

What a typical week looks like:

Our desire is for each team to be a part of the ongoing transformation of the community that has been “adopted”. Our aim is to make the experience as convenient as possible for each team that joins us. From your very first step onto Haitian soil until you step back onto the plane to leave us... our host missionary coordinates every phase of the trip. From living accommodations and meal preparations to transportation and construction site work, our Operation Hope team leaders organize every detail.

Our goal is to get each phase of the project completed in the shortest period of time. For example our Church phase will typically take 3-4 work teams to complete. While the frequency of team arrivals varies the work never stops... When U.S. based teams aren't on the ground working... a seven member Haitian Crew fills in the gaps on the construction of the project.

Arriving on a Saturday allows each team to get acclimated to the culture and settled into their week long- home away from home surroundings.

Sunday is church day and our teams spend the day attending church in the “Adopted” community and assisting in various outreach opportunities that are planned.

Monday – Thursday are spent working on the construction project... These days are long and labor intensive, typically lasting 10-12 hours including travel time and mandatory recoup periods. Friday's are set aside for a cultural experience or sightseeing excursion.

TYPICAL WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Saturday

3-5:00 // Arrival Time
6:00 // Dinner
7:00 // Orientation
8:00 // Project Overview
11:00 // Lights Out

Sunday:

7:00 // Wake up
7:15 // Breakfast
9:00 // Depart for church
noon // Lunch
2:00 // Afternoon community ministry

6:00 // Dinner
10:00 // Lights out

Monday-Thursday

7:00 // Wake up
7:15 // Breakfast
8:00 // Morning Devotional
8:15 // Load-up and depart
8:30 // Worksite
11:30 // Lunch at worksite
5:00 // Clean-up and pick-up
5:30 // Showers and free-time
6:30 // Dinner
7:30 // Free-time
10:00 // Lights out

Friday

8:00 // Wake up
8:15 // Breakfast
9:00 // Morning Devotional
9:15 // Load-up and depart
8:30 // Community Outreach/Beach Day/Shopping/Sightseeing
5:30 // Dinner/ Community Cookout
7:00 // Community Church Service
9:30 // Free-time
11:00 // Lights out

Saturday

7-9am // Teams Depart

PASSPORT

All North Americans traveling to Haiti are required to have a passport for entry in to the country. You can check with your local post office for a passport application. You can also go to the U.S. Department of State web page:

<http://travel.state.gov/passport> or the Passport Canada web page:

www.passportcanada.gc.ca. If you are applying for a new passport, please allow 4 – 8 weeks to receive it. All travelers should bring a photocopy of the first two pages of their passport in their carry-on luggage in the rare event that your passport is lost.

CUSTOMS

You will be required to fill out a customs form on the plane before you arrive in Haiti.

IMMUNIZATION AND GENERAL HEALTH INFORMATION

All groups are encouraged to have the following vaccinations prior to traveling to Haiti:

- Hepatitis A/B
- Tetanus/Diphtheria (DT) *REQUIRED
- Typhoid immunization
- Preventative malaria medication *REQUIRED

ARRIVING AT PORT-AU-PRINCE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

NOTE: As of July 2014 – there is a \$10 USD tourist fee to enter Haiti. Prior to departing the plane, have your passport and visitor's visa in a safe and easily accessible place. After leaving the plane, you will travel down a short hall to the Immigration area. Couples may go through together. Each person needs their own visitor card, but there is only one white card per family. Put your passport and visitor's visa (green or yellow card) in a secure place, you will need both to depart the country.

Next walk downstairs to baggage claim. Luggage carts are available for \$2; generally 3-4 suitcases will fit on a cart. It helps to have some team members stand with the carry-on bags as others remove the luggage off the belt. It is important not to miss any bags! There will be many "porters" trying to help with your bags, just smile and say "no mesi".

Do not let anyone take your cart; they may not release it without additional tips.

All checked suitcases need to be carefully weighed (cannot exceed 50 pounds) prior to arriving at the airport to avoid paying fees or having to answer questions as you try to re-distribute medicine or work tools and supplies in today's cautious and suspicious airport environment. We recommend that one or two "team bags" be available for larger containers of liquids or extra snacks that you are not able to bring in your carry-on luggage.

DEPARTING PORT-AU-PRINCE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Advance preparation is helpful. Remove all old airline luggage tags, consolidate and re-label empty suitcases. It is important to know if a suitcase is checked in your name for custom purposes in Miami.

In Haiti, where traffic jams, flat tires, and other hazards can delay travel significantly, we will build in sufficient travel time to arrive at the airport.

You may have a long wait, but the airport is air-conditioned and food is

available. Once you arrive at the airport, there will be many Haitians willing to help you. **Again, do not allow anyone to take your luggage.** The new departure terminal is similar to most American airports with all airlines located in a central location. Once inside teams enter the waiting line as a group and follow airport staff directions for check-in. After luggage is checked and everyone has received boarding passes, proceed to Immigration and the gates or visit the gift shop located across from the airline check-in desk (a smaller gift shop is located on the first floor after immigration and security).

Each person should have his/her passport, boarding pass and green/yellow visitor's visa ready for check-in. At the Immigration desk you will present your passport to be stamped and render your visitor's visa. Keep moving forward to the security/x-ray checkpoint, expect to be patted down or checked with the hand held wand after you pass through the metal detector. Once through this checkpoint, you can shop in the duty free shop located on the first floor of the terminal or proceed to the waiting room at the departure gate. Once in the waiting area you will not be able to return downstairs. There is a second security checkpoint upstairs prior to entering the waiting area, once cleared you may proceed to the waiting area. There are restaurants, bathrooms and clean water fountains in the waiting area.

MIAMI OR FT. LAUDERDALE AIRPORT (most U.S. international airports have similar procedures)

When you return you will go through immigration and customs. When entering the immigration area, watch for signs and security personnel for help on where to go. **IMPORTANT** do not use your cell phones or cameras until after you clear customs and immigration, they will be confiscated! After clearing immigration, proceed to the baggage claim area. There you will need to claim all checked bags and proceed towards customs. If a bag is assigned to you for the return trip, please try to be with these items. Try to avoid being sent to the agriculture line where all bags have to be scanned. If asked what is in your bags, tell them dirty clothes and medical/work supplies from the project you worked on in Port-au-Prince. After clearing customs, take the bags through a set of doors and to the left to be scanned for the flight to your home airport. You will go through the security checkpoint, after that, just relax until you are on your way home!

REGISTRATION:

We recommend that all team members register with the U.S. State Department (U.S. Embassy – Haiti) Go to: <https://step.state.gov/step/>. You will need your passport number, destination information and phone numbers; for purpose of trip; report humanitarian visit.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST FOR TEAM MEMBERS

1. Shoes: shower shoes, one pair suitable for work (closed shoes recommended for safety) and one for church
2. Clothing: sleepwear, shirts, pants, skirt/dress, socks, underwear, and modest swimsuit (for beach/pool only)
There is NO Laundry is available so bring a black trash bag to put dirty clothes in.
Women: knee length skirt and shirt or dress (with sleeves) for church, Jeans or long shorts for worksite. **Men:** short sleeve shirt & slacks for church, T-shirts, jeans or Long shorts for work site.
Please do not bring: short shorts or short dresses, sleeveless shirts, tank tops, spandex or other revealing clothing. Please bring clothing that fits within these guidelines as to maintain safety and avoid offense.
Hat, work gloves and sunglasses
3. Contacts, contact container (and PLENTY of solution)
4. Toiletries (soap, toothbrush/paste, shampoo, deodorant) please limit curling irons, dryers, & electric razors
5. Washcloths (pillows and bed linens are provided) – bath towel
6. Sunscreen - at least SFP 15 or higher and waterproof
7. Insect Repellent w/deet 30
8. Lip balm & eye drops (liquid tears)
9. Antibacterial hand wash/gel (Be discreet when using)
10. Personal medications (suggest Tylenol, advil, Imodium, stool softner and antacids in addition to prescription medications)
11. Antibacterial wipes (recommended to clean the tops of bottle, cans etc. before drinking)
12. Camera and extra batteries
13. Flashlight and extra batteries (needed at night after “lights out”)
14. Earplugs & iPods for after hours (Haitians roosters and dogs often start crowing/barking at 3 am)
15. Cell phone – there is little need for multiple cell phones in Haiti
16. Refillable water bottle
17. Personal snacks (granola or protein bars, peanut butter crackers, tuna packets - be imaginative!)
18. Copy of your passport & your PASSPORT
19. Copy of your Green Card
20. Driver’s license (needed to use a credit card)
21. Spending money, VISA & MC (accepted in some stores - consider pre-paid credit cards)
22. Bible, devotional and journal items

Do not bring: expensive jewelry, computers and other valuable items to Haiti; we cannot be responsible for stolen or lost items or damage to electronics due to electricity surges while charging the battery.

THINGS TO REMEMBER WHILE IN HAITI

1. Protect your passport at all times. Make two copies prior to departure. Give one copy to the group leader, keep the second copy in a safe place separate from your passport and checked luggage.
2. The most common problem is petty theft. Please leave expensive jewelry at home; do not carry expensive items in your hand or on your person. Carry your backpack in front of you in crowded areas. Leave passports and other documents, credit cards, and cell phones at the housing site.
3. Do not leave the group without permission from the team leader and staff. Always travel in groups of two or more team members; never travel without a Haitian escort. Out project leaders and staff will make final decisions regarding team travel and activities.
4. Please listen to the team leader and staff when he/she is giving directions, they are ultimately responsible for your safety. Ask questions, if you do not understand instructions or information provided, others in the group may be confused as well!
5. As representatives of a Christian based organization and out of respect for the Haitian culture, please refrain from conduct viewed as offensive: such as public displays of affection, consumption of alcoholic beverages, tobacco use or “colorful” language.
6. Dress modestly! No tight fitting, short or revealing clothing. Be mindful of wearing t-shirts with provocative language or images. Knee length dresses or skirts are recommended for women, long pants or long shorts are encouraged for women and men on work sites due to safety concerns. It is inappropriate to sunbath in any area except at the beach or a pool. It is important that we do not distract the people from the message we want to convey, and to respect cultural and church customs.
7. **There is NO safe public water in Haiti.** Never drink water from the tap, always use the water provided for drinking, taking medication and filling water bottles. Do not rinse your toothbrush with water from the sink and try to avoid getting water in your mouth while showering. Carry anti-bacterial wipes to clean the contact surfaces of soda bottles, etc. Always check the source of ice prior to using it in a drink.
8. Be careful what you eat! Food served at the guesthouse is safe, **but never eat from street vendors.**
9. Please let your team leader know if you become ill while traveling or working in Haiti. Your first aid kit should contain appropriate antibiotics and medicines. Additional help is available if such a need arises.

10. Your ultimate purpose for being in Haiti is to share the love of God. Get to know our Haitian hosts. Meet people with a smile, a handshake and a “bon jou.” (good morning).
11. Feel free to take photos, but be respectful of the people around you. Honor the people’s right to privacy. Always ask permission before taking someone’s picture. Be subtle with your photo taking; sometimes people photographed expect money for this privilege.
12. Keep in mind that **flexibility** is vital; each trip is a unique experience when one considers the individual needs of the Haitian people and the dynamics of each volunteer team.
13. Do not share personal information such as email addresses or phone numbers. We discourage individual gifts, including gifts to children. If you wish to give an individual gift or donation, talk with the Project leaders.
14. Be cautious and refrain from petting Haitian dogs or cats even if they appear friendly.