatshirt may be useful.

Do's & Don'ts in Honduras

- Don't take photos of military or police unless you're told it's ok
- Don't make promises to locals about how you plan to help them
- Don't invite locals to eat with the team without permission from your El Ayudante team leader
- Don't go anywhere alone or without your team leader's & El Ayudante staff permission
- Don't make fun of or put down Honduras, the government, or the people – you are their guest. Be mindful of how you talk in front of translators!
- Don't criticize something in Honduras, or talk about how 'great the US is' in comparison.
- DO eat all of your food, and don't waste water – you are in a country that uses everything!
- DO come with an open mind about how things work in Honduras, you might learn something!
- DO take time to talk to people instead of just focusing on finishing a task

Your Stay at the EA Mission House

Water: Honduras is a country that often has a limited supply of water; be respectful by not wasting water! Please *limit your showers* to 1 shower a day, and limit the time of your shower to a reasonable time.

Drinking Water: ***The water in the Mission House is filtered!*** El Ayudante will also have jugs of water available for you to refill your water bottle. It is safe to brush your teeth with tap water. Be sure to stay hydrated; you will be active and hot and sweating. Dehydration can come quickly, so prevent it by drinking lots of water!

Meals: Most of your meals will be served at El Ayudante by our amazing cook and will be a combination of Honduran and North American food. Peanut butter & jelly sandwiches are always available as needed.

Kitchen Duty: We ask all teams to help do their own dishes. There will be a sign-up sheet for dish duty.

Housing: The mission house has 2 large dorm rooms – men's and women's, each with bathrooms attached. Both dorm rooms have bunk beds; linens, pillows, and towels are provided. Each dorm also has several fans, but you may choose to bring your own. *Our mission house is not air-conditioned.* Earplugs may benefit you as well if you are bothered by your teammates snoring talents.

Snacks: El Ayudante has candy bars, ice cream and sodas for sale in the Mission House for your snacking pleasure.

Security: El Ayudante is very safe and we have never had security problems. We have a 24-hour armed guard as a precautionary measure. We also have a locked safe for passports, cash, etc. to be stored.

Gifts: Gifts, tips, money, food, etc. to Hondurans must be approved by your El Ayudante team leader. (This includes EA support staff, pastors, community members, and adorable little Honduran kids.) This is not because we are stingy; we never want to withhold a blessing from someone. HOWEVER, El Ayudante is a ministry striving to create lasting relationships and not be known for giving out unlimited hand-outs. We know the people and culture, and sometimes helping can hurt; let us help discern this.

Here to Serve: While we hope you have come to serve Honduras and our Savior, El Ayudante is also here to serve you. If we can serve, help, or assist you in something, please just ask.

Questions?

Email us at admin@eahonduras.org **or visit** eahonduras.org rev 07/28/26