**POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

**RESPECT FOR YOUR TEAM LEADERS AND HOST MISSIONARIES**

The Mission Department selects our team leaders very carefully. We are confident in their ability to lead your team safely and to carry out the purpose of the mission. Team members are expected to respect their team leader’s authority. There may be times when you do not understand a decision that is being made but remember that the decisions are being made with the best interest of the team in mind. If you have a concern or a question, you should go directly to you team leader and discuss it with him or her. Just as it is important to respect your team leader, it is equally important to respect your host missionaries. Seacoast Church has built strategic partnerships with our host missionaries, and we do not want to jeopardize those relationships by the actions of team members on short-term trips. You should expect things to be different than *your* normal on this trip – Remember that it is in those differences that God is going to be able to stretch you and use you.

**TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL**

Seacoast Church does not permit the consumption of alcohol or the use of tobacco products on any short-term mission trip, during travel to or from the country, or during any trip related activities.

**ATTIRE**

Participants in mission trips are expected to dress appropriately and conservatively at all times during the trip. You should avoid clothing that is revealing or sends any political or inappropriate messages. Avoid wearing flashy or expensive jewelry. Each country may have specific recommendations for appropriate attire, so be sure to discuss what clothing to bring with you with your team leader in advance of the trip.

**INDIVIDUAL GIVING**

Seacoast Church does not permit individual giving to missionaries, interpreters, or locals on the trip. Your team may be traveling with items that will be left in country or will be used as a part of your ministry, and this is acceptable, but individual team members should not bring gifts or leave items behind unless it is approved by the Missions Department. Our goal is to help meet a need in the individual communities where we are serving without creating a sense of dependency. It can also do damage to the long-term mission. Following this rule is important to ensure the success of teams traveling after you.

**COMMUNICATION WITH HOME**

The level of communication you will have with home while on the ground varies from trip to trip and country to country. Your team leader will give you an idea of what communication will be like while you are gone. We will help your leaders make sure that important family and friends are communicated with when you arrive in country and when you are preparing to depart for home. We do not believe in dictating when you can communicate with home if you are able to, but we think it is important to remember to be thoughtful about how this communication may affect your mission trip experience. Ask your family and friends to communicate things that will only have a positive impact on your trip. Unfortunately, unexpected things happen while serving on mission trips occasionally, so make sure your family and friends ask themselves if telling you about it while you are gone will change the outcome of the event before they do.

**ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS**

Remember not to be exclusive in relationships while on the trip. If your boyfriend, girlfriend or spouse is on the team, make every effort to interact with all members of the team. If you are attracted to a teammate, we discourage you from pursuing a relationship while on the trip.