



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC TRIP GUIDE

Hope



missionofhope.com



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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

ABOUT MISSION OF HOPE

As an organization following Jesus Christ, Mission of Hope exists to bring life transformation to every man, woman, and child. There is a large Haitian population in the Dominican Republic, and we are committed to serving them, as well as other underserved communities.

With over 20 years of experience coordinating international mission trips for churches, families, and individuals, Mission of Hope believes that sustainable transformation is possible by partnering with the local churches and indigenous leaders so that ongoing ministry continues long after you go home.

Thank you for serving with us as we partner with the local churches and indigenous leaders to reach their communities for Christ. Providing hope to the people of the Dominican Republic is a worthy goal, and we are thrilled to have you be a part of our Mission of Hope family.

ABOUT YOUR MISSION TRIP

Short-term mission trips are an incredible opportunity to grow spiritually, to cultivate an awareness of the world and needs around you, and to respond to God's call to share the gospel through personal, servant-minded ministry. As part of our mission of seeing lives transformed through Jesus Christ, we look forward to introducing visitors from around the world to all the work God is doing in the Dominican Republic.

Trips will be planned by Mission of Hope to involve team members in all the different facets of outreach ministry. Your team will have an opportunity to impact the Dominican Republic, just as much as the trip itself will have a long-term impact on you and your team members' lives. Team members will be a part of building intentional relationships in communities through work projects, ministry activities, and mobile medical clinics.

Empowering indigenous leaders leads to sustainable change. When your team works alongside these local churches and ministry partners who know the needs of their communities, you are helping these ministries serve more efficiently and effectively as we share the love of Christ together.

STRATEGIC MINISTRY TIME

As we work with the local pastors and leaders in the Dominican Republic, we ask the question, “What does your community need to be transformed?” Strategic Ministry Time (SMT) allows us to build and maintain meaningful relationships with the people of the Dominican Republic and gather significant demographic information of the homes we visit that will be used to better serve each community. Through this time, we can model Christ together in all we say and do to ensure that every member of the community has a chance to hear and respond to the gospel.

CHURCH ADVANCEMENT PROJECTS

In addition to sports camp and kids club which are included in your \$595 trip cost, additional church advancement projects are available to purchase and participate in.

Showing people the love of Christ through Church Advancement projects demonstrates that the local churches care about the individual needs of the people in their communities, and it creates an openness to the gospel. You can be a part of meeting both the physical and spiritual needs in the Dominican Republic.

For further details on your projects and how you will spend your time serving during your week, our CA Projects Coordinator will be connecting with your Trip Leader before your trip.

MAKE A RESERVATION

Available trip dates are posted on our website at <https://missionofhope.com/opportunities>.

When deciding how many spots you would like to reserve, be as strategic as possible so that we are able to accurately project the number of personnel needed each week. There is a required non-refundable and non-transferable \$25 per reservation fee due upon placing your reservation. If you are traveling as an individual, you must be 18 years old.

You will receive a confirmation email that confirms your trip and provides you with a Trip Dashboard, where you can make trip payments, provide us with your flight information, complete medical release forms, and more!

TRIP COST

Non-medical trip participant: \$595 (including \$25 reservation fee)

Medical trip participant: \$845 (including \$25 reservation fee)

Children (ages 6-12): \$395 (including \$25 reservation fee)

Price Includes

- Lodging
- Emergency medical traveler's insurance (coverage details upon request)
- Transportation in the Dominican Republic including airport pick up and drop off
- Meals
- Medical Supplies for medical trip
- Translators
- Excursion Day*
- Mission of Hope expenses/administrative fees

Optional Additional Costs

- Personal souvenir money for the Mission of Hope store and coffee shop on campus, suggested \$50-\$100 (cash or Paypal app only; smaller bills suggested & Paypal app needs to be downloaded prior to arrival in the DR)
- Internet cost, \$25/week/person (paid via credit card when you arrive on campus)
- Lunch money for excursion day if you want something other than the lunch Mission of Hope will provide
- Church Advancement Project Costs; pricing varies according to project selection

TENTATIVE DAILY SCHEDULE

Saturday- Saturday

Saturday Arrive in the Dominican Republic, Settle in on campus, Orientation

Sunday Dominican/Haitian Church, Relax on campus, Visit the coffee shop/MOH store

Monday-Thursday Strategic Ministry Time or Church Advancement Projects in the community

Friday Excursion Day

Saturday Depart to airport

Wednesday- Wednesday

Wednesday Arrive in the Dominican Republic, Settle in on campus, Orientation

Thursday-Saturday Strategic Ministry Time or Church Advancement Projects in the community

Sunday Dominican/Haitian Church, Relax on campus, Visit the coffee shop/MOH store

Monday Strategic Ministry Time or Church Advancement Projects in the community

Tuesday Excursion Day

Wednesday Depart to airport



PART 2: COMMITMENT

We are so glad you are planning a trip to serve alongside Mission of Hope as we bring life transformation to every man, woman, and child through Jesus Christ. Giving hope to the people of the Dominican Republic is a worthy goal and we are thrilled to have you as part of our Mission of Hope family. To help be fully prepared, we encourage you to go through this packet in-depth with all your team members.

Once you arrive at our campus, your team will be given an itinerary for your week. We take care of all in-country traveling logistics and have a community that is ready for your team to

meaningfully engage with in various work projects and outreach programs. Your team will be escorted at all times when off-campus by a translator. The last day of your trip will be spent doing an excursion, where your team will have the opportunity to debrief what God has done in and through you on your trip.

BOOKING FLIGHTS

Teams and individuals are responsible for their own airfare, as it is not included in the cost of the trip. Mission of Hope asks that all flights arrive and depart from Santiago (STI) on **Saturdays or Wednesdays only**. This allows us to be good stewards of transportation expenses, as well as ensure your team is met by one of our staff members. If you are unable to find a flight that meets our request, we may allow you to book flights into an alternate airport for an additional fee for the team (pricing varies by group size). If you cannot find flights that arrive on Saturday or Wednesday to STI, please talk with your HopeGo Trip Coordinator **before booking** for approval. There will be a fee associated with any off-day travel.

When at all possible (and the cost is reasonable), we ask that you please purchase flights that arrive into STI **before 9:00 PM**. However, when the savings are significant, we do permit teams to purchase flights that arrive later. For approval on flight arrivals/departures beyond 9:00 PM, please contact your HopeGo Trip Coordinator.

Be sure to check with the airline for current restrictions, embargos, luggage weight limits, etc. prior to traveling.

HOW TO PAY FOR YOUR TRIP

In an effort to be good stewards of our resources, we have initiated a required reservation fee and payment system for all mission trips. Please see the below guidelines regarding trip payments.

- \$25 non-refundable fee per spot reserved
- 50% of total team payment due 90 days out from trip departure date
- 100% of total team payment due 30 days out from trip departure date

Trip Payment

Trip payments are non-refundable and should be made online on your Trip Leader Dashboard. If you are a trip participant, your trip leader can provide you with a team link where you can make payments toward your trip.

Payments can also be made via check by sending it to:

Mission of Hope
P.O. Box 171500
Austin, TX 78717

Please include your trip number on the memo line and let your Trip Coordinator know you will be sending in a check.

PREPARING TO TRAVEL TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

For complete information on travel to the Dominican Republic, refer to the Dominican Republic page on the U.S. State Department Travel Site at

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>.

PASSPORT

All North Americans traveling to the Dominican Republic are required to have a passport for entry into the country. You can check with your local post office for a passport application. You can also go to the U.S. Department of State's website at <http://travel.state.gov/passport> or the Passport Canada web page at www.passportcanada.gc.ca.

If you are applying for a new passport, allow 10-12 weeks to receive it. All travelers should bring a photocopy of the first two pages of their passport in their carry-on luggage in the rare event that a passport is lost. **All passports must be valid for at least six months after the first day of your trip.**

IMMUNIZATIONS AND GENERAL HEALTH INFORMATION

We recommend everyone discuss recommendations for anti-malaria medication and immunizations with their doctors and follow their doctor's direction.

For information on immunization recommendations in the Dominican Republic, please refer to the CDC website: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/dominican-republic>.

Our Medical team will be available to assist you with team healthcare needs. Team leaders, we strongly suggest that either you or your team members carry some of these basic health supplies for use in the event of common conditions seen while working in the Dominican Republic:

- Gatorade and/or electrolyte replacement tablets
- Pepto Bismol
- Anti-diarrhea
- Tylenol, Advil
- Cold/Flu
- Benadryl (for an allergic reaction)
- Band-aids, Neosporin, Hydrocortisone cream/ "itch relief" cream
- ACE compression wraps, chemical cold pack(s)

In addition, team members should carry a larger-than-normal supply of any prescription medications and should bring medications that they might have to use at home on an as-needed basis, such as:

- Inhalers
- Sinus/allergy medications
- Cough/cold medicine
- TUMS or Pepcid
- Cold-sore/Canker-sore medication

ALLERGY DISCLAIMER

If you have food allergies (nut, gluten, dairy, etc.), **you will need to bring supplemental food**, as we are not able to avoid cross contamination. Mission of Hope uses peanut butter on the food buffets several times each week. Due to kitchen limitations and lack of storage space, this food needs to remain with you and needs to be non-perishable (rice cakes, peanut butter packets, tuna packets, Chex cereal, protein bars, trail mix, etc). Thank you for your understanding.

For severe food or substance allergies, plan to carry two EpiPens.

PREGNANCY DISCLAIMER

As a precaution, we recommend that any women who are pregnant or think they might be pregnant NOT travel with Mission of Hope until further notice due to the potential risk of the Zika virus. While the infection is generally mild, it can be very dangerous to a developing fetus and has been linked to microcephaly in babies when the mother is infected with the virus during the first trimester.

PHYSICAL CONDITION AND MEDICATIONS

If you are over the age of 50 or have any health conditions (heart disease, diabetes, asthma, lung problems, severe allergies, mental illness, etc.), please have a thorough medical evaluation before traveling to the Dominican Republic, and communicate those conditions and needs to Mission of Hope before arriving.

Any trip participants with a newly diagnosed condition or anyone who becomes ill before the trip, should delay or reschedule their trip. Medical identification (tags, bracelets, cards, etc.) must be carried by anyone with chronic illness such as diabetes or heart conditions.

Trips to the Dominican Republic can be moderately stressful physically and mentally, and sometimes further strain comes with high temperatures, intense sun, mosquitos, hilly terrain, and lots of walking. People with mental illness or physical disabilities are required to disclose such information to us before being approved to travel. Be sure to carry all prescriptions and required medications in your carry-on luggage. If you have a history of asthma or sinus and allergy problems, bring your medication, even if you haven't used it in a long time or don't need it at home.

INTERNET AND COMMUNICATION

Mission of Hope staff carry working cell phones to be used in emergencies only. These are not to be used for any other communication by team members. Some American cell phone companies work in the Dominican Republic. WiFi is available where you will be staying for a \$25/week per person fee.

PLANNING FOR EVERYDAY IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Once you arrive in the Dominican Republic, your team will be given an itinerary for your week. We take care of all the in-country traveling logistics. Your team will be escorted at all times when off-campus by our staff or interns.

BUNKING/ ELECTRICITY/ FANS

Team members will stay in the Mission of Hope Guesthouses. Your team members will be separated by gender into separate rooms, each with twin bunk beds. You may want to bring earplugs, if you are a light sleeper! There are fans in most rooms. Standard US three-pronged electrical outlets are available in all rooms. Bunk rooms on each of our campuses include running water and showers. Mission of Hope will provide a pair of clean sheets for you, as well as a pillow. Please bring your own bath towel and washcloths.

WATER

Please do not drink or brush your teeth with tap water. Purified water will be provided for you. We encourage you to drink as much purified water as possible. Make sure you are drinking continuously, even when you do not feel thirsty. You will need to bring a reusable water bottle for the week.

SHOWERS

Please shower with as little water as possible, as water is very precious in the Dominican Republic. It is strongly encouraged to turn the shower on to rinse, off to lather, and on to rinse again. The same is suggested for the washing of hands: on, off, on.

FOOD

We will prepare most of the meals for you and other visiting groups throughout the week. In some cases you will prepare your own sack lunch.

HANDOUTS TO LOCALS

Mission of Hope kindly asks you **not to hand out any items to locals**. This includes but is not limited to money, candy, toys, or water. We, as an organization working for lasting change in the Dominican Republic, are trying to discourage locals from seeing or expecting handouts from visiting North Americans. Mission of Hope is striving to encourage a culture of locals helping locals. There will be an opportunity to donate items at the end of your mission trip. These items will be distributed through the local church and Village Champions to the surrounding partner communities.

MISSION OF HOPE STORE AND COFFEE SHOP

You will have the opportunity to shop at the Mission of Hope store on campus. You will find apparel, jewelry, local items, coffee, and much more. The amount of money you bring will depend on your desire to buy souvenirs. **Payment is cash only or PayPal app.** We recommend bringing cash in small bills. You can also shop on [our online store](#).

LOSSES

Mission of Hope and/or its employees, agents, or volunteers are not responsible for any team member's lost money, stolen money, damaged luggage, lost luggage, or loss of any other personal property. We do everything possible to prevent these unfortunate incidents; however, they sometimes occur despite our efforts.

OTHER POLICIES

Mission of Hope is a smoke-free environment. All alcohol, drugs, and firearms are prohibited for all Mission of Hope guests.



PART 3: BEFORE YOU GO AND DEPARTURE

Your trip is right around the corner, and we have a bit more information to share with you before you're on the ground in the Dominican Republic.

REMEMBER THESE OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL COSTS

- Personal souvenir money for the Mission of Hope store and coffee shop on campus, suggested \$50-\$100 (cash or Paypal app only; smaller bills suggested & Paypal app needs to be downloaded prior to arrival in the DR)
- Internet cost, \$25/week/person (paid via credit card when you arrive on campus)
- Lunch money for excursion day if you want something other than the lunch Mission of Hope will provide
- Church Advancement Project Costs; pricing varies according to project selection

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

- Passport
- Personal-sized water bottle (one-quart that can be used all week is recommended)
- Personal-sized fan (battery operated)
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Bible, journal, pen, and MOH devotional
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo)
- Towel and washcloth
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Personal snacks (e.g. Clif bars)
- Souvenir money

INSECTS

Extra-strength insect repellents and insecticide sprays are useful for repelling mosquitoes and spraying sleeping quarters. Be sure to place this in your checked baggage.

DRESS CODE

The local Dominican pastors have requested that, in order to respect the culture and be most effective in ministry, we abide by the following dress code. **Our staff on the ground reserves the right to ask you to change if you do not comply.** Thank you for your understanding. We do not have a laundry facility available to trip participants

WOMEN'S DRESS CODE

Skirts

- 1-2 skirts or dresses that are at least to the knee or longer must be worn for church
- Leggings can be worn under skirts that are to the knee or longer

Shorts/Pants/Capris

- Bring several pairs of shorts to the knee, loose-fitting/flowy pants, or loose-fitting capris that can be worn in the community on CA project days
- For SMT in the communities, please wear jeans or loose-fitting/flowy pants (no leggings), or a skirt
- No yoga or workout pants outside of campus!

Shirts

- Bring 4-6 simple, solid, light weight, breathable shirts
- Shoulders, chest, and back must be covered
- No tank tops outside of campus!

Swimsuits

- One-piece or tankini

Shoes

- Durable sandals (e.g. Chacos/Texas)
- Closed toe shoes/work boots (if applicable to projects)
- Tennis shoes
- Shower flip-flops

MEN'S DRESS CODE

Shorts

- Bring 2-3 pairs of shorts and/or pants
- Athletic shorts can be worn for CA projects
- Khaki, Cargo, or Hiking Shorts can be worn in the community for SMT

Pants

- Bring 1-2 pairs of pants for church; nice jeans recommended, and dress pants are preferred for church

Shirts

- Bring 4-6 simple, solid, light weight, and breathable shirts
- Collared shirts for church
- No tank tops outside of campus!

Swimsuits

- Trunks – No Speedos

Shoes

- Durable sandals (e.g. Chacos/Texas)
- Closed toe shoes/work boots (if applicable to projects)
- Tennis shoes
- Shower flip-flops

MEDICAL PARTICIPANT'S DRESS CODE

Licensed Medical Team Members should plan to wear full scrubs or scrub bottoms and a t-shirt. We ask men not to wear earrings and women to only wear them in their ears to respect culture.

ARRIVAL FLIGHT INFORMATION

When traveling into Santiago, Dominican Republic (STI), you will need to complete an Online Customs Form prior to your departure for the DR and again prior to departure back into the U.S. Your trip coordinator will ensure the Trip Leader receives this link. Upon completion of the online form, you will receive a QR code, so plan to have this handy on your phone (we recommend it be screenshotted). Here is the information you will need to fill out the form:

- Province: La Vega
- Municipality: Jarabacoa
- Section: Pinar Quemado
- Street and number (if needed): S/N Calle Obdulio Jimenez

Address of our campus, if needed:

Carretera Pinar Quemado, Pinar Quemado, Jarabacoa, La Vega, DR

CONTACTS AND EMERGENCY NUMBERS

For changes or delays on the day of your travel, please send a **text message with updated details**: team name, flight number, and new arrival time to the Mission of Hope DR HopeGo cell phone: +1 (512) 914-7429.

For all other inquiries, please call the US office at +1 (512) 256-0835 during normal business hours M-F 8:30am-4:30pm CST.

IMMIGRATION

At the immigration department, you will be asked for your passport and possibly your QR code from the online customs form you filled out. To ensure a smooth transition through the immigration line, please have your passport and QR code readily available for the immigration officer.

BAGGAGE CLAIM

Once you pass through immigration, you will move directly to baggage claim. You may be approached several times by airport employees seeking to help you. If you do not need assistance, kindly tell them “No, gracias” which means “No, thank you.”

Keep your group together in one area, and assign two or three people to get the luggage off the carousel for the whole team. In some cases, the luggage will have already been pulled off and will be lined up in the large open area to the right of the carousel. We recommend tagging your team’s luggage in a unique way for easy identification. For example, tie the same color ribbon on each luggage handle. Once your team has secured its luggage, you can head to the customs checkpoint.

CUSTOMS

Once you have your luggage, you will go through the customs checkpoint. Have your QR code readily available for the customs agent. The customs agent will clear you to leave the airport.

When you pass through customs, you will exit the airport. Once you exit the building, start looking for our Mission of Hope staff member, who will be waiting just inside or outside of the exit doors wearing a Mission of Hope shirt or holding a Mission of Hope sign.

DEPARTURE FLIGHT

On the day of your departure, you will leave for the airport approximately 3-5 hours before your flight departs from the STI airport. Please have your luggage packed and ready to go before then.

On campus, there will be a link to the departure customs forms. You can fill out the departure form before your trip, or you can fill it out while in the DR before you go to the airport.

AIRPORT DROP-OFF

A Mission of Hope driver will transport you to the airport. You will be dropped off at the front of the airport. It is possible that there will be locals who want to assist you with your bags into the airport. If they help you with your bags, you are expected to tip them. It is acceptable to tell them, “No, gracias” which means “No, thank you.”

You will need to show your passport before you will be allowed to enter the airport. Once inside the airport, your bags will be screened by airport officials. When you get through the initial security checkpoint, you will then proceed to your airline’s counter to check your bags and get your boarding papers.

DEPARTURE CUSTOMS

After you check in with your airline, you will proceed to customs where you will show them your passport and possibly your QR code. When you pass through customs, you will proceed to another security checkpoint. At this checkpoint, you will be asked for your boarding pass. You cannot have any liquids at this checkpoint.

CONCLUSION

We are committed to ensuring you and your team have an excellent mission trip experience in the Dominican Republic. If you have any questions, please reach out to our HopeGo Trip Coordinator. We believe God is going to do amazing things in and through you as you serve on your mission trip. We look forward to seeing you and serving with you in the Dominican Republic!

TEAM LEADER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Make reservation and pay the \$25 non-refundable, non-transferable reservation fee per person
- ☐ Direct trip participants to their HopeGo Trip Guide (located in the Trip Details and Resources tab in their Dashboard)
- ☐ Each participant must complete their Medical Release Form (due 60 days from departure). Their form is found on their Trip Participant Dashboard.
- ☐ Mark two trip payment deadlines on your calendar:
 - ☐ Initial 50% due 90 days prior to trip start date
 - ☐ Final 50% due 30 days prior to trip start date
- ☐ Check in with team to ensure passports are current for travel
- ☐ Book team flights and submit itineraries on your Trip Leader Dashboard
- ☐ Church Advancement Projects (payment and project selection due 30 days out from departure) if additional projects were selected
- ☐ Distribute the Mission of Hope 21 Day Devotional Books (sent approximately one month prior to departure). It's also available digitally for you and your team.

DISCUSS WITH TEAM

- ☐ Strategic Ministry Time training packet (located in the Trip Details and Resources tab in the Dashboard)
- ☐ Dress Code
- ☐ Suggested packing list
- ☐ Extra spending money for souvenirs