



VIDA School of Discipleship

Student Handbook

This VIDA School of Discipleship Handbook is an essential contribution to a successful experience in Guatemala. Preparation for a cross-cultural trip is essential. The anointing on the ministry and the fruitfulness experienced by past participants is attributed to the faithfulness of those who have prepared both spiritually and logistically. As a participant of VIDA, you are invited to be engaged in all trip segments, activities, and commitments to spiritual and logistical preparation. Further, your active spiritual and logistical preparation will enhance your experience, while allowing God to use you cross-culturally to share the Gospel and His love in a meaningful way. May God richly bless you as you prepare for your cross cultural discipleship journey.

© Impact Ministries 2021

No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without written permission of

Impact Ministries USA, PO Box 550, Duvall, WA 98019-0550 or Impact Ministries Canada, PO Box 975, Kamloops, BC V2C 6H1

Last Revised September, 2021

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW	3
GOALS FOR EACH VIDA MEMBER	4
SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS	4
IMPACT MINISTRIES MISSION	4
WHAT WE BELIEVE	5
VIDA LEAD TEAM	6
Impact Ministries Field Directors - Les and Rita Peters	6
Rod and Cheryl Barks	6
Walter and Ruth Dubon	6
Julio and Julie Lem	6
WHAT WE WILL BE DOING IN GUATEMALA	7
COMMUNITY LIVING	7
STUDIES	7
SERVICE	7
VINE TIME	7
WORSHIP/PRAYER/GROUP DISCUSSION	7
LANGUAGE LESSONS	7
OUTREACH	7
DEBRIEFS	8
WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE IN GUATEMALA	8
TRANSPORTATION	8
LODGING	8
MEALS	8
ALLERGIES	8
TEMPERATURE	8
TRANSLATORS	9
MALE / FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS	9
SAFETY AND SECURITY	9
APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND QUALIFYING PROCESS	10
APPLICATION PROCEDURE - General Info	10
APPLICATION PROCEDURE	10
CHECKLIST AND TIMELINE	12
PRACTICAL PREPARATION	14
PASSPORT	14
VISA REQUIREMENTS	14
TRAVELER REGISTRATION PROGRAMS	14
SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM - United States	14
TRAVELER ENROLLMENT - Canada	14
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND TRAVEL INSURANCE	15
OUT OF COUNTRY MEDICAL INSURANCE	15
ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE	15
IMMUNIZATIONS	15
FINANCES	16
PREPARING FOR PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH	18
PERSONAL DEVOTIONS	18

GETTING OTHERS INVOLVED	19
YOUR PASTOR AND YOUR CHURCH	19
OBTAINING PRAYER PARTNERS	19
YOUR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES	20
BEING A MEMBER OF VIDA SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP	21
DRESS CODE	21
RELIEF: GIVING FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL HELP	22
CULTURAL PREPARATION	24
GUATEMALA	24
MISSIONARY LIFE	24
CATHOLICISM	24
SCRIPTURE THAT DEALS WITH CULTURAL DIFFERENCES	24
A LITTLE SPANISH	24
FINAL PREPARATION	25
PERSONAL LUGGAGE	25
WHAT TO BRING	25
INTERNET ACCESS AND MEDIA FAST	26
TRAVEL TIPS	27

COVID-19 INFORMATION

It is critical that you review Impact Ministries [COVID-19 Procedures in Guatemala](#). It is also important that you review this document on a regular basis as it will be kept up to date as requirements change regularly.

INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW

God wants to use YOU!!! He is inviting YOU to an experience like no other. VIDA - School of Discipleship will cause you to:

Be stretched. . .

experience the rich cultures of the Central American Spanish and Indigenous people.

Be used ...

work under difficult and rough conditions on Christian Schools, churches and medical teams.

Be humbled...

feel the pain as you serve and assist people who suffer under oppressive and relentless poverty.

Be fruitful...

grow in your love and knowledge of God and learn to walk by His Spirit to minister to those around you.

Why?

- God wants you to be the hands and feet of Christ. He wants to use you to show the people of Guatemala and your VIDA team, His "Father" heart in a tangible way. Your participation in caring for the needs of your VIDA teammates, learning to work together in evangelism efforts, ministry opportunities and work projects will reflect the compassion of Jesus to each other and everyone you come into contact with who have physical, emotional and spiritual needs. These efforts will bear much fruit in God's Kingdom.

How?

- The VIDA team members will be showing God's love through personal involvement in daily chores, studies, service opportunities in schools and churches.
- Ministry in churches will give VIDA members opportunities to encourage, serve and pray for Guatemalan brothers and sisters.
- Your VIDA team may travel around to various villages in the provinces of Alta Verapaz and Baja Verapaz, Guatemala, visiting typical humble homes, public and/or Christian schools, churches and the Coban hospital with the message of God's love.
- Your VIDA team will participate in children's ministry (mini VBS program) helping to bring the Gospel message to children.

Who?

- You! If you let Him, God will use you!!
- You are welcome... with or without experience. VIDA team members will receive training and instruction for tasks on site. God wants to use your strength, energy and abilities to bless His church and the lost.
- Upon approval of your application, you will have the opportunity to participate in this exciting and rewarding experience. This handbook will provide you with an outline and overview of the preparation and planning process. This process may seem overwhelming at times, but your investment of time and energy will be used by the Lord to equip you for this adventure.

GOALS FOR EACH VIDA MEMBER

It is the goal of Impact Ministries to:

- Develop a mission consciousness in each VIDA member so that they would have the heart of Christ for the lost and the compassion of Christ for those in need.
- Give opportunity for the Lord Jesus to work:
 - in each VIDA member's heart
 - through each VIDA member
 - in the hearts of those ministered to
- Experience the culture of a developing nation and increase in understanding the role of the body of Christ in that society.
- Develop an awareness of God's calling to missions in personal career & ministry planning.

SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

 <p>Impact Ministries USA PO Box 550 Duvall, WA 98019-0550 teams@impactminusa.org www.impactminusa.org 617-855-5259</p>	 <p>Impact Ministries Canada PO Box 975 Kamloops, BC V2C 6H1 teams@impactministries.ca www.impactministries.ca Office 250 434 4350 Kristyn 902 394 2791</p>
---	--

You will receive communication from your Impact Ministries office at appropriate times. If you have a concern or questions, please feel free to contact your Teams Coordinator at the emails above.

IMPACT MINISTRIES MISSION

To train Guatemalans for leadership by teaching biblical principles in such a way that they become integrated in their lives and effect spiritual change in their society, and to impact North American Christians for world missions.

We train Guatemalans for leadership by:

- building and operating Vida Christian Schools
- supporting the growth and development of the Rio de Vida Churches
- providing access to medical care through medical & dental clinics
- providing care to orphaned and abandoned children through our children's home

We impact North Americans for world missions by:

- providing quality short-term mission programs
- offering connections into world missions through sponsorship and other giving opportunities
- offering VIDA School of Discipleship as a place to grow closer to God and learn to love others

Impact Ministries has been working in Guatemala since the year 2000, and many of our leaders were once Vida students themselves. We provide opportunities for North American Christians to come alongside these Guatemalan leaders through giving, going and praying. It's exciting to see Christians from throughout North

America joining together with our Guatemalan brothers and sisters to present the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Word of God, the Bible, provides the principle foundation for Impact Ministries. The Bible in its entirety as originally given is the only infallible revelation of God.

The following truths are fundamental teachings from the Word of God:

God is one, yet expressed in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

God is the creator of heaven and earth

- He created life and substance by a direct creation act
- He upholds and directs all things according to His will and by His power

God chooses to reveal Himself and His truth to mankind

- He reveals Himself through His written Word, the Bible
- He reveals Himself through Jesus Christ, the Word of God became Flesh
- He has given His Holy Spirit to lead and guide into all truth

Jesus is both truly God and truly man

- He is the Son of God
- He was born of a virgin

Jesus' death on the cross is the only substitutionary atonement for sin

Jesus physically rose from the grave, breaking the power of sin and death

- Jesus will come again
- He will come to receive His church to Himself
- He will come to judge the living and the dead

All men are dead in sin and need to be born again through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit

Salvation from sin and condemnation is by grace alone. Grace comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

The believer is saved by grace and has become a new creation in Christ. This is a gift of God

A believer is called to be a disciple of Christ

- A believer's submission to Christ will bring about profound changes and maturity
- The evidence of this is the fruit of the Spirit

A believer is called to servanthood and evangelism

- The Holy Spirit will empower and gift the believer so that he can be a joyful and thankful witness to the saving power of Christ

VIDA LEAD TEAM

IMPACT MINISTRIES FIELD DIRECTORS – LES AND RITA PETERS



Les and Rita are the Founders and Field Directors of Impact Ministries. They were ordained as pastors in May 2000 and followed God's call to move to Guatemala to establish a ministry. They now reside and minister in Tactic, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. Prior to moving their family to Guatemala, Les worked in the education field. He was a teacher and administrator, serving as Principal at Kamloops Christian School. While there, Les developed the missions program, taking young people to Guatemala on short-term mission trips and teams are a vital part of the fulfilment of the mission of Impact Ministries.

ROD AND CHERYL BARKS



Rod and Cheryl have been supporters of Impact Ministries from its inception, providing pastoral care for Les & Rita upon their departure from Canada. They have proven invaluable in the development of VIDA. Rod & Cheryl love to laugh and live to love. They live in Hamilton, Ontario and have 6 kids (4 by birth and 2 by marriage) and one amazing granddaughter! Adventuring together for God and with God is their deepest joy and ongoing passion.

WALTER AND RUTH DUBON



Walter and Ruth have been a part of Impact Ministries since before it began. They are an invaluable resource, having served in various capacities over the years and currently overseeing special projects, the finance and administration office, sponsorship and the medical clinic. They have two children, 17 and 18. And love to serve the Lord and His kingdom.

JULIO AND JULIE LEM



Julio and Julie have been a part of Impact Ministries since before they were married in Guatemala in 2011 and over the years have worked in Vida schools, ministry administration, and currently as teams and hospitality coordinators. They live in Tactic, Guatemala and have 3 children ages 8, 6 and 3. Living for the Lord and serving Him through life and service here in Guatemala is their privilege and joy.

We will strive to serve each team member with warmth and sincerity. It is our hope that this missions experience will take each team member into a deeper understanding of God's love and bring enlightenment regarding His call to making disciples throughout the world. Les and Rita Peters

WHAT WE WILL BE DOING IN GUATEMALA

Participants should understand that this experience is not a vacation or holiday. It will consist of many enjoyable experiences and activities; however, our primary focus is to be a “missionary student” and to give of ourselves to the people of Guatemala.

COMMUNITY LIVING

Living in community will provide many opportunities for service as together you and your class will take on chores, breakfast prep and clean up, etc..

STUDIES

VIDA participants will be taking several courses during your stay in Guatemala. These include:

- Thinking Theologically
- Intimacy with Jesus
- Kairos (This is a dynamic course that focuses on what God is doing around the world, in fulfillment of His global purpose. It is designed to educate and mobilize Christians and local churches into strategic, 21st century, world Christian mission.)

You will receive online lectures, participate in group discussions and hand in homework assignments.

SERVICE

While in Guatemala, you will be given the opportunity to serve in some of our school campuses. This might look like washing dishes, helping early elementary teachers write in the children’s notebooks, practicing English with students and teachers, or even more, depending on the expressed requests from our Vida Schools.

VINE TIME

Each morning you will be expected to participate in Vine Time as you spend time with the Lord. Intimacy with Christ is itself a relationship, and practicing the spiritual disciplines of prayer, reading the Bible and meditation are key to growing in intimacy with Christ.

WORSHIP/PRAYER/GROUP DISCUSSION

Part of your regular week will include times of group worship, prayer and group discussions. Worship is powerful in the lives of Jesus followers, and we want to intentionally set aside time to lift up His name together.

LANGUAGE LESSONS

Learning Spanish will both aid you in communication skills as you serve in Guatemala, and will open your understanding of a Kingdom worldview, which includes people of different languages and cultures.

OUTREACH

VIDA participants will be expected to plan and host various weekly outreach activities. These include youth events, sports events, family events, small groups, etc.

DEBRIEFS

Once a week we will have a time of group devotions and debrief. This will provide an opportunity to share with one another and will serve to bring you closer together as a class. Your schedule will be full, and often by the end of the day everyone is tired. However, these times of prayer and sharing are essential to provide a cohesive factor to the class and give an avenue for participants to connect their experience with decisions that will affect their future.

WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE IN GUATEMALA

TRANSPORTATION

In-country transportation will be secured before your arrival and will be waiting at the airport. Vehicles will be in a safe and in a well maintained condition. The Impact Ministries staff drivers are very competent.

LODGING

You will stay in hotels, dormitories of Bible schools or mission guesthouses and the Chicoy campus. Every effort will be made to ensure that married couples have the privacy of their own room. Every attempt will be made to provide facilities that are clean, with comfortable beds, semi-private bathrooms and bottled water. When venturing into the backcountry, a motel of more primitive nature may be secured. Again, it will be clean and secure.

Our Lead Team will be overseeing these arrangements while in Guatemala.

MEALS

You will experience the full spectrum of cuisine, from North American fast food and traditional tortillas and beans, and you will be involved in its preparation. In many cases, each person will be given some choice to suit his/her taste. There is an abundance of safe and tasty food. Even while in the backcountry, purified water will be available.

ALLERGIES

Because of conditions in developing countries, it is difficult and sometimes impossible to avoid allergens. Although we want to know when a participant has allergies, specifically if the allergies are serious and could induce anaphylactic shock, we may not be able to adjust the menu to accommodate for allergies. Therefore, it is critical that a VIDA member with food allergies supply their own snacks and/or food items for those occasions when they are unable to eat the food that is being presented and bring along sufficient medications such as an Epi-Pen to treat any anaphylactic conditions. Impact Ministries is unable to take responsibility for participants who have anaphylactic allergies, mental health or life threatening medical conditions. Documentation from a doctor with permission to travel will be required.

TEMPERATURE

The climate in Guatemala is quite varied depending on the altitude. In the coastal lowlands it is extremely hot and humid; however, Tactic is located in the higher altitudes, where the temperatures are comfortable year-round. More specifically, March and April are generally quite warm while the rest of the year tends to be

cooler with rain showers. VIDA members will need to bring a light summer jacket for the cool evenings and lots of sunscreen for the hot afternoons. It is a good idea to pack some clothing for the extremely hot climate but also pack for the cooler temperatures.

TRANSLATORS

When necessary, you will be accompanied by translators who will help your VIDA team to communicate in Spanish. These translators will also be available to help you when you share at a service, during class and home visits, and at other formal events. There may be some times when you will be able to practice communicating in Spanish and experience the language challenges that new missionaries face.

MALE / FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS

Other than married couples, a man and woman should not engage in any interaction that would indicate they are a couple. It may be normal behavior in North America for an unmarried couple to hold hands or walk with their arms around one another, but in the Christian community in Tactic, this would not be normal. Even when a Christian couple is courting or dating, people are generally more reserved in their public displays of affection. VIDA members must be willing to adhere to this standard while in Guatemala.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

North America is very multiethnic, Guatemala is not. As a foreigner in Guatemala, you will always stand out. Taking this into consideration, along with your lack of knowledge of cultural norms and language, we ask that all students abide by all of our safety measures. Under no circumstances is any VIDA team member to leave the campus without the House leader's knowledge. Generally speaking you will be required to be in groups of at least two outside of the campus during daylight hours. House leaders will confer with Guatemalan Liaisons to make decisions on any safety concerns. You may feel that we exercise more control than you are used to in respect to your personal autonomy to go outside of the compound and what activities we will allow but your personal safety is to a degree our responsibility, and we uphold a high level of not offending the culture in which we serve.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND QUALIFYING PROCESS

All applications received by Impact Ministries will be given serious and individual consideration. In order to keep VIDA School of Discipleship functioning ideally, the numbers accepted for one class are limited and applications will be processed on a first come, first served basis.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE - GENERAL INFO

1. Peruse the Impact Ministries websites:



www.impactminusa.org

OR



www.impactministries.ca

2. To fulfill the ministry objectives, it is important that every VIDA member is a born-again Christian and is serious about developing their relationship with the Lord. Discuss any questions or concerns you may have regarding this point with the VIDA Lead Team.
3. Pray - Ask the Lord to reveal His will to you regarding your involvement in this venture. As He directs you to follow a certain path, He will fill your heart and mind with His peace.
4. Confirmation - Ask those who are in authority over you for their counsel and blessing. The Lord wants us to live in submission to those who have authority over us.
5. Fully review this VIDA Handbook to ensure that this is the trip that will match God's calling on your heart. You must also be in agreement with Impact Ministries expectations of VIDA members which can be found in this handbook.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. Complete the [online application form](#). Approved applicants continue to the next level.
2. Fill out a second application form. Approved applicants continue to the next level.
3. Interview with VIDA Lead Team. Approved applicants continue to the next level.
 - VIDA Lead Team reviews each application prayerfully. Applicants will be informed of the decision shortly after submitting the completed application form and reference forms. Once approved the following steps need to be taken immediately.
4. Applicants work with Canadian and USA Impact Ministries offices to fulfill all final requirements including submission of registration form, release forms, police information/criminal record checks and documentation of insurance. Other items may be required and will be communicated during post acceptance communication.



- You will need to pay a \$500 deposit to hold your place. The Teams Coordinator will communicate details of how to submit that deposit when your application has been approved. Once acceptance of the application has been made the deposit is non-refundable and non-transferable.

Even though you have been accepted as a participant of VIDA School of Discipleship; you will jeopardize continued involvement if you fail to submit all the forms, meet financial obligations or neglect to fulfill the expectations of Impact Ministries.

CHECKLIST AND TIMELINE

The following checklist/ timeline has been prepared for you to keep track of your progress as you prepare for this short-term mission trip. Feel free to remove this page from the handbook and post it somewhere that is accessible. Details about each step follow the checklist page. As you complete each step, tick it off. You will want to stay on schedule, as there is a lot to do.

(✓)	Task	Details
To be completed at least 9 months before departure date		
See the Application Procedure US or Application Procedure Canada for more information.		
	Complete the first application form	
	Provide the reference form link to your four references	
	If approved, complete second application form	
	If approved, Zoom interview with VIDA Lead Team	
	If approved, submit the Impact Ministries registration form, release forms and all other forms as requested by the Impact Ministries Teams Coordinator.	
	Make arrangements for flights <i>Flights should only be reserved once applications have been approved by Impact Ministries. Before final confirmation and payment of flight bookings, communicate dates and times with the Impact Ministries Teams Coordinator (teams@impactministries.ca) - See this Travel link for more information.</i>	
To be completed 6 months before departure date		
	Apply for passport	Ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months after your return date.
To be completed 3-4 months before departure date		
	Get your church involved	Contact you pastor and church leaders
To be completed 2 months before departure date		
	Identify prayer partner(s)	1 or 2 people who are spiritually mature and able to support you in prayer before, during, and after your missions trip
	Cultural Preparation	Familiarize yourself with the country of Guatemala and its people; read a missionary biography; study how Catholicism affected Latin America (ie Bruchko)
	Immunizations	Book an appointment with your doctor or travel clinic for information

	Finances	Ensure adequate finances are in place to cover costs.
To be completed 6 weeks before departure date		
	Travel Medical Insurance	Impact Ministries requires each student to have out-of-country medical insurance and COVID insurance.
	Trip Cancellation/interruption Insurance	This type of insurance is encouraged but optional
	Prayer partner(s) and provide prayer partner guide	Meet with and update your prayer partner(s) regularly
	<p>All VIDA members are required to register their time in Guatemala at the appropriate link:</p> <p></p> <p>Registration of US Citizens Abroad: Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)</p> <p></p> <p>Registration of Canadians Abroad: travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration</p>	<p>Further information is available later in the handbook</p>
	Financial donations	Send in any remaining funds to cover your costs.
	Spending Money	order from your financial institution

PRACTICAL PREPARATION

PASSPORT

A valid passport is needed to enter or leave Guatemala.

- It is very important to apply for your passport at least six months prior to the departure date. Your passport must be valid for at least six months after the planned departure date out of Guatemala. You may be denied boarding if your passport expires within that time.
- Consider purchasing a passport holder that you can wear concealed under your clothing. You will also have to keep medical insurance, travel documents and any cash that you carry in this pouch.

Passports will be stored in a secure safe while the you are in Guatemala. During travel it is the your responsibility to safely secure your passport.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

If you are not traveling on a US or Canadian passport you may need a Visa to travel to Guatemala. It is your responsibility to investigate if a Visa is required and to ensure that the Visa is in place in time for travel.

TRAVELER REGISTRATION PROGRAMS

Each VIDA member is asked to enroll in their country's traveler registration program. It is a free service allowing those traveling abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest Embassy or Consulate. Enrollment helps the Embassy contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency and helps family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency

You will need all your travel information, including your passport number, flight itinerary, etc. and the contact information provided below.

Contact Information you may need for enrollment in these programs while with Impact Ministries:

Julio Lem 502-4149-7301, Julie Sawatzky 502-5413-2340
Address: Asociación Cristiana "Ministerios Impacto" (ACMI)
Cantón Chijacorral, Zona 7, Tactic, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala



SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM - UNITED STATES

Each US VIDA member is asked to enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#).



TRAVELER ENROLLMENT - CANADA

Each Canadian VIDA member is asked to enroll in the Registration of Canadians Abroad program at the following link. travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND TRAVEL INSURANCE

Impact Ministries requires students to book their own flights. The flight arrival and departure itinerary must be approved by the Impact Ministries Teams Coordinator before being confirmed with the travel agent. This will ensure that the Staff who will pick up and drop off at the airport are able to accommodate your times.

Airfare Cancellation/Interruption Insurance is up to the individual. Please feel free to purchase cancellation insurance.

Tickets should be purchased well in advance after all applications have been approved in order to ensure that you will travel on the dates/times that have been approved by the Teams Coordinator and are able to take advantage of any possible group discounts or sales.

OUT OF COUNTRY MEDICAL INSURANCE

Impact Ministries requires each VIDA member to carry his/her own out of country medical insurance. The policy should be kept on your person for the duration of your trip. Please submit a photocopy to the Teams Coordinator.

- Any VIDA member needing health care while on the trip will be appropriately accompanied at all times.
- Your emergency contact person at home will be contacted immediately should any medical condition or emergency arise.

ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE

North Americans with travel medical insurance will have access to excellent medical facilities. However, the medical facilities may be quite a distance away, and we cannot guarantee prompt arrival at a hospital due to unforeseen circumstances. Impact Ministries will try their best to get prompt medical attention when required but cannot guarantee this happening in each situation in a timely fashion.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Please check with your family physician or travel doctor for recommendations regarding immunizations for travel in Guatemala.

FINANCES

The total cost to be a student in the VIDA School of Discipleship is:

US - \$2,900 US

Canada - \$3,495 CAD

Please note that these funds are to be sent to the Impact Ministries office no later than 6 weeks prior to your start date. Funds submitted are not eligible for a tax receipt. They are payment for your enrolling in the VIDA School of Discipleship and as such, money submitted is not considered a donation, but rather a payment. .

The funds you submit will cover the following:

- all in-country meals, lodging and travel
- translators, drivers and other staff
- subscription for classes and resources
- miscellaneous "all group" activities (ie. entrance costs to archeological and culturally significant sites, etc)

The funds you submit to Impact Ministries will not cover the following:

- out of country health insurance. This is the responsibility of each individual to arrange.
- travel cancellation and interruption insurance. This is the responsibility of each individual to arrange.
- immunizations
- lodging, meals and misc. while traveling to and from Guatemala
- expenses associated with passports and visas
- personal spending money

VIDA COSTS

The following are the funds that need to be submitted to Impact Ministries:

1. All funds are due to Impact Ministries six weeks prior to departure.
2. Refer to the section on [TRAVEL](#) for information re: finances for flights.

If you are unable to meet a fundraising deadline, please contact your VIDA Lead Team **BEFORE** the deadline date to discuss the situation and how you plan to meet your fundraising commitment.

SPENDING MONEY

You will want to have access to some funds for purchasing some snacks when traveling, souvenirs and for snacks or personal expenses. The amount you need is up to you. As your basic costs such as food, lodging and transportation are covered, you will not need large amounts of money. A suggested amount would be \$200 to \$300 depending how many souvenirs or gifts you would like to purchase.

Guatemalan funds should be ordered from a financial institution prior to the trip. Make sure you order the funds ahead of time as it may take a week or more to arrive at your branch.

Please note the following -

- We ask that you NOT stop in the Guatemalan airport to exchange money. This will slow down the arrival process. Impact Ministries Staff will be waiting for you outside the airport, and parking for an extended period of time in the arrivals areas is not permitted.
- We can NOT exchange Canadian Dollars and it is very difficult to exchange American Dollars in Guatemalan banks. Canadian cash is not exchangeable in Guatemalan banks, and American cash is inspected rigorously as only perfect bills are accepted by banks, with most bills being rejected. This is time consuming and not reliable, and we cannot offer this service to visitors.
- You will be able to access money in ATM machines if your card is VISA and has a 4 digit PIN (no longer, no shorter!)

PREPARING FOR PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH

This may become one of the greatest spiritual stretching experiences of your Christian life. With this in mind, it is important that you prepare yourself.

PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

Make a commitment to have a daily personal devotional time.

- Find a place where you can be alone with God.
- Ask God to open His Word to you and prepare your heart for a message from His Word.
- Read a chapter from your Bible.
- Make notes as the Holy Spirit speaks to you.
- Spend time in prayer.

GETTING OTHERS INVOLVED

YOUR PASTOR AND YOUR CHURCH

As a Christian, it is appropriate that your commitment to evangelism and ministry be connected with your church and endorsed by your pastor. Your church will be a source of encouragement and support. By working with your pastor and church, you give them an opportunity to participate and involve themselves with you in this exciting venture.

Call your church office to set up a time to speak with your pastor face to face. Prepare for your appointment by making a list of all the things you'd like to cover. If your pastor is not familiar with Impact Ministries or VIDA School of Discipleship, take a few minutes to explain this to him/her.

Your pastor may want you to speak in a church service or he/she may prefer you to write something for the bulletin. It is important that you remain respectful and receptive to how your pastor sees best to support you.

It is a good idea to come to the meeting with a few suggestions of how you could share with the congregation (a short part of a service, brochures to hand out, a PowerPoint, speak to the Sunday school classes, presentation to the missions committee, etc). You know your church best and have probably seen what others who have gone on the mission field have done prior to going.

When you return from Guatemala, follow-up with your pastor and other groups within your church you presented to (Missions Committee, Sunday School, etc).

OBTAINING PRAYER PARTNERS

You will need daily prayer for the time that you are preparing to come, for the duration of your in-country time and for a time period following your return home. God has called each member to accomplish some specific and strategic tasks for His kingdom. This time is not a vacation; it is a spiritual confrontation. As a VIDA student, you will face a spiritual enemy who wants to destroy and discourage the work of God in your life. Prayer is the key to success!!

- Ask people who know you well and are mature in their Christian walk to be your Prayer Partners. Consider providing the [Impact Ministries Prayer Partners Guide](#) to each of them.
- Meet with each one of your Prayer Partners at least twice before your trip and twice after your trip to let them know how you are doing. This is very important, as it will help them to know specifically how to pray for you.
- In order to have prayer coverage while you are on your mission trip, we recommend that you have 5 to 20 people commit to praying for you every day while you are away. This prayer support would be above and beyond the Prayer Partner mentioned before. It is especially wise to ask the people in your church who have the reputation of being prayer warriors. You may want to ask your pastor to identify them for you.

- Make sure that each one of these people is informed as to the exact dates of your trip. It may work best to give each of them a little card to keep on their fridge with all the pertinent information.
- Do not forget to thank these people upon your return. Share with them the answers to prayer that you experienced.

YOUR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

Your friends and relatives will be interested in knowing about your upcoming venture. Connect with them to let them know of your plans and ask them to pray for you. It may be that God will use these people to assist you in meeting any financial needs you might have.

- Make a list of people to contact. Most people can develop a list of 30-60 people: relatives, friends, pastors, church members, and neighbors.
- Communicate about your trip in whichever format is most effective. Share personally where possible, send letters or emails. Or you may wish to create a blog.
- Pray about what you should communicate and how to best present the vision God has placed in you. Help them “connect” with you by being as personal as you can. Share from your heart. Tell them what excites you, as well as things which challenge you about this trip. Let them know your concerns and needs. You may wish to create a prayer card, itinerary/facts sheet, or your picture. Be creative and add your own personal touch.
- Follow up with expressing appreciation and sharing how the Lord has worked in your life as a result of the trip. Share some highlights.

BEING A MEMBER OF VIDA SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VIDA STUDENTS IN GUATEMALA

(August 21, 2019)

1. **Be humble and modest.** When in a developing nation, North Americans tend to stand out. We ask that you serve in a humble and modest way, not drawing undue attention to yourself.
2. **Treat others with respect.** This includes when taking photos, visiting homes, and in everyday conversations. Strive to live by Ephesians 4:29 - Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Remember to be conscious that you are not living in your own culture. Be sensitive; it's not your job to change the Guatemalan culture.
3. **Crude language is not acceptable.** Please be careful to talk with discretion.
4. **No smoking, drugs, or alcohol** are permitted.
5. **No complaining** of any sort will be tolerated. If you are offended by someone, go to that person directly (Matthew 18:15-17). Bring all unresolved conflict to whomever is placed in direct authority over you.
6. **Live honorable and Christ exemplifying** lives.
7. **Be law-abiding** in all activities and abide by the Spirit of Christ when law and conscience are in conflict.
8. **Cheerfully submit** to spiritual and managerial authorities in Guatemala.
9. **Accomplish all tasks with excellence** to the best of your ability.
10. **Be dedicated to serving** rather than being served, **honoring others** rather than seeking honor for yourself.
11. **Be kind and forgiving.** Keep confidences and refuse to speak evil of each other.
12. **Be cheerful, prompt, and reliable** in carrying out assignments and responsibilities. Be cooperative in all work undertaken
13. **All VIDA meetings must be attended.** Punctuality is an expected courtesy.
14. **Be appreciative** and sensitive to your hosts and leaders. Please present a courteous and thankful spirit.
15. **Please accept the food that is offered** to you. Receive it gratefully. Try to eat what is offered to you outside the compound or take it with you if need be.
16. **For VIDA students:** No romantic relationships are to be cultivated in Guatemala. This is your time to focus on serving others and building platonic relationships.

DRESS CODE

North Americans will stand out in Guatemala. Guatemala is what we would consider a “formal” country in comparison to Canada and the United States. When going out people try to dress well. Often you cannot tell the economic situation a person is living in by their clothing as they make it a priority, especially shoes! Guatemalan women, especially in the aldeas (small towns) almost never wear shorts. Even men rarely wear shorts although it is more common among the younger generations. Dressing in sports clothing is usually only done when actually doing sports. All that to say, please limit the number of shorts you bring, we are not located in a hot part of the

country and be sure that they reach at least mid thigh. Make sure to bring dressier clothing for Sundays. We ask that when you choose the wardrobe to use in Guatemala that you keep in mind that you will be seen as a missionary by the local people. Our desire is to remove some of the barriers that come into play in a cross cultural context. Do not allow your clothing to be a distraction to what you are coming here for.

Your personal appearance should always be of a high standard, modest, and glorifying to the Lord! Most people don't dye their hair unnatural colors. Longer hair for males is sometimes viewed negatively. It will be expected that you come with neatly groomed hair. Body piercing, other than ladies' earrings, are not common among Christians in Guatemala. When we ask you to cover or take them out for certain activities we expect that you will comply with a positive attitude. As very few Christians have tattoos, it will need to be covered at certain times while you are in Guatemala, we expect these requests to be followed joyfully. We do not want anything to stand in the way of the work that the Lord wants to do through you.

Please follow this code in the strictest sense as you begin accumulating what you will wear while attending VIDA.

If for any reason you are asked to change your clothing or cover a piercing or tattoo we expect that you will do so without complaint.

RELIEF: GIVING FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL HELP

General principles and guidelines found in "When Helping Hurts – How to alleviate poverty without hurting the poor and yourself" (Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert – 2009) have helped to shape Impact Ministries practice. It would be a good idea to read at least the first 70 pages to get an idea of Impact Ministries philosophy of ministry.

Within the North American experience we have learned to believe that a gift of money or material is an appropriate response to physical deprivation. In a developing country such as Guatemala, such gifts may relieve our own sense of guilt but may create isolation from the community or initiate violence within families. Great care must be taken to respond to physical needs.

Examples:

1. Giving money to a poor mother of 6 children, so she can buy food, can actually cause her harm. If her husband is an alcoholic, which is a common problem in Tactic, he may beat her because she has possession of money which she has withheld from him. Even if alcohol is not a problem in the family, the gift of money may not even be used for food, but rather for a cell phone or other wants and desires.
2. A gift of a computer for a student can create a dangerous situation for that student or isolate him from the family and community. When he alone receives this gift, he might feel superior to other students. Because he now has this outside contact/help, he may cut himself off from those around him, believing he no longer needs to live in community with those here in the ministry.

Impact Ministries defines poverty, not as a lack of material possessions, but rather as "broken relationships and the result of broken relationships." The following guidelines are in place to help us work effectively with the materially poor.

1. When relief is needed, giving should be done in the context of ongoing, long-term relationships. VIDA students enter and leave Tactic. They can only make a positive contribution to the established ongoing,

long-term relationships when they allow Impact Ministries to provide relief/gifts as part of their long-term ministry plans.

2. Independent gifts from North American visitors may create unintended harm. **Do not give gifts to any Guatemalans without consulting with the VIDA Lead Team.**
 - a. If a gift is appropriate, they will see that it is given in a way that respects the intent and purpose of the ministry as well as those giving and receiving the gift.
 - b. The VIDA Lead Team, in consultation with the Impact Ministries Field Director will guard against gifts that may endanger the recipient or create unintended harm;
 - c. Gifts are also monitored to enable better accountability and equality.
3. Do not give gifts to any Impact Ministries staff without consulting with the VIDA Lead Team.
 - a. Often those working closest with the teams will receive the most gifts when there are many others that are working equally as hard, but are never seen. This can cause hard feelings among staff.
 - b. This applies while a team member is in Guatemala and after they return home.
4. Gifts given outside of Impact Ministries guidelines put both the Guatemalan staff and the visiting team in jeopardy.
 - a. Staff - their jobs are at risk because they have been instructed not to ask for or receive gifts from team members. This is abusing their proximity to the North American visitors for their own personal advantage.
 - b. Team – If you choose to ignore this rule, it may jeopardize you and your sending organization from making future trips with Impact Ministries.

CULTURAL PREPARATION

GUATEMALA

Do some research on the country of Guatemala. Find out as much as you can about its ancient history, spectacular geography, colorful culture and very dear people.

MISSIONARY LIFE

Read one or two missionary stories.

CATHOLICISM

The country of Guatemala is predominantly Catholic. Study up on Latin American Catholicism and how it differs from evangelical Christianity.

SCRIPTURE THAT DEALS WITH CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Study 1 Corinthians 8:4-13. How should we behave when we encounter different cultural ideas or practices?

Study James 2:1-5. In what ways can you live this verse out on the mission field? Read Romans 12:15. How might this verse be applicable on the mission field?

A LITTLE SPANISH

You might wish to register in a local conversational or online Spanish course. Even a few phrases will be invaluable.

FINAL PREPARATION

PERSONAL LUGGAGE

Please check with your airline to confirm updated luggage size and weight allowances and packing regulations for both checked and carry-on luggage. Note that extra checked-in baggage often costs an additional fee.

We also ask that you leave your valuables at home. The rule to follow is this: If it is irreplaceable or would hurt to lose it/have it stolen, don't bring it!

It is important that you pack all of your essential items in your carry-on, just in case your luggage fails to arrive at your destination. Also, you should have everything for the first night and day in Guatemala in your carry-on, as you may not have access to your checked luggage until you arrive in Tactic. You do not need to pack towels or bedding for the first night. These items will be provided for you. The following is a list of items that should be in your carry-on:

- Medicine/prescriptions (a copy of the written prescription is helpful).
- Note: Those with diabetes **must** have a doctor's letter to explain the insulin and syringes in their carry-on luggage.
- All medications need to be in their original packaging.
- Travel sized personal hygiene items.
- A change of clothing/pjs.
- Bible/notebook/pen.

WHAT TO BRING

Individual Items		
(✓)	Item	Details
	Rain jacket	Particularly if you are here in the rainy season (Most months, minus March and April)
	Light sweater or sweatshirt	2
	T-shirts	5-7
	Work clothes	1 set that can be soiled, ensure you have sturdy closed shoes to wear while working
	Rubber boots	If you are here during the rainy season, optional but may be handy
	Underwear	5-7
	Socks	Probably a few pairs, depending if you are planning on wearing sandals
	Church clothes	1 set (details in dress code)
	Shoes	2 – 3 pairs: runners/sneakers, sandals; dress shoes
	Pants	
	Capris (ladies)	
	Shorts (men)	

	Water bottle	500ml or 16oz at least
	Towels	1 bath towel & 1 facecloth
	Blow dryer	Only if absolutely necessary
	Sunglasses	
	Sunscreen	SPF 40 or greater
	Sunburn remedy	
	Tylenol or Advil	
	After bite treatment	
	Large plastic bag	For dirty laundry
	Medicine and Health Care Supplies	Prescriptions must be in the original bottles and it is good to have a copy of the prescription should it need to be filled while in Guatemala
		Contact lenses – bring enough solution to last the trip as it is very expensive in Guatemala
	Hat	Something that covers your neck and ears
	Toiletries	Brush/comb/Body Soap
		Shaving gear
		Hand sanitizer
		Shampoo/conditioner
		Feminine hygiene items (tampons are expensive here)
		Deodorant
		Toothbrush/paste
	Warm PJ's	The nights can get quite cool/ may want to bring a small extra blanket also.
	Camera	Memory card and charger
	Study Aids	Bible, journal, pens
	Passport	Please be sure to keep this in a secure location with you at all times while traveling. Once in Guatemala a safe place will be provided, although we recommend you carry a photocopy.
	Travel Health Insurance	Name of company, address, phone number and policy number
	Things to give away	Supplies for the ministry to distribute. Ask for the latest list of items. If you are a sponsor, pack your gift to your sponsor child or class in your personal luggage
Optional Items		
	Bug repellant	
	First Aid kit	

INTERNET ACCESS AND MEDIA FAST

There is limited wi-fi at the VIDA campus. However, access to the internet is dependent on many factors and is not guaranteed at all times. We want this time to be used to distance yourself from social media but will be sure to provide you with access to communicate with your family and prayer partners.

TRAVEL TIPS

1. High altitude flight is dehydrating. Drink at least 8 ounces of fluid every two hours. Lots of fluid intake helps a great deal in jet lag.
2. Eat lightly before and while traveling. Keep fats, oils and heavy foods to a minimum. Avoid junk food. This goes a long way in preventing travel sickness. At least two days before traveling take care as to what you eat.
3. To enjoy your trip most, try to stay caught up on your sleep.
4. Check medication schedules with your doctor. High altitude flights might make drugs twice as potent as on ground level. If you are a diabetic, you will need to get your doctor to carefully help you plan your medication with the time change. Anyone with diabetes must carry a Doctor's letter confirming they are a diabetic and their reason for carrying syringes and medication. If you take prescription drugs, have a copy of all your prescriptions (drug stores can easily print this up for you).