



## Volunteer Information

The activities sponsored by Cambiando Vidas take place in the Dominican Republic, in remote locations far away from a city or hospital, in economically challenged areas, and involve active participation in building construction tasks in intense heat.

The following guidelines are presented to provide a safe and rewarding experience while addressing or minimizing some of the inherent risks or hazards associated with the above conditions.

### 1 Health

#### 1.1 Vaccination / Medication:

Check the CDC website for health and safety travel information: [CDC--Dominican Republic](#)

Volunteers should carry any prescription medications in their carry-on luggage to the Dominican Republic.

#### 1.2 Medical Coverage

Volunteers must carry health insurance as well as traveler's insurance to cover medical emergencies and potential repatriation. [Trawick International](#) is one of the insurance companies offering such coverage. Volunteers chose which insurance company and policy they want to use. Volunteers must submit proof of insurance one week prior to the program beginning date.

Applicants with health conditions warranting access to close medical support should consult with their Primary Care Provider to assess risk. Based on risk, Cambiando Vidas reserves the right to deny the application.

### **1.3 Local conditions:**

Volunteers should apply sunscreen before arriving at the worksite and should re-apply several times throughout the day. Recommendation: Unscented, at least SPF 30.

While mosquitoes are not typically active during the day at the worksite, volunteers should apply mosquito repellent before evening activities. Avoid the use of scented lotions, soaps, etc. that may attract mosquitoes.

Volunteers should not interact with local dogs or other animals.

### **1.4 Food and Water**

Volunteers will eat at the hotel, at an approved restaurant or at the worksite, where members of the community have been briefed about the food safety procedures.

Bottled water will be available at the worksite. Volunteers should only drink bottled beverages or beverages made with bottled water. In addition, volunteers should brush teeth with bottled water and keep their mouths closed in the shower.

## **2 Safety**

### **2.1 Personal safety:**

Volunteers should check the Department of State website to understand the current situation in the Dominican Republic. [Department of State-International Travel](#)

All transportation will be in Cambiando Vidas vehicles or vehicles chartered by Cambiando Vidas.

Volunteers may not ride in any other vehicles, including motorcycles.

The possession and use of drugs is illegal in the Dominican Republic.

The use of alcohol is strictly forbidden at the worksite.

Volunteers may not leave the worksite or hotel on their own. For excursions in small groups, volunteers must first consult with the Trip Leader.

Volunteers should be modest in their dress and accessories. Expensive jewelry, electronics, etc., as well as revealing clothing may draw unwanted attention.

## **2.3 Construction Site Safety**

At the beginning of each day, the Trip Leader and Project Director will outline the plan for the day, paying particular attention to any potential safety risks involved in the activities.

### **2.3.1 Activities**

Volunteers will perform the following activities depending on their level of comfort:

- Use tools such as shovel, rake, hammer, trowel, pliers, paint brush, roller
- Carry and pass standard cement blocks
- Climb ladders or scaffolding
- Push loaded wheelbarrow
- Carry and pass buckets of cement, dirt, rocks
- Shovel sand, dirt, rocks
- Work with cement, wood, rebar, wire, nails, paint (latex/water based)
- Walking distances on uneven ground
- Climbing steps, ladders, scaffolding

Volunteers are not allowed to to perform the following activities:

- Operate the cement mixer
- Work on the roof
- Operate power tools
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Volunteers will be working at an active construction site. Roughhousing, horseplaying, and running are dangerous and will not be tolerated.

### **2.3.2 Safety Requirements**

At the worksite, volunteers must wear

- Long pants
- Steel-toe work boots
- Gloves

It is recommended that volunteers also wear

- Wide-brimmed hat
- Sunglasses

Volunteers should not wear

- Headphones
- Jewelry

## 3 Environment

Volunteers should

- Use water and energy conservatively. In areas with frail infrastructure, access to clean water and energy is a luxury and should be used conservatively so as not to impact local users.
- Ask for permission before taking photographs.
- Dispose of garbage appropriately.
- Use waste baskets next to toilets for paper and personal products. Throwing toilet paper and personal products into the toilet may damage the integrity of the waste system.

## 4 Packing List

Volunteers are encouraged to pack lightly

- Passport
- Steel toed work boots/shoes
- Bandana
- Work clothes—jeans and t-shirts
- Work gloves (2-3 pairs)
- Sunglasses
- Sunblock
- Mosquito repellent
- Water bottle
- Backpack/daypack
- Bathing suit
- Washcloth
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Casual clothes (shorts/skirts and t-shirts)
- Nice outfit for ending ceremony (khaki pants or shorts/polo shirt, skirt/blouse)
- Any needed medications
- Plastic bags for packing used work clothes
- Hat
- Water shoes
- Sneakers
- Sandals
- Powdered Gatorade
- Snacks (e.g. granola bars, fruit snacks)

