



Methodist Church of Puerto Rico

Hurricane María Recovery Travel Information

2018

IGLESIA METODISTA
DE PUERTO RICO | UMCOR
RENACE • REVERDECE • RECONSTRUYE

General:

- Recommended work group size: 6 to 8 people. 13 people per van maximum.
- The team may be divided into different work groups to address the needs of the work project and the team member's skills.
- Each work group must have a leader (preferably the most skilled).
- There should be at least one skilled person for every work group.
- Each group must bring their own personal safety equipment: gloves, safety glasses, boots, knee pads (if working on a roof) and N-95 dust masks. All other tools and equipment will be provided.
- Team members must be in good health and prepared for physical labor in hot and humid environments, at higher elevations.
- Volunteer age requirements: 18 years or older. Volunteers 18 to 21 will need a notarized "power of attorney" for medical services and "Permission to Travel with Someone Other Than Parents" document.
- All adults must have current Background Check and Safe Sanctuaries training, medical plan, and liability insurance documentation. Team leader will indicate this on Team Registration/Skill form.
- Team leader will work with the mainland-based Volunteer Coordinator to schedule team and begin the volunteer registration process. Mainland Coordinator will work with the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico Volunteer Coordinator to finalize schedule.
- "Registration and Skills" form (1 document) is needed one month prior to arrival, if not sooner. If this form is not received on time, there is a risk of trip cancellation.
- All communication with the group will be via the leader
 - Groups should be fully coordinated at least six weeks prior to the visit
- You will be notified of your group host and work location one to two weeks in advance. Please, be aware that changes may occur. We ask you for your patience and flexibility.
- Each group must have two drivers (25 yrs. or older)
 - Drivers will need a valid US license
 - Team will need a major credit card to be able to guarantee the vehicle rental

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Travel Dates:

- Best day to travel: preferably Thursday. **No Sunday** travel please.
- Teams 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.

Currency:

- US Dollar
- In Puerto Rico, you can use any major credit card.

Official Language:

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

Medical:

- Everyone must travel with \$50,000 (per person) Travel Medical Insurance/Accident, and Repatriation Insurance. Mainland Coordinator will verify with Team Leader.
 - Personal – verify your coverage with your provider
 - Temporary Insurance from your Conference or Jurisdiction
- Hospitals
 - Each camp site and bus have a list of nearby hospitals. In case of an emergency, there will be a vehicle on site at all times.
 - 8-21 years must bring a Power of Attorney for medical purposes.
- Each group will have a First Aid kit in their vehicle.
- All team members will sign two liability waivers: (1) Participant Liability Release Form and (2) Medical Information for Individual Volunteers
- Vaccination requirements are the same as the mainland.

Driving in Puerto Rico:

- Drive carefully. Rural roads can be narrow.
 - Do not speed, you will be liable for any tickets.

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- If you have a traffic accident, call the police immediately 787-343-2020.
- Do not leave valuables or bags in the van.
- If you go to the beach, please clean the sand from your feet and dry yourself before entering the van.

Work Site Project:

- Volunteer work: Groups may be divided to work in different projects on the island, depending on the needs of the project and size of the team.
 - Work projects:
 1. A priority will be given to the repair and installation of new roofing. This may include working with wood or metal trussing.
 2. Teams may be asked to assist with masonry work, including the installation of rebar
 3. Work may include the repair or installation of windows, doors, or flooring
 4. Teams may be asked to remove mold, do general cleaning or waterproof roofs
 5. Please refer to additional information under “What to Bring”
 6. Your team skill sheet is critical to your work assignment!!!!

A qualified and experienced foreman will be present on site and guide the work of the team. He is the project coordinator. It is emphasized that all teams have one person skilled in construction or building for every 5 or 6 team members. This will form a work team.

Sunday and Weekly Itinerary:

- You will be provided a weekly itinerary including opportunities for site-seeing
- The group will be expected to attend the Local Church Worship Service.
- All services are in Spanish

Transportation:

- Air transportation:
 - Each group will be responsible for securing their air reservations and tickets.

Arrival Airport: Luis Muñoz Marín 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 (a church that has several rooms prepared) and travel to host site the next morning.
- All team members should plan to arrive at the same hour and no later than 5 p.m.
- Departure times: Should be between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

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- A member of the MCPR will contact the Team Leader upon your arrival and drivers will meet your team at the outside Arrivals Pick-up Area.
- Ground transportation:
 - 13 max per van (more details in the Estimated Cost section). Drivers need to be at least 25 years old & have a valid license to be able to drive.
 - The group will need at least 2 vans: (1) passenger van (for the whole week); (1) luggage vehicle to and from the host site;
 - If the group is divided in two different sites, then an additional van will be needed (2 passenger vans and 1 luggage van). You will be notified of this requirement one to two weeks in advance.
 - Puerto Rico's *Volunteer Coordinator* will make the arrangements for the van rentals. It could be from a local church or from a private company.
 - If it is from a local church, insurance is included in the fee and in case of a car accident the group will pay a \$500 deductible. If it is a Rental Company, the rates may vary, insurance is not included, and deductible varies per contract.
 - Gas is not included. Gas tank will be full, and you should return it full. The group can pay directly at the gas station or can give the money to the MCPR driver to fill the gas tank at the end of their trip.
 - **Van should be returned in clean condition.** Please clean the van on a daily basis.
 - Please report any damages or vehicle concerns to the Site Host.

Lodging and meals:

- You will be notified of your group site location one to two weeks in advance. Please, be aware that changes may occur. We ask for your patience and flexibility.
- Other groups could be staying at the same facility, please be aware that you will be sharing common spaces. If there is a retreat at the site, we ask for your consideration in respecting their need for quiet times.
- Accommodations:
 - Depending on the assignment and group size, the group will be staying at a Retreat Camp or a local church. There are five primary Camp Host Sites:

Patillas/Guayama	Carolina
Jayuya	Vieques
Arecibo	
 - There are adequate bunks at the retreat sites. Please bring appropriate linens (twin size)
 - There is no steady Internet service or Wi-Fi in any of the camps.





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- There is cellular signal (Will depend on provider and site location.)
- We suggest you coordinate a roster for maintaining the facilities clean.
- Before departure, pick up all the trash, and take it out of the building into the trash cans. Leave the camp in good condition.
- 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.
- Meals: The host site kitchen will provide 3 meals and a snack for the group.
 - One week prior to arrival the leader will receive a schedule that provides the hours for each meal.
 - Meals are not made to order, there can be no changes in the menu or special orders. All team members must eat together. We are sorry, but we are not able to accommodate gluten free diet. If a special diet is required the individual team members will need to provide their own meals. Please let the Team Leader know in advance.
 - 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 PR Volunteer Coordinator or with the Site Host upon arrival (at least 3 days in advance of desire date.)
 - All teams will have adequate drinking water both at the Camp and Work site
- Power and water:
 - To this date the five Retreat Camps have tap water. (Only for washing)
 - Bottled Water will be provided while working in the sites.
 - The five camps have power. However, prolonged periods of blackouts are possible. Be prepared to use your flashlight and shower with cold water.
 - Do not bring any small electric appliances such as hair dryers. Our sites cannot accommodate electrically assisted medical devices, including CPAP machines.

What to bring:

Clothing: Men and Women

- **Everyone must wear long pants on the construction site.**
- Always wear t-shirts on work site – “cami-shirt” or “spaghetti strap shirt” for women or sleeveless shirts for men are **not allowed**
- If you have heat sensitive skin, long sleeve shirts are recommended for work.
- A Hat to protect yourself from the sun. (Flap Cap Hat)
- **Construction Boots** or vibram-sole hiking shoes (Be conscious of the danger of nails in the floor. Protect yourself, there are small insects.)
- **Bring your safety construction equipment: gloves, safety glasses, masks, and boots.**



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- Appropriate outfit for church attendance: men-slacks or jeans, women-dress or long pants
- Consider local weather temperature – based on season (very hot with high humidity during the summer).
- Comfortable clothes for evenings
- Little or no jewelry
- Comfortable walking shoes for evenings.
- Don't wear any tight or shorts during your stay. Long Bermuda-type shorts can be worn at the campsite or in your free day.

- Flip-flops for shower
- Bathing suit (one piece)

- **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).

Personal items:

Linens: Twin Bed Sheet Set (Bunk Bed)	Sun Block – always use it
Pillow	Insect Repellent (Outdoor Off)
Towels	Flashlight with batteries (in case of power outage).
Small wash basin	Work Gloves
Water bottle	N-95 dust masks
Light Blanket	Safety glasses/sunglasses
Hygiene items/toiletries	Do not bring hair dryers or irons
Sleeping bags- For those staying in Sanctuary	Detergent for hand laundry

Optional:

- Money for buying non-budgeted items such as snacks, soft drinks or personal items

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Electrical small appliances:

- Do not bring any electrical small appliances (i.e. hair dryers). We have electricity at the camps, but the system is weak.
- Our sites cannot accommodate electrically assisted medical devices.
- There is no steady Internet or Wi-Fi in the camps.

FINANCES:

▪ Estimated cost per person: **\$55.00 per person/ per day**

- Lodging
- Meals: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner
- 1 snack

● Transportation cost:

Transportation	Cost	Description
Van #1 13 pax van	\$ 500*	Passenger Van (One Week)
Van #2 Luggage	\$ 300	Airport (Arrival & Departure)
Subtotal	\$ 800	Per group up to 13 passengers
If additional Van #3	\$ 500	Passenger Van (One Week)
Total transportation	\$ 1,300	Per group that will be split in two sites

**Rate if it is a Local Church Van, otherwise, it will be the airport rate (starting at \$700/week/van) and does not include insurance, nor taxes.*

• Translator cost:

- \$300.00 /week

Make checks payable to ReHace, Inc. (The social holiness arm of the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico.) Please give to Site Host upon arrival.

ReHace, Inc. P O Box 23339, San Juan, PR 00931-3339

• NOT INCLUDED:

- Personal items

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- Gas is not included in transportation estimate
- Gas tank will be full, and you should return it full.
- Van Insurance:
 - o Local churches van- If you are assigned a van from a local church, the church carries insurance and you do not have to pay any additional insurance. In case of any type of car accident, you will be liable for the \$500 deductible and/or any amount that the insurance will not cover.
 - o Car Rental Company van- The insurance is not included; you will have to pay the Car Rental daily insurance rate. In case of accident, the applicable deductible and conditions varies, it is specified in the contract you will sign.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Culture, Religious, and Local Customs:

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

DO:

- Use sun block lotion all the time.
- 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 tips or additional money compensation to our employees.
- No drinking of alcoholic beverages
- No smoking

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- No shorts to attend church
- No shorts while working.
- Do not give money to individuals
- Please do not make judgments or promises.
- Do not proselytize.
- Don't take pictures of the owners of the house you are working in, except with their permission.
- Don't take pictures of the children's family.

- Don't drink untreated water.
- Don't wear expensive-looking jewelry and flashy clothes.
- Don't 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 worship service, neither for work. Slacks or jeans 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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