**PRE-TRIP LEADER TIMELINE**

**PHASE 1**: **Initial Planning (8 Months Out from Trip)**

* The Missions Department will work with you and the country host to plan a date that works for both of you. Consider when you leave America and arrive in your new destination based on length of travel and how this may impact your trip dates.
* The Missions Department will e-mail your host missionary for dates that will work for them and based on your availability. They will put you in touch with the host so you can begin to discuss trip expectations (Trip size, goals, needs, etc.)
* Meet with your trip coordinator to go over your timeline and expectations as a leader.
* Send the Missions Department a brief summary of your trip with team leader contact information to put on the website advertising your trip.
* Contact the Mission Department with this information and they will activate your team page.
* You can find your trip page at: <https://my.seacoast.org/portal/missiontrips#/>
* Plan meeting schedule and reserve a room at Seacoast if you plan to use this for your meetings.
* Contact the Mission Department to help you reserve a room at the church.

**MEETING SCHEDULE**: The Mission Department gives each team leader the flexibility to create their own team schedule. We encourage you to plan for at least one team building activity and one social event (include team member’s families whenever possible). The Mission Department will provide a video series with important content that each of your team members must review and be familiar with prior to leaving for the trip. There will be 4 videos, and we encourage you to spend some time going over each one of them at your team meetings so you can discuss each of them as a team. You can do these all on one day or separate them into several meetings based on how often your team is going to meet.

* Plan schedule for fundraising goals for team members.
* Consider creating a video or presentation to introduce potential team members to your trip. A Power Point is a great way to introduce your trip as you can provide pictures in addition to basic information about the trip – **Visit our webpage for a sample presentation.**
* Each person who signs up for your trip will receive a hard copy of the Mission Department’s Team Manual. This is also be available online for each team member. You will need to supplement this manual with your team meeting and fundraising schedules.

**PHASE 2**: **Recruitment (6 Months Out from Trip)**

* Make a list of all potential team members. Obtain a list from past leaders of all of the people who have gone on this mission trip before.
* Begin contacting individuals and ask them to begin praying about potentially joining your team. Invite them to your interest meeting to hear more about your trip.
* You can send out a mass email but personal emails connecting to people and inviting them individually work best – You can tell them how their skills would affect your ministry this way.
* Advertise your trip on social media – Give the information about your interest sessions.
* Consider advertising to volunteers at the Dream Center depending on the type of trip you are offering.

**PHASE 3**: **Interest Meetings and Team Formation (5-6 Months Out from Trip)**

* Hold your interest meetings (One or two depending on how many you need). Give out your interest packets at this meeting. Below is some basic information to make sure you share with your team:
* Introduction presentation or video if you have created one.
* Overview of the trip with basic information and the vision for the trip.
* Review your meeting schedule.
* Review your fundraising schedule and instructions.
* Discuss leadership positions for your team.
* Passport information – Must be valid for six months after your trip return date.
* Vaccine information – Consult the CDC website or your personal physician about vaccine recommendations for the country to which you are traveling.
* Application process – Announce application deadline and how to apply online with $50 application fee.
* Regularly email out information to people who express an interest in joining your team, encouraging them to fill out the application as soon as they have prayerfully made a decision to go.
* We suggest having your application deadline at least 4 months out from the start date of your trip to allow adequate time for fundraising and team building.
* The key is FOLLOW UP and making connections personal – Make sure you keep in contact with everyone you invite to be on your team. Not everyone will be able to come to an interest session so meet with people individually if need be.

**PHASE 4**: **Team Logistics (4-5 Months Out from Trip)**

* Contact the Missions Department to discuss your team budget. Update your budget throughout the planning process and routinely check to make sure it matches up to what the Missions Department has record of.
* The Mission Department will ask your host missionary team for an itemized list of expenses for your team while you are there (food, transportation, water, lodging, etc.)
* Prepare to introduce your host missionary team to your team members – Have each person of the missionary team answer a few questions about themselves. You can send an email with a team roster and bio for each team member – you can send these out closer to the trip but it is a good idea to begin obtaining this information in advance.
* **MEDICAL TEAMS ONLY** – Begin preparation for the medical clinic and pharmacy – **See separate leadership guide on the Missions’ website for more information.**

**PHASE 5**: **Team Information (4 Months Out from Trip)**

* All team member applications should be received with the application fee.
* Create a Team Roster – This is best done on an Excel spread sheet. Include each team member’s name, address, phone number, email address and position on the team. **Visit our webpage for a sample roster.**
* Complete the contact information spreadsheet for your team required by the church to purchase plane tickets. **Visit our webpage to obtain spreadsheet.**
* Send an email to your team asking them which leadership position they are interested in taking on and begin to assign these. It is important for you as a leader to delegate responsibilities, and it is important for your team members to develop a sense of ownership in the team. Therefore, this is a really important step. You may need to adjust the leadership positions to fit the needs of your team.
* Fundraising – Your team members should certainly be fundraising as soon as they apply for the trip. If your fundraising chair has been selected, have him or her email your team regularly about fundraising. You should remind team members of fundraising guidelines often.
  1. Support letters should go out as soon as an individual makes a decision to join the team.
  2. Make sure your fundraising chair is planning for your First Wednesday Dinner. Your team will be assigned a First Wednesday Mission Dinner. **Refer back to the fundraising section of this manual or to the website for additional information about planning your First Wednesday Dinner.**
  3. Discuss separate fundraising ideas with your Fundraising Chair and your team. These events should be held offsite and not at one of our campuses. **Refer back to the fundraising section of this manual or to the website for additional information about fundraising ideas.**
* Begin Weekly Email Updates – We encourage you to get in the habit of sending out an email once a week on the same day to your team members – You can title this email “Trip Update: 16 Weeks To Go”. In it, you can include all of the pertinent information for that week. Encourage team members to write you back to acknowledge that they received your email and to answer any questions you may have asked.

**PHASE 6**: **Trip Logistics (3 Months Out From Trip)**

* Begin discussion about purchasing plane tickets for your trip’s selected dates with the Mission Department. The church has a travel agency they use to purchase all plane tickets. Be in regular conversation with them during this time so you can get the best deals and purchase your tickets as soon as possible. Make sure they know if there are any special needs of the team (departure cities, food needs, Etc.) The Mission Department will purchase your team tickets as soon as your team has enough funds to do so – This is usually done 2-3 months to the trip departure dates.
* Suggested Leadership Positions – You may want to assign team members to an area of leadership. Email each of your leadership coordinators a list of their responsibilities and challenge them to begin working on plans for their specific ministries. Examples may include:
  1. **Fundraising Coordinator** – This person would be in constant communication with individual team members about their fundraising. You will be able to monitor each team member’s progress through Ministry Platform (see attached instructions). **Make sure your team knows to contact you or your fundraising coordinator if they have any concerns about their fundraising** – Individual team members should not contact the Mission Department if at all possible.
  2. **Team Ministry Coordinator** – This person should begin developing the team devotional for during the trip. We recommend you encourage your team members to read Jack Hempfling’s *Before You Go*, which is a 40-day pre-trip devotional. The Mission Department has copies of this book available for each member of your team. You may also want this person to organize Prayer Partners for before the trip. This is a great way for people on your team to start connecting on a more personal level. You can change these frequently or keep them the same. Make sure this person has any resources they may need. See website for sample team devotionals.
  3. **Men’s Discipleship Coordinator** – This person should begin developing a program for Men’s Discipleship training while on the trip. They may need to contact the host ministry to find out what their needs are. They should make a list of any supplies they will need.
  4. **Women’s Ministry Coordinator** – This person should begin developing a program for Women’s Ministry while on the trip. They may need to contact the host ministry to find out what their needs are. They should make a list of any supplies they will need.
  5. **Children’s Ministry Coordinator** – This person should be working on a list of activities for entertaining the children during the mission trip. They should make a list of any supplies they will need.
  6. **Praise and Worship Coordinator** – This person should be working on the team worship CD (this can be given out at a team meeting) and should be working on a song handbook with lyrics to use while on the trip.
  7. **Vaccine Coordinator** – This person should follow up with each team member to make sure they have all of their necessary vaccines and the appropriate documentation for these if necessary.
* If the country where you are going requires a Visa application, send out your team Visa applications and have each person complete them and return them to you or the Mission Department with their passport (and additional passport pictures if necessary). Make sure you are aware of all the specific details for completing these correctly. For example, does the country you are traveling require the Yellow Fever vaccine? If so, you will need to provide this documentation with your Visa application. The Missions Department should be able to help you with any questions.
* Follow up with your host missionary team to make sure everything is in order for your trip. Do they need anything from you? Do you have everything you need from them?
* Host team meetings as scheduled during this time. Follow up with team members who were unable to attend with a review of what took place in the meeting. Direct them to watch any of the Mission Department Training videos if you watched them during the meeting they missed.

**PHASE 7**: **Team Logistics and Tying Up Loose Ends (2 Months Out from Trip)**

* Follow up with your host missionary team to make sure everything is in order for your trip. Make sure they have everything they need. Make sure you have discussed your budget with the Missions Department so they can send the funds at the appropriate time. Make sure the partner has copies of your flight itinerary so they can pick you up from the airport and a copy of your team roster with photos so they can begin to get to know everyone who is coming.
* Make sure you are sending weekly updates to your team members – The key to a successful team is clear communication.
* Follow up with your leadership coordinators to make sure their individual projects are coming along well. Do they need your help with anything in particular?
* Follow up with your fundraising coordinator and individual team members about their fundraising. They should be getting close to having the majority of their money collected. Certain team members may need additional encouragement and help, so be aware of those who may be struggling to meet financial deadlines. How can you and the fundraising chair help them?
* Get a list of emergency contacts for people at home (1 or 2 people) – These people will be emailed once the team has successfully arrived at their destination by a designated contact person who is a family member or friend of the team. Send this list to the designated contact person and the Mission Department once it is completed. Your team may or may not be able to update people regularly while you are gone. Make sure you tell your team members how much their family should expect to hear from them. For some trips, it may be very little. It is important to manage expectations in advance.
* Send the Mission Department any printing projects you need to have completed. **These must be received 4 weeks prior to your trip date and will available for pick up 2 weeks prior to your departure.** Be sure to include specific instructions for printing (one-sided, color or black and white, type of paper, what should be cut, etc.)
* Organize your Airport Handbook that you give to each team member at the airport. This can include:
  1. Team roster
  2. Host missionary roster
  3. Flight itinerary
  4. Travel insurance information
  5. The address where you will be staying (To use when filling out custom forms)
  6. Schedule for the trip
  7. Trip devotional
  8. Worship handbook
  9. Medical guides and formulary (For medical teams only)
* Host team meetings as scheduled during this time. Follow up with team members who were unable to attend with a review of what took place in the meeting. Direct them to watch any of the Mission Department Training videos if you watched them during the meeting they missed.

**PHASE 9**: Final Preparations (1-2 Weeks Out from Trip)

* Send your team final reminders about departure plans, traveling and the trip.
* Team members should pay their final balance if they have not done so already.
* Give the Missions Department a copy of everyone’s passports to hold onto in case of an emergency.
* Pick up your team supplies from the Mission Department. This will be available 2 weeks in advance of your departure date.

**TEAM SUPPLIES**

1. Trip Insurance
2. First Aid Kit
3. Emergency Team Funds
4. Trip Printing Projects

* Organize your Leader Handbook that will travel with you on the trip:
  1. Copies of plane tickets
  2. Emergency contact list
  3. Copies of each team member’s passport
  4. Letter of invitation from your host country (if needed)
  5. Medical formulary copies (if a medical team)
  6. Medical donation letters (if a medical team)
  7. Copies of medical licenses for each provider and a copy of their resumes (if a medical team)
* PRAY for your team daily, pray for the host missionaries, and REST!