



Methodist Church of Puerto Rico Hurricane María Recovery Travel Information 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 Check 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

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.)



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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 times: Should be between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
 - o Departure times: Should be between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
 - 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
 - o Gas is not included. Gas tank will be full, and you should return it full. The group can pay directly to the gas station or can give the money to the driver to fill the gas tank as they go.





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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 service 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 small 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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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 campsite.
- 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
- 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 site**

Optional:

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



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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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