

Short-Term Mission Trip Policies

Cuyahoga Valley Church

5055 East Wallings Road • Broadview Heights, OH 44147

440.746.0404 • www.cvconline.org



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**For questions, please contact Elena Golsch, Missions Assistant, at 440-972-2210 or email questions to egolsch@cvconline.org.

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A message from Rick Duncan, Pastor of Missional Living at Cuyahoga Valley Church:

God's revolutionaries are gospel bringing people.

When it comes to having a revolutionary love for the world, we don't have to wonder whether we are sent or not. In John 17:18, Jesus is praying to the Father about His followers, "As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (ESV).

There are a lot of people in our world doing a lot of good deeds. There are lots of people feeding the hungry, providing clean water, building medical clinics, adopting Third World kids. And a lot of the people doing a lot of the good are *not* followers of Jesus.

So what makes Christians different? What do we have to offer that the world doesn't? We love them with *revolutionary* love. We point people to Jesus, the Savior who loved them enough to die.

We do good deeds to create good will so we can share the good news. It's not an ulterior motive, as some may think. It's the *ultimate* motive.

Pick a place and go on a mission trip knowing that you've been commissioned by God. Be confident. Wherever God enables you to go, you can say, "I am a missionary. I'm here serving, talking, helping, speaking because I've been sent by God." You're going under His authority, under His commission.

When you have the sense that He's sent you and you have His divine authority backing you and that every conversation is a divine appointment, then watch God work *in* you and *through* you and *for* you and *with* you.


CVC wants to be an "externally focused" church. We don't want to exist for ourselves, but for others.

Our dream is that we all will be revolutionary in our love for God, in our love for one another, in our love for the world.

We've tried to visualize it this way...

We start with **loving God**. And that flows into our **loving one another**. Then we go into a world of hurting people and we **love the world**. The circle and the arrows mean that this goes on and on. Everybody goes 3 for 3. Over and over.

We are sent as a scent. When you respond to God who sends you, it will be the sweetest-smelling decision you'll ever make!



Jesus said to them... "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."
John 20:21b (ESV)

SHORT-TERM MISSION PROJECT POLICIES

Cuyahoga Valley Church

Purpose of Short-term Mission Projects

- To lead people to faith in Jesus Christ.
- To impact the world through the living testimonies of project participants and through the Word of God.
- To assist and encourage the ministry of the local missionaries and pastors.
- To be obedient to God's command expressed in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19).
- To develop long-term, strategic relationships throughout the world.
- To be purposeful in watching God work in my life as a result of being on mission for Him.

Short-Term Member Selection Criteria

- All team members should have a testimony of salvation through Jesus Christ and be able to verbally express this testimony. (Some exceptions may be made with prior approval.)
- All team members should be able to share the gospel. There will be training on this prior to the trip departing.
- Team members should be at least 16 years of age unless accompanied by a parent or guardian and approved by the team leader.
- Parental or guardian permission and a medical release is required for team members who are under 18 years of age.

Application for the Team

- Team members must complete the Cuyahoga Valley Church short-term mission team application and submit it to the team leader by the prescribed dates for review.
- Short-term mission team members must agree to comply with all of the Cuyahoga Valley Church Short-Term Mission Policies listed in this package.

One-on-One Get Acquainted Sessions

The goal of these meetings is to build relationship and get to know each other better, as well as to share trip specifics and answer any questions as well as spend time in short-term mission trip training. It will also give opportunity to share personal testimonies with each other and share the gospel.

- Team members will meet with the trip leader or a member of the Mission Development Team.

Team Preparation

- There will be planning and training meetings in advance of the trip. Attendance is required (at least 75% of the meetings) as the team discusses and trains for the trip, building unity.

IMPORTANT

Perspective for a God-Honoring Trip

A mission trip is not a vacation. The Team will represent Christ and serve others. Flexibility and patience by all team members will be key. Although a lot of preparation takes place and plans have been made, there will be changes, interruptions, and delays in all of it. Details will change and all involved need to respond in a godly fashion (with patience and grace) as we watch God work in our midst. Having a humble, servant-like, giving attitude will be critical.

Team Behavior and Attitude

Team Members participating in Cuyahoga Valley Church sponsored short-term mission trips are reminded that they are **ambassadors for Christ**. As teams go out on mission, they not only represent Him, but Cuyahoga Valley Church, the United States, and the supporting mission agency. This is a tremendous responsibility. For this reason, Cuyahoga Valley Church asks that each team member seek to be **above reproach in his/her actions and attitudes**.

- The team member must submit to the team leader's authority.
- Due to instability and anti-American sentiment in various countries around the world, Cuyahoga Valley Church asks that team members refrain from expressing political opinions while overseas.
- Abstain from sexual activity, the consumption of alcoholic beverages, the use of tobacco in any form, or illegal drugs while on the trip.
- The team member must adhere to the behavioral guidelines for each specific team as set by the team leadership or the missionary agency, with a mind toward the culture to which the team is going. This will require a servant attitude toward all nationals and team members, appropriate dress as stipulated by the Team Leader, along with the willingness to learn from the host culture.

After consultation with the local church pastor and Cuyahoga Valley Church, the team leader reserves the right to ask a problematic team member to return home if that team member's behavior is destructive to the team, the ministry, or the host community. Any additional cost incurred as a result of this action will be at the team member's expense.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND INOCULATIONS

Vaccines may be recommended and even required for your travel. Discuss your travel plans and personal health with a health-care provider to determine which vaccines you will need. Recommended and required vaccines will be in your trip-specific application package and will be at your personal expense.

For international trips, please be sure to visit <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

As a step of safety for all involved, a background check will be required on everyone 18 years of age and older.

REFERENCES

The application includes two reference checks. Ideally, the first reference should be a department director in a ministry in which you serve. If not available, a church pastor may be a reference. The other reference should be someone who knows your ministry abilities as well as your strengths and weaknesses. *For minors, the 2nd reference may be a parent or guardian.*

DRIVER'S LICENSE CHECK

If you desire to do any driving on the trip, either with your family, or drive other team members that are non-family members, you will need:

- 1) A valid drivers license
- 2) Be at least 25 years old
- 3) Not have more than 4 points within the last 24 months on your driving record
- 4) Not have any DUI's (driving under the influence) convictions
- 5) Authorize CVC to do a Drivers License Check

In addition, you will need to provide CVC a copy of your driver's license and a license check will be done on you.

AUTO INSURANCE

If driving your own vehicle, you will need to carry auto insurance and provide proof of insurance (a copy of your insurance card) with the following minimum coverage:

- Bodily injury liability: \$250,000 each person / \$500,000 each accident
- Property damage liability: \$100,000

If driving a rented vehicle or a church vehicle, insurance will be provided by the church.

HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY

- Every volunteer is required to be covered with health insurance while traveling as a volunteer missionary with Cuyahoga Valley Church. You will need to provide a copy of your health insurance card (both front and back of card). If you do not currently have health insurance, there are short-term insurance policies that may be purchased relatively inexpensively through Adams and Associates / Gallagher Insurance at aintl.com.
- Cuyahoga Valley Church will not be responsible for the volunteer's health care expenses at any time. Cuyahoga Valley Church will not be responsible for medical evacuation within/to the U.S. or any other country.

Cuyahoga Valley will assist the ill volunteer in any way possible, but cannot assume monetary responsibility.

- If possible, each volunteer will be provided with an accidental death policy through Adams and Associates / Gallagher. This is the provider that has a relationship with the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and the International Missions Board (IMB). The face amount is \$100,000 and would be included in the trip cost. You will need to indicate the name of a beneficiary for this policy on your trip application.

VOLUNTEER MISSIONARY TRAVEL INSURANCE

- As part of the cost of the trip, every volunteer will have travel insurance taken out on them. This supplemental insurance includes medical, disability, accidental death and dismemberment and would kick in after an individual's primary insurance benefits have been exhausted. The exact coverage will be determined by trip and coverage may vary

by trip. The volunteer will need to designate a beneficiary on their Trip Application. Insurance is purchased through Gallagher Charitable International Insurance Services www.aaintl.com 1 800 922-8438.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

All team members should have a personal testimony of salvation through Jesus Christ (approximately 700 words) and be able to verbally express it. *Use these statements as a guide:*

- (1) your life before making a commitment to Christ;
- (2) how you came to know Christ personally;
- (3) how Jesus has changed your life.

You may be invited to share it with the Mission Team. As servants for Christ, this will be one of the single most powerful things you will share on the trip (as well as throughout your entire life). This is your unique and wonderful story that tells others how God has changed you.

SHARING THE GOSPEL

All team members should be able to share the gospel. This is simply listening to the other person's story, sharing your story and then sharing God's story (the gospel). There will be training on this prior to trip departure. We have received an incredible gift from God and He calls us to take that message to the world.

- That you will stay close to God so as to hear and learn all He has for you during this period.
- That the whole team, especially yourself, will keep a devotional time as a priority in all the hectic schedules throughout the project.
- Your team leader and the wisdom he or she needs to make any necessary decision

RAISING SHORT-TERM MISSION SUPPORT: THE TEAM-BUILDING APPROACH

Financial Policies for Short-Term Mission Team Members

- Team members are expected to raise 100% of their financial support for the trip. Funding must be completed by the due dates set by the team leader.
- Support should be raised from within and outside Cuyahoga Valley Church. **If the team member raises more than the required support – or for any reason cannot participate in the trip, the funds will be reallocated to the team account.** All funds will be used to support the field ministry and/or the trip to which it was given. Excess funds will not accrue in an account “in your name”. *Because all contributions to Cuyahoga Valley Church are income tax deductible, excess funds will NOT be reimbursed. All contributions are made with the understanding that Cuyahoga Valley Church has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds. This is done in accordance with IRS regulations.*
- A thank you letter should be sent to each supporter.

Building a Support Team

Each individual team member will be responsible for developing his/her own Support Team. The Support Team consists of prayer supporters, encouragers, and financial contributors.

The concept is to develop a team, not merely to raise funds. The most important need for the team member is for the people to pray for him/her **before** and **during** the project.

The Team

The **purpose** of a team is to involve as many people as possible in the mission experience.

The Team...

- is a means by which others can share in the blessing of the ministry. (Phil. 4:17)
- is a Biblical approach. (2 Cor. 8:4)
- is a means by which others become “World Christians” through giving.

You should seek people you want on your team; not those you think will contribute financially. Remember, if the prayer support is in place, everything else will fall into place.

Preparing the Team List

- Recommend at least 5 people.
- Do not contact just members from CVC. In fact, it is good to include people outside of CVC.
- Choose friends, relatives, co-workers, companies, Christian contacts.

Writing the Letter

You are asking people to support the ministry of Cuyahoga Valley Church. If you are asking for financial contributions, you are asking them to help with the costs you incur by conducting ministry (transportation, meals while on the field, in-country housing, visa, travel insurance, etc.). A common testimony for team members is that while they were initially hesitant about the idea of sending letters, the experience turned out to be a highlight of the entire trip. The following guidelines will assist you in writing your letter:

There are three types of letters:

- A letter sent to ask for prayer support only (if you are paying your own way)
- A letter sent to ask for prayer and financial support
- A letter sent to ask for project support (if you are paying your own way)

Compose your own letter:

It is unwise to copy from a sample letter. The last thing a donor wants is four copies of the same letter with four different signatures. People prefer to read a personal letter. Keep the letter brief (one page).

Include the following information in the letter:

1. Information about the area, country and the culture to which you are going.
2. Information about the sending organizations - CVC.
3. Description of what the team will be doing. (why the team is doing this particular project.)
4. The cost of the trip.
5. You may want to recommend a giving amount (\$25.00, \$50.00 or \$100.00).
6. Why you want to be involved in the short-term trip (reasons for going about which you feel the strongest).
7. How you would like the recipient to be involved (prayer, financially, both).
8. All checks must be payable to Cuyahoga Valley Church and mailed to the church at 5055 East Wallings Road, Broadview Hts., OH 44147.
9. **Contributors are not to write on the memo line of the check. Instead have the person complete a Mission Contribution Card and return it with the check.** (You should send the blank form with your support letter.) Write in your name and trip destination on the card.
10. The date you need the money.
11. **Include a copy of the Cuyahoga Valley Church Donation Policy with every letter.**

Send the Letter

Mail the letter, response card, Cuyahoga Valley Church Donation Policy (page 13), and a CVC-addressed envelope to the list of potential supporters by the deadline date set by the team leader. (Cuyahoga Valley Church does not supply postage, envelopes, or copies of letters.)

Follow-up

Following the trip, each team member is strongly encouraged to send a follow-up letter to each person who supported him/her on the trip, whether by prayer, finances, or encouragement. (You will receive the names and addresses from CVC on who

supported you/your trip. Please contact our accounting department for that information.) The letter should detail what happened on the project and how it affected you. It is discouraging to support someone on a mission trip and never hear from that person again. By sharing your experiences with your support team, you continue to spread the burden and heart for world missions.

Cuyahoga Valley Church (CVC) Donation Policy

All contributions to Cuyahoga Valley Church (CVC) are tax deductible and as such need to follow IRS regulations. All contributions are non-refundable and are made with the understanding that CVC has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds.

To be tax deductible you must:

1. Make checks and money orders payable to Cuyahoga Valley Church. Do not write an individual's name on the envelope or the check (including the memo line).

IRS regulations prohibit our finance office from giving you tax credit for donations designated for individuals. Contributions received which designate an individual on your check will be returned to you.

2. Enclose Mission Contribution Card which states which project and / or individual you would like to support. DO NOT attach the card to the check. Just include it in the envelope.
3. Contributors will receive acknowledgements from Cuyahoga Valley Church as follows:
 - CVC contributors may view their contributions at myCVOnline.org. You will receive a contribution statement at the end of the year.
 - Contributors who do not attend CVC will receive a statement for their contribution at the end of the year.
4. Checks or money orders only. Mail them to: Cuyahoga Valley Church; 5055 E. Wallings Road; Broadview Hts., OH 44147, Attention: Missions Coordinator. Please no cash. If you have any questions, call 440.746.0404, x275.

-----**Please cut here and return with your contribution.**-----

CUYAHOGA VALLEY CHURCH Mission Contribution Card

MARCH 2015

Thank you for your prayerful support.

All contributions to Cuyahoga Valley Church (CVC) are income tax deductible and are made with the understanding that CVC has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds. Questions regarding donations may be directed to 440.746.0404, x. 275.

- No goods or services were provided by the ministry for this contribution.
- All contributions are non-refundable.

PLEASE RETURN THIS CARD WITH YOUR GIFT. Thank you.

Name (Missionary): _____ Trip Destination: _____
Date: _____ Total: \$ _____

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