



Sending Volunteers Abroad

Management Considerations in the Preparation, Placement and
Accompaniment

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➤ Vetting

➤ Orientation

➤ Building Community

➤ Safety Issues and Emergency
Responses

➤ Visas

Vetting during the application process

- What qualities or attributes do the volunteers need to possess to succeed in mission with your organization?
- How do you determine if the applicant has these qualities or attributes?

- ❑ Prepare open ended interview questions that will illicit information needed based on past behavior or experience.
- ❑ For example, if one of the qualities is: plays a positive role in situations of interpersonal conflict, the interviewer can ask the applicant to name a recent conflict that he or she has had with another person and how he or she handled the conflictive situation.
- ❑ Basic intake questions about trauma, etc.



- ❑ Recommendation forms that specifically ask about applicant's attributes or qualities, follow up with a phone call to recommenders to illicit concrete examples.

- ❑ Check up on any gaps or unanswered questions on the application, especially job or volunteer history, basic medical information. Make sure application questions include information needed to make an initial vetting process.

- ❑ If possible, interview applicant in person to assess how he or she physically responds to questions and interacts with others.

MEDICAL



Goal is not to put people in a situation that will put their health at risk, mentally or physically.

Orientation

Orientation before leaving for mission

- Skills (conflict management, finances, etc)
- Knowledge (staying healthy, cultural adaptation, etc)

- ❑ Charism of group (history, community expectations, meeting key people, etc)
- ❑ Preparation to enter new ministry site (information about the country and ministry, what to bring)

Orientation in country of mission

- Community life and resources in country
- Daily life (buying food, transportation, safety issues, money)
- Introduction to ministry site and key people
- Cultural norms and expectations (dress, conduct)
- Language acquisition or improvement

Building Supportive Communities

- Welcoming
- Willing to listen and patiently explain
- Check in regularly, ask questions like
“How are you doing with the
adjustment?” when first arrive
- Clearly defined process of who to contact
for what
- Flexibility, Adaptability to meet needs
- Find out about and use person’s gifts and
talents (music, art, finances, etc.)
- Safe environment

Discussion Questions:

- How does your organization provide a supportive community to your volunteers?
- What are some of your challenges in providing a supportive community?

Safety Issues and Emergency Response

- Have emergency contact numbers and passport numbers in a place(s) they can be quickly accessed.
- Have key safety issues written out and go over them with volunteers on a regular basis. Make sure volunteers get the latest news about what may be happening in the country- strikes, protests, elections, etc.
- Develop good relationships with local people who can tell you when it is safe or not to travel in a certain area.

- Have a written emergency response plan in-country- where to meet, who to contact and how, etc.
- Respond quickly to an incident, be clear who in country to report it to, get medical, mental health, etc help, if needed. Document incident and response.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your organization's biggest safety concern for your volunteers?
- How are you handling this concern?

Visa Processes

- Differs with each country
- Check embassy/consulate websites but know they may not contain the most up-to-date information
- Know which type of visa is needed for entry and residency
- Have someone to guide volunteers in paperwork needed (good to have someone in-country)
- Get started in advance!!
- Good luck

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