



## Methodist Church of Puerto Rico Hurricane María Recovery Volunteer Guidelines 2018



### **General:**

- You will be notified of your group site location two weeks in advance. Please, be aware that changes may occur. We ask you for your patience and flexibility.
- Group size: up to 14 people
- 14 people are considered a full group. Larger groups may possibly be divided based on the needs of the community.
- Group age: 18 yr. or older (18-21 yrs. will need a notarized “power of attorney” and “Permission to travel with someone other than parents” document)
- No one under 18 yrs. Will be accepted – Our mission is re-construct houses & Sanctuaries
- Each group must have a leader
- Team leader will work with the mainland-based Volunteer Coordinator
  - o Mainland Coordinator will coordinate with the Methodist Church of PR
  - o Group should be fully coordinated at least two to four weeks prior to the visit
  - o All communication with the group will be via the leader
- Each group must have two drivers (25 yrs. or older)
  - o They will need a valid US license
  - o Need a major credit card to be able to guarantee the vehicle rental
- All adults must have current Background Checks and Safe Sanctuaries training

### **Travel Dates:**

- Puerto Rico has started receiving teams.
  - o No Sunday travel.
- Groups should plan to stay 7 to 8 days including travel dates

### **Travel Documents:**

- Puerto Rico is part of the USA; Puerto Ricans are US citizens from birth, no passport required for US citizens
- Need an official ID – valid driver’s license or passport.
- If under age (18-21) need a letter of authorization to travel with an adult other than parents



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**Currency:**

- US Dollar
- The Conference Office will accept checks for payments or donations. Made them payable to ReHace, Inc. (The social holiness arm of the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico.)

**Official Language:**

- Spanish is PR's first language, and English our second.
- We will provide a translator with each group. Please refer to Estimated Costs

**Medical:**

- Everyone should travel with Medical (\$50,000), Accident, and Repatriation Insurance (Submit documents two weeks before departure.)
  - o Personal – verify your coverage with your provider
  - o Temporary Insurance from your Conference or Jurisdiction
- Hospitals
  - o We will provide a list of nearby hospitals. In case of an emergency, there will be a vehicle on site at all times.
  - o Team members must be in good health and prepared for heavy work in warm temperatures and higher elevations.
  - o All team members will sign a liability waiver for their Conference prior to departure and a liability waiver upon arrival in Puerto Rico.

**Transportation:**

- Air transportation:
  - o Each group will be in charge of their air reservations and tickets.
  - o Arrival Airport: Luis Muñoz Marin Airport, Isla Verde, PR (Airport Code: SJU). Plan to arrive no later than 2:30 PM to allow travel to host sites. If arriving after 2:30 p.m. group will have to stay overnight in the Metro area (no additional charge)
  - o All team members must arrive at the same hour
- Ground transportation: - 14 max per van (More details in the Estimated Cost section)
  - o Need a valid license to be able to drive the van and 25 yrs. or older.
  - o The group will need 2 vans: (1) passenger (1) luggage
  - o Puerto Rico's *Volunteer Coordinator* will make the arrangements for the van rentals



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**Lodging and meals:**

- You will be notified of your group site location two weeks in advance. Please, be aware that changes may occur. We ask you for your patience and flexibility.
- Accommodations:
  - o Depending on the assignment and group size, the group will be staying at a Retreat Camp or a local church
  - o There will be bunks at the retreat sites. Please bring appropriate linens.
  - o There is no internet or wi-fi available in any of the camps.
  - o Teams staying at a local church will sleep in the sanctuary either on pews or on the floor. Please bring a small air mattress or crash pad, sleeping bag – depending on your needs.
  - o Large groups may be divided in different parts of the island depending on the needs (Different camps or churches) (14 people are considered a full group, larger groups may possibly be divided.)
- Meals:
  - o The kitchen will provide 3 meals and a snack for the group.
  - o Meals are not made to order, there can be no changes in the menu or special order – except for medical concerns.
  - o If a volunteer requires a special diet because of a medical condition, please request it at least 4 weeks prior to your arrival thru your team leader. All team members must eat together.
  - o If desired, a team may eat at a local restaurant if one is available at their own expense. These arrangements must be made ahead of time with the Volunteer or Site Coordinator.
- Power and water:
  - o To this date the three Retreat Camps have tap water. (Only for washing)
  - o Bottled Water: Is included in the daily costs
  - o There is no power. The camps have a small generator for the fridge and fans. The generator is turned on from 6am-10am and from 6pm to 10pm
  - o Be prepared to use your flashlight and shower with cold water.
  - o Do not bring any electric appliances. (ie. Hair dryers.) Our sites cannot accommodate electrically assisted medical devices.

**Activities:**

- Sunday Itinerary:
  - o The group will attend the Local Church Worship Service.
  - o All services are in Spanish.
- ERT's common tasks:
  - o Install tarps, clean debris, "Shelter in Place" repairs (roof, windows, doors), cleaning, etc.



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### Methodist Church of Puerto Rico Travel Information



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#### What to bring:

##### Luggage:

- It is suggested that personal items be kept to a minimum.
- One checked bag (50 lbs) and one personal bag per person. (Space is limited)
- If carrying tools you are allowed to bring an additional bag. (Check with your leader)

##### Clothing: Men and Women

- Work pants or jeans on project site
- Always t-shirts on work site – “cami-shirt” or “spaghetti strap shirt” for women or sleeveless shirts for men are Not allowed
- If a volunteer has heat sensitive skin, long sleeve shirts are recommended for work.
- A Hat
- Construction Boots or vibram-sole hiking shoes (Be conscious of the danger of nails in the floor)
- Appropriate outfit for church attendance: men-slacks, women-dress or long pants
- Consider local weather temperature – based on season
- Comfortable clothes for evenings
- Little or no jewelry
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Don't wear any tight or shorts. Long Bermuda-type shorts can be worn at the camp site.
- Flip-flops for shower
- Bathing suit (one piece)

##### Personal items:

- Linens: Twin Bed sheet set (bunk bed)
- Pillow
- Towel
- Small wash basin
- Water bottle
- Light blanket
- Sleeping bags-those staying in sanctuary
- Hygiene items/toiletries
- Insect repellent
- Flashlight and batteries



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- Sun block
- Work gloves
- N-95 dust masks
- Detergent for hand laundry
- Do not bring hair dryers or irons – there is no electric power at camp sites

### Optional:

- Tea Bags (If you do not drink coffee)
- Money for buying non-budgeted items such as specific snacks, soft drinks or personal items

### Electrical Appliances:

- Do not bring any electrical appliances. There is no electricity at the camp
- Our sites cannot accommodate electrically assisted medical devices.
- There is no internet or Wi-Fi in any of the camps.

### Tools:

- Follow your team leader's instructions.
- We encourage teams to bring hand tools (hammers, pry bars, screw drivers, etc..) and cordless drills and saws. Your team leader will know which ones are needed.
- Consider a donation of your tools to the site to be used by other groups in the reconstruction of PR. This will help build up our inventory.

### FINANCES:

- **Estimated cost per person: \$55.00 per person/ per day**
  - Lodging
  - Meals: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner
  - 1 snack
- **Plus:**
  - Transportation 15 passengers van for one week = \$1,100 per van / per week
  - Van for transporting group luggage 2 days (Day In/Out) from \$440
  - Translator/Team host - \$300.00 /week
    - **Total estimated cost per group / per week = \$1,840**
- **NOT INCLUDED:**
  - Gas for the van
  - Toll expense
  - Van Insurance
  - Personal items

Make checks payable to ReHace, Inc. (The social holiness arm of the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico.)



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### VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES Culture, Religious, and Local Customs:

All teams will receive a general orientation after arriving at their host site

#### DO:

- Recognize that survivors own their own recovery, and have ultimate decision-making regarding their residence.
- Have confidence that the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico has done a thorough assessment to identify the needs and available resources.
- Shake hands when greeting someone and when saying good-bye. A kiss on the cheek, or an “abrazo” (hug) is not unusual.
- Take time for polite conversation; don’t just jump right into “business.”
- Give gifts **only** through the local pastor, District Superintendent, or Volunteer Coordinator.
- Learn as much Spanish as you can, and use it every chance you get.
- Expect to participate in charismatic-style worship.
- Smile! Smile! Smile!

#### DON'T:

- No drinking of alcoholic beverages
- No smoking
- No shorts to attend church
- Do not give money to individuals
- Please do not make judgments or promises.
- Do not proselytize.
- Don't take pictures of the owners, specially children, of the house you are working in, except with their permission.
- Don't drink untreated water.
- Don't wear expensive-looking jewelry and flashy clothes.
- Don't smoke or drink alcoholic beverages at any time or place while in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rican culture in church context is more conservative.
- Don't wear any tight pants or shorts. Long Bermuda-type shorts can be worn at the campsite, but NOT to a church service. Slacks for men, and skirt/dress or long pants for women, should be worn for church activities.
- **DO NOT** give gifts to **anyone**. **Any private or collective gifts**, should be given through the local pastor or the Puerto Rico Volunteer Coordinator.



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