



### Introduction

#### MISSION TO GUATEMALA

Mission teams sponsored by Hope of the Pokomchí are called “Hope GO (God-Ordained) Teams.” The goal for every aspect of the mission, including team participants, is to be in the center of God’s Will. Therefore, if you are considering being a team member, God is already at work in your life.

You have signed up to be a team member, so here are some qualities you should consider:

- Have a “heart to serve”
- Good physical and emotional health
- Flexibility
- Ability to work under authority and as a team member
- Ability to SMILE A LOT!
- A skill can be helpful, but not necessary - such as masonry, technical ability, children’s ministry, speaking Spanish, music

During your work week, you and your team will live...

- Minimum 8 people: in the village in a “base camp” which will be a school, a church, or the village community center. The camp is safe, hygienic, and has all the basic creature comforts, BUT it is rustic. Be prepared to step out of your comfort zone.
- Minimum 6 people: in the Shekinah Center and travel to the village daily

Primary goals of the trip:

- Build relationships with the Pokomchí and your fellow team members
- Be the “hands and feet” of Jesus to those around you – Pokomchí and team members
- Savor the experience and the culture
- Ask God what delights, lessons, and personal growth He has prepared for you on this trip
- Be a blessing to others

Secondary goals of the trip:

- Complete a project for a Pokomchí family– latrine, water tank, wood cook stove, Shekinah Center upgrades
- Share the Gospel through planned children’s, women, or family activities, either team organized or ASOSAP organized



### L.A.M.P.S.

#### A Pre-Trip Perspective on your Guatemala Experience

WELCOME AND CONGRATULATIONS!!

You've decided to step out of your comfort zone and venture into a life-changing experience in a developing country, into an ancient Mayan culture, into the day-to-day life of an isolated, rural Pokomchí community nestled in the breathtaking mountains of Alta Verapaz.

You come as LAMPS. Read Matthew 5:14-16 to find out why we have chosen this as your "title".

LAMPS is also an acronym which further explains your role in this cross-cultural experience:

#### Learners

You'll be in a "classroom", "learning" mode all week. Keep in mind that although you'll be limited in knowledge and understanding of the local culture and customs, what a golden opportunity to learn and grow! Have you thought about what your personal learning goals are? Also remember that you are *Unlimited* in the amount of love, friendship, and spiritual blessing that you can share.

#### Ambassadors

First and foremost, of CHRIST, then of Hope of the Pokomchí, known as a Christian organization in Guatemala. Many of the cultural tips that we give you are intended to help you be good ambassadors.

#### Masons

You will be building a foundation on which every successive team will rely. Think carefully about what you would like your "Finished Product" to be, years down the road. What legacy do you want to leave?

#### Pioneers

The people of your village have had very little contact with outsiders, even Guatemalan outsiders. They are shy, even frightened at the prospect of a bunch of "gringos" suddenly being in their midst days at a time - especially the women and children. What a precious opportunity you have to gently melt fears and replace them with budding friendships and fond memories!

#### Servants

Remember how Jesus washed His disciples' feet? And then He told them - and us, "do as I have done". The concept of servanthood is stated perfectly in [Philippians 2:5-8](#). Realize that our Pokomchí friends have a long-ingrained worldview that they are inferior, helpless, and hapless; and that all foreigners are superior in every way.



## Team Leader Guidelines

### Team Application and Preparation Process

1. Make sure each team member completes the Volunteer Application, Code of Conduct, and General Release Forms.

- These forms can be downloaded from our website: [www.HopeOfPokomchi.org](http://www.HopeOfPokomchi.org)
- Have each team member email their completed forms to you
- Review each set of forms to ensure that all is complete and correct, then email all forms to the Guatemalan Team Coordinator: [ASOSAP@ASOSAP.org](mailto:ASOSAP@ASOSAP.org)
- Ideally all forms should be sent to Guatemala ONE MONTH before team departure

2. Payment of Funds:

- Pay the first and second deposits by the dates on the bottom of the Team Budget form that you received
- The first deposit is non-refundable

Make Checks Out To	Write on Memo Line	Mail Checks To
<b>USA:</b> Hope of the Pokomchi, Inc.	Name & Date of Team	Hope of the Pokomchi, Inc. 120 Belmont Drive Auburn, CA 95603
<b>Canada:</b> Clearwater Christian Church	Name & Date of Team	Clearwater Christian Church 1010 School Road VOE-1N2

3. **Packing for Trip:** Team members should review the packing list at least one week prior to departure.

4. Prayer Partners:

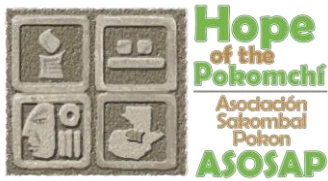
- We suggest that each team member seek a prayer partner to pray for them before and during the trip; we believe in the importance of operating in God's strength rather than our own.
- We also suggest that your church hold a Commissioning Service to send the team off with God's and the congregation's blessing

5. **Airline Tickets:** Each team will be responsible for booking their own tickets

6. **Passport:** Each team member must have a current passport, including a copy of the face page which should be kept in a different place than the passport

7. **Immunizations:** Each team member must have proper current immunizations. Check with your local health unit or immunization clinic.

8. **COVID Prevention:** In the villages where we work, the COVID vaccination rate is low. To protect these villagers that you will be serving and showing love to, we require that team members are vaccinated and bring this proof of vaccination with them. When working with families on a project, during cultural



activities, or playing with children for example, mask use is required. When amongst just team members or when walking to a project site and social distancing can occur, mask use is not required. We so appreciate this show of love and care to the Pokomchi people, especially children, through following these precautions

### 9. **Important Contact Information** – Team Leader Should Bring with them:

- Phone number of team's church and name of contact person there
- Name, email address, and passport face page of each team member
- Emergency contact list – name and phone number of contact person for each team member, plus the team member's allergies

### 10. **Guatemala Emergency Numbers:** 011-502-3301-0346 or 011-502-5918-9813

11. **Team Meetings:** We urge you to hold several meetings with your team to go over all aspects of the upcoming trip and preparation for it

### 12. Suggested Pre-Departure Team Planning Meeting Topics

- Packing reminders
- Exchange of money – Cultural Liaison will exchange \$US50 worth of Qs per person on arrival. During your R&R time in Antigua, you can exchange more in banks and at ATMs.
- Devotionals – Plan themes and who will do them
- Prayer partners – Any questions?
- Church Commissioning Service – date and time
- Emergency contact names and numbers – each team member should supply emergency contact information and allergies to their team leader no later than 2 weeks before departure.
- Team projects and work requests – who has what preferences or skills?
- Optional donations: if bringing donations, decide who buys and packs what.
- Procedure for airport departure and arrival – times and arrangements.
- Arrival back home – airport pick-up, times, and arrangements
- Post-trip Debriefing Session – We suggest a potluck and photo night within the first month.
- Post-trip Informational Activity for church congregation - Plan slide shows, presentations at church service, Bible studies, or Sunday schools.

## Travel Suggestions and Packing List for Guatemala

Inform Yourself:

We suggest you visit our website, <https://www.HopeOfPokomchi.org>. There you will find valuable information about the Pokomchi culture, the country of Guatemala, and about our organization.

Climate:

Alta Verapaz sits at an altitude of about 4500 feet and temperatures range from the 40F's (5-10C) at night to the 80F's (25-30C) during the day. Days can be hot and humid; it rains part of each day, for 10 months of the year.



## Hope of the Pokomchi Missions Teams Info Package

### Clothing in General:

In the villages, the indigenous women will sometimes work in their 'slip strap tops', but it is better for team women to wear tops with sleeves. Women should wear below-the-knee, loose-fitting skirts that one cannot see through and T-shirts or blouses with short sleeves, even in the evenings at the Village Camp. Men should not wear shorts or muscle shirts. Don't wear jewelry in the villages. (A wedding band is okay). In Guatemala City and Antigua, you may dress as you would at home.

### Clothing for Women:

4-5 work skirts or dresses, not see-through  
2-3 pairs of shorts (to wear under skirts)  
5-6 T-shirts/blouses (loose)  
6-7 pairs of socks & underwear  
Jacket or sweater for evenings  
Warm pajamas or sweats  
Light rain jacket and/or poncho

Hat for sun protection  
Shorts/pants for the city  
Work shoes (tennies/hikers/Tevas)  
Bandanas  
Semi-nice outfit for our evening out  
Swimsuit  
Comfortable sandals for city

### Clothing for Men:

3-4 pairs of work pants  
5-6 T-shirts  
Jacket or sweater for evening  
Warm pajamas  
Light rain jacket and/or poncho  
2 nice casual shirts  
Sandals (optional)

Hat for sun protection  
Shorts/pants for the city  
Swim trunks  
Bandanas  
Work shoes or boots  
6-7 pairs of socks & underwear



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### Other Items to Pack:

Personal medicines	Hand sanitizer
Sunscreen	Small bottle of fabric refresher or body mist for refreshing clothing (if desired)
Insect repellent	Work gloves (1 pair)
Antibacterial towelettes	Plastic bags for packing dirty items
Body wipes	Paper and pen/pencil for journaling
Small roll of toilet paper or travel packs of Kleenex	Flashlight w/batteries
Daypack	Camera/cell phone
Fanny pack or money belt	Extra batteries/ chargers for your electronics
Bug bite cream (Chigger cream is esp. good)	Snacks
Anti-Itch cream	Water Bottle
Band-Aids	Bible
Personal toiletries	Copy of passport photo page (pack in separate bag from passport)
Wash cloth and towel	
Shower shoes	

### How to Pack:

Pack all items according to the following categories:

- Overnight in Guatemala City – in a day pack
- Big bag with clothes for the work week
- Bag for Antigua

The idea is no one will have to rummage through all their gear at each phase of the trip.

*Remember! What you put in your bag, you alone will carry. Think carefully!*

### Laundry:

Due to rain and humidity, clothing items may stay damp for days, so don't plan on washing clothes during work week because they may not get dry.

### Luggage:

Each person should pack in their carry-on what he/she will need for the first night in Guatemala City - a change of clothes (skirt for women), and toiletries in case luggage is lost. Carry on any medications you need.

### Money:

The Quetzal is the Guatemalan currency with an exchange rate of roughly Q7 to \$1 US (exact exchange rates vary daily). On the first night, you will have the opportunity to exchange \$US 50 for quetzales. Canadian dollars are not accepted in Guatemala. There are also ATMs in San Cristobal. Your meals during



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your stay in the field are prepaid, but the only meal pre-paid in Antigua is the banquet dinner the last night. You will have the opportunity to buy crafts from PokoMaya, village artisans, and in San Cristobal. For your days of R&R, there are ATM machines in Antigua to obtain Quetzales. A credit card can be used at your hotel and most restaurants and shops in Antigua. Jade and silver are plentiful in Antigua. If you don't intend to purchase many souvenirs, \$US 100 should be sufficient spending money. If you love to shop, bring more.

### Communication:

Don't expect to do much communicating with home until Antigua. Even if you have an international plan, cell service in the villages can vary. For emergencies, ASOSAP staff always carry cell phones with which we can call North America. Please bring one or two emergency home contact numbers with you in case we need them.

### Helpful Donations to Bring

- Coloring books and crayons
- Multivitamins for adults, children, or women: Vitamins are given out as needed to patients at the health posts
- Toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss: We teach dental hygiene, and these donations are very useful so that education participations can put into practice what they learn.
- Packages of sterile or non-sterile gauze pads or rolls of gauze – these items are used frequently at the health posts

### School Supplies

At the beginning of each year, we make up a "care package" of school supplies for the village teachers. Since their budget from the Ministry of Education is very minimal, this minimizes the amount of personal money that the teachers have to spend.

We appreciate it when teams help us supply these items. This is an option, not a requisite, for sending a team or coming on a team. And we thank all of you in advance for helping out in this way.

### *Items that the teachers need are:*

Pencils, Erasers, Pens, Notebooks, Construction Paper, Glue, Crayons, Felt Pens

*Dollar Stores are a goldmine!*

### *Soccer Balls*

Soccer (Fútbol) is a national passion in Guatemala, so gifts of soccer balls with pumps, to the local school are always loved and welcomed.



## Hope of the Pokomchi Missions Teams Info Package

### Typical Schedule for Team Trip

#### Friday

Meet at church – take cars or vans to airport

Flight to Guatemala City

Arrive in Guatemala City, overnight in Guatemala City (if arrival time is in the evening)

#### Saturday

7:00am Breakfast & Leave for San Cristobal

12:00pm Lunch in San Cristobal

3:00pm Arrive in your village & settle into your village Camp

4:00pm Welcome activity by the village (depending on the village)

6:30pm Supper

8:00pm Devotions and Social Time

#### Sunday -Thursday

7:00am Breakfast, pack lunches, fill water bottles

8:00am -12pm Work on projects in village

12pm - 1pm Bag lunch at worksite

1pm- 4:30pm Continue work, cultural activity (Sunday),  
Kid's activity (Monday), prayer for projects (Thursday)

4:30pm - 6:30pm Return to base camp, showers

6:30pm Supper

7:30pm Devotions and Social Time

9:00pm Lights out – Bedtime

#### Friday

6:30am Breakfast; pack lunch for bus

7:30am Leave for Antigua

3:00pm Arrive at hotel in Antigua for two nights

Evening Free time

#### Saturday

Day time Leisure time - shopping, massages, tour of the city, volcanoes, etc.

7:00pm Banquet dinner

#### Sunday

4 hrs. before Flight Bus arrives at hotel - load luggage and drive to airport for flight





### Final Tips

Here are some KEY thoughts we want to dangle in front of you:

**FLEXIBILITY** - the most important prerequisite for a cross-cultural volunteer

**EXPECTATIONS** - Take a moment to ponder yours for this trip, maybe bounce them off someone else. We all have them but let them not be a damper on your experience. Yes, we have work goals, but take time to 'smell the roses'. . .return home with a story. The end product isn't as important as the PROCESS of trying to attain it.

### VILLAGE CULTURAL TIPS

- Greeting: Guys - Shake a man's hand gently; Girls - Gently pat a woman on the upper arm; guys do not touch women, just a verbal greeting
- Verbal Greeting – kah-LEN
- Dress for women volunteers - skirts or dress past knees, tops with sleeves and modest necklines.
- No smoking or drinking alcohol (For most Christian Guatemalans it is not socially acceptable to drink alcohol. Most Non- Christians drink to get drunk or as part of a Mayan religious ritual.)
- Asking an adult person's name is only done after a relationship has been established, not as an icebreaker as in our culture. You may ask children their names.
- Opposite sexes holding hands or touching in general, is not done among adults
- When you're leaving someone's presence, a Pokomchi 'Good-bye' is "noch-PED"
- If you have tattoos, try to cover them up; in Guatemala mostly only gang members have tattoos

### "BONDING" TIPS

- Bring your cell phone or photos of your family or landscape where you live to show them
- Music is universal. Practice some songs your group can sing - SMILE a lot!
- Offer to play soccer. YES! Guaranteed to put a sparkle in every male heart!
- Bring simple games like jump-rope or jacks or marbles to play with the kids
- Bring card games, dominoes, and beach balls to play with the village kids while in camp
- Bubbles are always a big hit

\*game items to be returned to base camp each night and not given out to the kids - see note re: stuff below



### A WORD ABOUT “STUFF”

We have a lot of stuff. They have very little stuff. Our natural tendency is to bring lots of stuff and give it away to them. By our standards, their needs are endless. However, copious, random giving away of stuff quickly erodes their dignity and self-respect and turns them into opportunistic “beggars” with a “welfare mentality”. It is probably the most common hazard of Developed-Developing World relationships.

How do we address their very real needs in an appropriate manner? Listen and observe what THEY perceive their needs are and respond by giving the item in an appropriate, orderly fashion, i.e., to be distributed by a teacher, church, or community leader. This should only be done after consulting with our team coordinator.

### LOGISTICS NITTY GRITTY

- Money: Keep in it in several different places
- Traveler’s diarrhea: **Acidophilus Capsules, 1- 2 per day** lessens the chance of getting it; start a week before arrival here; Pepto-Bismol is good if you get it, Imodium in severe cases
- Use ONLY bottled water for drinking and brushing teeth
- DON’T put TP in the toilet! (The plumbing in all parts of Guatemala cannot support toilet paper)
- NEVER go anywhere alone; even in groups, always tell someone where you are going

### WE PRAY ALL GOES WELL

We can’t underestimate the power of prayer! Blanket your trip with prayer – personal prayer, corporate prayer, and prayer with your prayer partner. We look forward to sharing your cross-cultural experience with you and to being alongside you as you partner with the people of your village, to help them move toward their God-given potential!

**In His Grip,**

*The Hope of the Pokomchi, ASOSAP Ministry Team*