

**SHORT-TERM MISSIONS APPLICATION
INFORMATION FROM THE HILLCREST MISSIONS TEAM**

Dear Hillcrest Short-Term Mission Trip Organizer:

This application and information from the Missions Team at Hillcrest Church of Christ is for persons considering a short-term foreign mission trip. Hillcrest has historically called these efforts “Send the Light.”

Each year in April, the Hillcrest congregation has a special collection to off-set some of the personal costs for short-term missions. To prepare for the collection, the Missions Team reviews requests from individuals and groups to be included in the collection. Due to the annual collection being held at regular time, the Team asks that applications be submitted by January 15, but we will accept applications for consideration when received throughout the year. After reviewing applications, we submit our recommendation to the elders, and later communicate to the congregation. Please send your application to Neal Coates, coatesn@acu.edu, 325-513-4248.

If you are heading a group or planning a mission trip by yourself and would like to be considered, please send us information about your plans (see the form below). Please remember to provide a good description of when, where, what, who, and costs. In light of ever-diversified requests, our application criteria are designed to help both the participants and the Missions Team alike reflect on Biblical imperatives of missions and evangelism.

Hillcrest members going on mission trips are of course free to request funds from Hillcrest members individually and from persons elsewhere (this second option is also helpful because it will expand your donor/involvement base).

For persons receiving funding, there are some additional safety, health, and financial protection requirements and recommendations. First, Hillcrest has found historically that **medical evacuation coverage has been life-saving, and thus we require it** (and it’s not expensive). This requirement is due to the slow nature of receiving emergency medical treatment at foreign hospitals in potentially life threatening situations. Second, we highly recommend each recipient have **travel health & hospitalization insurance**. Trip organizers should think through safety issues, and we are happy to provide helpful guidance about these insurance. Our health criteria has emerged from many years of experience, and our objective is your safe return!

If airline tickets are a part of your trip, we also highly recommend **ticket cancellation insurance** be purchased along with the plane ticket to protect each campaigner from cancellation losses. Each year there is someone among the dozens of persons on trips who needs to alter their plans due to family emergency or other issues, and returns their unused funds to Hillcrest. Likewise, we also recommend COVID-19 trip cancellation insurance—it is not too expensive but may be a necessity depending on your destination.

If you are planning to use a Hillcrest account in the Church Office to manage your mission funds, please inform Neal Coates and Pam McGrew, Hillcrest’s office administrator. Each group should have fund raising complete and funds in the appropriate Hillcrest account 30 days prior to your trip. We also recommend this for persons and groups who do not use Hillcrest for overseeing their mission funds.

Go ahead and start your fundraising—do not “depend” on the special collection as we don’t know what the amount given will be yet. The Lord has been generous in the past to provide many funds through this collection opportunity, but there are other avenues also available between now and any mission trip from which to raise funds and/or to save money for your work.

Finally, here is some additional helpful information (regarding funds management and taxes) for you and your donors. Any gifts will go toward the Hillcrest-sponsored trip that you are planning. The church will maintain full discretion over how these funds are used. If a donor wants to recommend their donation be used on a behalf of a certain individual or project, they should state so. Rarely, a mission trip must be cancelled for one or more campaigners due to circumstances beyond Hillcrest’s control, such as illness or safety risk. In that case, donations will be managed by the Hillcrest Missions Team in a manner consistent with the donor’s intent.

Please see the application below and the criteria by which the Missions Team will evaluate your request. Be as complete as possible in communicating your plans.

Thank you for your efforts to build up the body of Christ around the world!

SHORT-TERM MISSIONS APPLICATION

Name, Phone, Email for Applicant/Group Organizer

What?

Where?

When?

Who?

Faith Sharing Plan?

Church Plant Plan?

Projected Costs? Airfare _____ Other Costs _____

Fundraising deadlines?

Emergency medical evacuation insurance? (Required)

Airline ticket cancellation insurance? Ticket COVID-19 cancellation insurance? Personal health insurance coverage?

Travel health and hospitalization insurance? Safety Plan? Emergency contact numbers / e-mail addresses?

CRITERIA FOR FUNDING

Each program must have a thought-out plan of how its participants will share their faith and how their efforts will flow into functioning church plants of the New Testament church.

Each participant must be a member of the Hillcrest Church of Christ for at least six months prior to departure, and pursuant to the needs of the particular Send the Light mission effort may be required of the team director to be a baptized believer. Each participant must be at least 18 years old at the time of departure. If a group organizer needs to ask for an exception, please submit an explanation. There are also international travel requirements regarding minors traveling without their parents—see the Missions Team to discuss these.

If airline tickets are involved, trip cancellation insurance is recommended; likewise, COVID trip cancellation insurance.

Do participants have personal health insurance coverage? Travel health & hospitalization insurance is recommended. Your travel agent can help you with this requirement.

Each participant must obtain emergency medical evacuation travel insurance from a trusted provider. This should include repatriation of remains. Several with a good track-record are Med Jet Assist (offers rider for emergency front cash for medical treatment), MedEx, and Travel Guard. If you do not have reserve cash for foreign field medical treatment, some of these providers offer riders that provide emergency front cash for medical treatment. Remember, many foreign medical centers only provide service upon receiving up-front payment for services.

Travel immunizations depend on your target country. Please insure compliance with their requirements.

If entering another country, participants need to see that their passport is current. Many countries often consider a passport within six months of expiration ineligible for travel; make sure your departure date is NOT WITHIN six months of expiration. Also, most countries require at least 2 empty pages (with the word “Visa” at the top) in your passport to issue their visa.

If recommended by the State Department, notify your travel to the U.S. Embassy in your target country. See <https://step.state.gov/step>

If your accounting is going to be in conjunction with Hillcrest accounts, please organize this with Hillcrest’s office administrator.