



Volunteer Orientation Manual
1–11 Months

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the MAPS Program

The Missions Abroad Placement Service (MAPS) program provides challenging opportunities for short-term placement to serve Christ in other lands. Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM) Personnel and Member Care serves as the liaison between MAPS volunteers and missionaries.

Service is the defining concept, attitude, and action of the program and of each MAPS volunteer. The MAPS program contributes toward the goal of world evangelization by providing guidance and opportunities for short-term placement to our committed volunteers.

Purpose of the MAPS Program

The program includes two categories of service:

MAPS Volunteer

MAPS volunteers are placed on assignments that last a maximum assignment of 11 months (364 days). They must be at least 18 years old and be either married or single without children.

College Intern

The college intern program is primarily for Assemblies of God college students in their second or third year who are normally missions or intercultural ministries majors. Interns serve a minimum of two months during the summer. Many Assemblies of God colleges select several students each year for missions scholarships through the college intern program.

While on assignment, no distinction is made between college interns and other short-term volunteers—each is a MAPS volunteer in the Lord's great harvest field.

Orientation

The MAPS volunteer carries the responsibility of preparing to make a successful adjustment to cross-cultural living, relationship building, and the work of ministry. However, the Personnel and Member Care office provides helpful materials that have been developed over years of successfully placing MAPS volunteers.

MAPS volunteers are asked to read this MAPS Orientation Manual and listen to the audio files provided on www.WideOpenMissions.org as part of their preparation for life and ministry in another culture. Your missionary supervisor will give further orientation specific to the field of assignment upon your arrival.



WHAT TO EXPECT ON THE FIELD

Read everything you can about the country you are going to by checking out books and Internet resources. Nationals will be your best source of information though—while there, ask questions, listen, and observe. Your supervising missionary is another valuable resource for you as you acclimate to the new culture. Also, keep this MAPS Volunteer Orientation Manual handy for review.

Your Assigned Missionary

You are on the field as part of a team that includes the supervising missionary and field fellowship. Communicate with the missionary you are assigned to. Get to know that missionary, and let the missionary get to know you. AGWM career missionaries are people of experience and proven credentials who pass rigorous screenings and receive training before being approved for full-time service. Many have lived abroad many years and are accustomed to living and building relationships in other cultures. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn from their experience and insights.

The Field Fellowship

In most cases, missionaries in each country comprise a field fellowship to coordinate member activities and maximize ministry effectiveness. The work of the American Assemblies of God on foreign fields is administered largely through field fellowships. The field fellowship has no authority over the national church.

Meetings are held annually to take care of matters related to living overseas as a missionary. The field fellowship usually has a chairperson, a secretary, and a treasurer. Administrative details are covered by policies in the Missionary Manual. Career missionaries are familiar with the manual and are apprised of new policies as adopted.

Having Successful Relationships

Cross-cultural relationships are complex and take time to learn, so be patient in your relationships, whether with your assigned missionary or national church members. Remember that your short exposure to the culture is not enough time to make you an expert on that field. Maintaining a positive attitude will serve you best, reflecting well on you, your relationship with the Lord, and your relationships within World Missions.

Demonstrate the utmost respect for and cooperation with all missionaries, other American Assemblies of God personnel, and nationals. A spirit of concern and love will enable you to labor in harmony with your missionary supervisor and will present an image of unity to be followed by the nationals.

Relationships with Nationals

Work at developing and maintaining positive, healthy relationships with nationals, both saved and unsaved. Earning their confidence takes time. Let it be known you are there to manifest Christ and His gospel, and ask God for wisdom and diplomacy. For example, if nationals want to discuss world affairs and political matters, ask God to help you give answers that will satisfy them and at the same time allow you to turn the discussion to a witness for the Lord.

Don't be afraid or apologetic for being an American, but on the other hand, don't go with the idea that you are there to represent the United States. You are there to represent Jesus Christ and His kingdom. If you feel your mission is to change their culture, nothing will be accomplished, and bridges for relationship and communication will crumble. Strive to introduce Jesus Christ into their lives, and trust the Holy Spirit to make any necessary changes.

How to Deal with Conflicts

Conflicts may arise, but keep lines of communication open with the missionary. If you

have a serious problem, speak with your missionary supervisor first. The next step, if necessary, is to report the problem to the area director, the regional director, or the MAPS office. Under no

Culture Shock

circumstances should you confront or try to deal with the problem alone.

Culture shock comes almost immediately—and quite naturally—when you arrive in another country. Culture shock need not become a problem, particularly if you understand and expect it as a normal aspect of adjustment to an unfamiliar culture.

Culture is the sum of what an individual acquires from his or her upbringing: beliefs, customs, artistic forms, food preferences, crafts, dress, styles of music and worship, nonverbal communication, time orientation, spatial relationships in communication, and so on.

We learn patterns of thinking, living, and relating from the families, communities, and cultures we are raised in. These patterns are automatic and natural, and we seldom stop to define or question them.

It may never occur to us that people from other cultural backgrounds would think, live, and relate any differently than we do!

A Normal and Expected Response

When first confronted with subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle differences between your culture and your host country's culture, you can experience frustration at the ambiguity of it all. It's like being thrust into a game, knowing you're expected to play and win, but never having the rules explained. Attempts to communicate may be misunderstood. People's behavior may seem peculiar and make no sense. When you do not understand another culture's patterns of behavior, you experience automatic inward responses. These responses are referred to as culture shock.

These responses can be mental, emotional, physical, and/or spiritual. You may experience discomfort—a sense of insecurity or not belonging. You may even feel like you have been reduced to the level of a baby, dependent on others again! The most intelligent, highly skilled individual may feel inadequate in an unfamiliar cultural setting. Interestingly enough, the subtle differences—not the glaringly obvious differences—more often cause stress and frustration.

Underlying the aspects of a culture that are outward

CONTRASTING VALUES	
SELF	
Sees self as an individual	Sees self as a family member
Youth is valued	Age is valued
Self-reliant	Dependent on family and friends
Value placed on what one does	Value placed on who one is
FAMILY	
Democratic	Authoritarian
SOCIETY	
People should be treated informally	People should be treated formally
Face-to-face confrontation	Confrontation through an intermediary
Males and females are often close friends	Close friends are usually the same sex
HUMAN NATURE	
Man is rational	Man is irrational
We are masters of our own fate	The future is predetermined
NATURE	
The world is knowable and controllable through science	The world is spiritually controlled and not to be altered
The future is important; thus, time is not to be wasted	The past or present is important; thus, time should be enjoyed
THE SUPERNATURAL	
Material goals are most important	Spiritual goals are most important
People are in control of the universe	People are controlled by the supernatural

Source: Syracuse University Handbook for International Students and Mount Holyoke College International Student Handbook.

Keys to Dealing With Culture Shock

Recognize that culture shock is a normal, human response to plunging into an unfamiliar cultural setting. You can deal with culture shock and maintain effectiveness in relationship building at the same time.

Writer Peter Adler described culture shock as “the very heart of the cross-cultural learning experience.” Dealing with culture shock forces you to reflect on yourself and your culture, resulting in a new understanding of your values, beliefs, and behaviors.

Recognize that the depth and duration of culture shock will vary. It varies from person to person—depending upon temperament and previous experience with adjusting to change—and from situation to situation—depending upon the cultural distance between the host culture and your own.

Accept the host culture’s living patterns. Your host culture may have a long history and values that its people are used to or feel they have been well-served by.

Recognize that different is not necessarily wrong, nor is it inferior. By maintaining this attitude, you will remain open to others and ready to learn—rather than closed and ready to judge. This is the right relationship-building attitude!

Accept that the host culture is imperfect, as is your own. Biblical principles are the standard by which every human culture is measured, and therefore each one is imperfect.

Avoid comparing the host culture to your own. Avoid making comments that compare or contrast, particularly negative comments, and guard against an attitude of superiority.

Step out in friendship. Don’t let cultural barriers—even language barriers—keep you from making friends with nationals. You will be amazed how far a smile and some “charades” will go! You can get involved in games or work projects, doing things side by side and developing camaraderie.

Enter the host culture as a learner and a servant. Practice your listening skills, and be ready to ask for help when needed. Do not go as the one with all the answers and the right way to do things! That approach automatically builds walls instead of bridges.

Give yourself time to adjust. Realistically, adjustment happens slowly over the course of months and years. Simply adjust as much as you can during your time on the field.

Recognize that being a Christian will not shield you from experiencing culture shock. God is not only interested in the result of your ministry on the field, but He is also very interested in the process of transforming you into His likeness. His Word makes clear that He brings good into our lives even through frustrating and difficult circumstances. He can use the natural cultural adjustment process to shape you and make you more flexible, open, sensitive, and freer from monocultural constraints.

Set realistic expectations. God in His sovereignty sets us in families, in cultures, in circumstances and makes us stewards of all He provides. Consult with your missionary supervisor to set some realistic personal and ministry goals for your time overseas.

Maintain a balance of appreciation for your culture versus the host culture. Occasionally, someone totally rejects his or her own culture in favor of another. This response is psychologically and emotionally unhealthy, because it is actually impossible to totally divorce from one’s own culture. Each individual is a product of his or her culture, and those who turn their back on their culture will experience frustration in the effort to leave behind their very foundations and build new ones. Build and maintain a balance of appreciation for what is good within one’s own culture and what is good in the host culture.

What is the bottom line? Culture shock is not something to be feared or avoided. It is part of your growth as a person and a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Reentry Shock

Americans sometimes experience reentry shock when returning to the States after living abroad. Missions volunteers may come home with an enlightened conscience concerning lifestyle and material things and become critical of their own culture’s standards and affluence, while no one at home seems to understand or agree. After focusing on adjusting to a new cultural setting, you have to readjust to going back into your own cultural setting.

A potential negative result of culture shock is mild depression upon returning home. This may occur for a variety of reasons. Some may feel they failed to fulfill certain expectations, and therefore, they should not have left home in the first place. They may feel that way because of some specific event, language barrier struggles, relational challenges, or simply because of a vague sense of inadequacy.

Spiritual and Physical Challenges

Spiritual attacks often accompany culture shock. You have invaded the enemy's territory, and he is not going to give up without a fight.

One of his attacks is to bring severe despondency while on assignment. Little things can creep into your mind and become a constant irritation. Relational problems can develop, often over small differences of opinion. Fears may crop up that hinder your work. Resolve not to be a victim! Recognize problems for what they are, and deal with them in the power of the Holy Spirit so they do not interfere with your work in missions.

Spiritual attacks may also come in the form of health problems. These are usually limited to temporary illnesses due to changes in water and food, but they can still impair the work of spreading the gospel. Such ailments do not ordinarily last long, and the body adjusts to the changes. A stomachache does not signal a life-threatening disease. Local missionaries can help if you experience health problems.

Whatever the attack, combat it through prayer. Set aside daily prayer times alone with God. He is far greater than the enemy, and He will help you emerge victorious over your fears.

Spiritual Preparation

An important part of spiritual preparation for your assignment is to place yourself under the discipline of the Holy Spirit. Your term of service will only be as fruitful as the extent to which the Holy Spirit has control of your life. Let Him work in and through you to develop a meaningful witness and to direct every aspect of your life.

Prayer is still God's method of accomplishing His work, so be a prayer warrior. Open communication

with God is necessary before trying to work for Him. This assignment, if bathed in daily communion with the Lord in prayer and Bible study, can be the most enriching experience of your life.

Physical Health

Guard against overtaxing your strength. In the excitement of being in a new place with new responsibilities, many people drive themselves far beyond their physical endurance. This brings on fatigue that often leads to illness. Either one will sap your strength and hinder your usefulness in the task to which you are called. So use good judgment, and don't overdo it. Pay attention to your body's need for physical exercise, nutritious food, and plenty of sleep. Heed the missionary's instructions regarding local foods and drinking water.

Expected Conduct

Assemblies of God MAPS volunteers are, first and foremost, witnesses and messengers of Jesus Christ in cross-cultural situations. They exemplify the worldview of the Assemblies of God Fellowship of the United States doctrinally and in moral, ethical, and social patterns of personal discipline and conduct.

Dress and Conduct

In most foreign cultures, Christian views and standards of dress and conduct are more conservative than in the States. Yet in some cultures it may be quite the reverse. Ask your missionary supervisor to discuss with you any differences you should be aware of.

In any case, do not insist on their changing to accept and/or conform to your views. Be willing to discipline yourself and conform to their standards when appropriate.

Often the rule regarding interaction in the States is the casual attitude, "Relax and make yourself at home." Overseas this will not be the general rule. Do not make yourself at home. Rather, observe and adapt to the local people's pattern of living.

Alcoholic Beverages

The privilege of being an approved MAPS volunteer places a solemn responsibility upon each one to walk worthy of his or her calling to missionary

service, no matter how short the assignment. This includes abiding by the standards and behaviors sanctioned by the Assemblies of God within the United States even in cross-cultural settings. Therefore, you are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages while overseas, regardless of the social situation you may find yourself in.

Dating Relationships

MAPS volunteers are expected not to date a national or an American while on the field. Your purpose for being overseas is to serve alongside the missionary family, not to find your spouse. Be friendly with everyone, but romantically involved with no one. If you feel you are becoming romantically involved, discuss your feelings with your supervising missionary immediately, seeking his or her counsel. Your missionary, the area director, or the regional director is authorized to recommend that you be reassigned or return home, based on both the field's and individuals' best interests.

Adoption of Children

Volunteers should not consider a MAPS assignment as an opportunity to pursue the adoption of a child.

Speaking Through an Interpreter

The language barrier need not be a big problem in a public speaking ministry. If you need to speak through an interpreter, observe the following:

- Smile—not a forced smile, but one that reflects your natural joy in Christ.
- Speak to and look at the audience, not the interpreter.
- Speak loudly enough to be heard.
- Gesture naturally as you speak, but do not overdo it.
- Be brief, remembering that a five-minute testimony is really ten minutes long when given through an interpreter.
- Testify in short statements, pausing for the interpreter to keep up with you.
- Limit your testimony to what Christ has done for you, how much you love Him, and what He can do for them.
- Close with a verse of Scripture.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

This section contains helpful information regarding finances for your MAPS assignment. If you have further questions, feel free to contact the MAPS application lead or MAPS Support Specialist (see “Staff Contacts”).

Ownership of Mission Funds

The AGWM policies and procedures noted in this section have been carefully established to conform to all the laws that affect missions personnel, AGWM, and the local church. Any divergence can compromise our position or that of our supporting churches. We endeavor always to maintain proper and conscientious stewardship to both the Lord and the donors for the use of contributed funds.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), under whose tax-exempt status AGWM operates, sets forth specific laws regarding the ownership of funds donated to any charitable organization. World Missions must maintain administrative control over contributed funds and be able to give account to the IRS for the use of those funds in achieving the objectives of the mission.

All funds received by a missionary (as a representative for AGWM) as a direct or indirect result of missions activities become the property of AGWM. Any failure to report these funds or any unauthorized use of these funds would constitute criminal embezzlement.

A church that issues tax receipts to its donors cannot legally contribute to a missionary or the missionary’s work unless one of three conditions is met:

1. The church passes responsibility for administrative control to AGWM. This is done by our receipting process.
2. The church maintains administrative control of the funds if it does not receive an official General Council receipt. This does not apply to most churches.
3. The church considers the contributions as taxable income to the missionary and reports to the IRS as required.

Processing Fee

A \$25 processing fee is required from all MAPS volunteers who apply for an assignment, which helps cover costs of operations and materials related to placement. This fee is charged at the time the application is started.

Raising Support

When your application specialist informs you of your approved placement, you should begin raising funds. MAPS volunteers are permitted to seek financial support for their assignment from family, friends, and their local church.

Budget

Your budget will be determined in dialogue with your application specialist and missionary supervisor and generally includes the following:

- Airfare, plus airport or departure tax, if necessary. AGWM will use a standard amount of \$1800 per person round-trip; actual costs may vary.
- Visa, if necessary. AGWM will use a standard amount of \$200 per person; actual cost may vary.
- Per diem funds, which are daily living expenses such as food and ground transportation. This information is determined by the area where you will serve and is mandated by the IRS.
- Lodging/rent expenses, provided by the missionary and AGWM.
- Insurance.
- Any additional approved ministry expenses.



AGWM Account

When the World Missions Executive Committee gives final approval, one account number is assigned to each unit (couple or single). The account number is set up on the same system used for missionaries. After the account number is assigned, contributions may be sent in for your support. **This account number must be indicated on all contributions coming into AGWM for you.**

We recommend all donations be made payable to AGWM and submitted to your AGWM account. Do not cash a check payable to AGWM. Those who send offerings to AGWM will receive tax-deductible receipts from the General Council. With the first receipt, each contributor will receive a return envelope and remittance form to use with the next contribution.

Receipts for Donors

Checks you receive directly that are payable to you can still be processed through your AGWM account.

To assist in tracking your fund-raising, keep a master list (name, complete address, city, state, and zip code) of your donors and the amounts given (see Expense Tracker form on wideopenmissions.org).

Five-Percent Overhead

Assemblies of God World Missions deducts five percent from all offerings and contributions that come through your account. This is applied against administrative costs. This percentage is also deducted from direct offerings.

Personal Funds

If you use any of your own personal funds for ministry expenses, keep receipts for these expenses. They will be needed to document deductions when filing your federal income tax.

World Ministries Credit

World Ministries credit can be given to Assemblies of God churches that give toward a MAPS volunteer's airfare or living expenses on the field. AGWM will make sure contributing churches receive World Ministries credit and that individuals receive official receipts for their giving based on your reports of addresses.

Assemblies of God Credit Union

Each MAPS volunteer is asked to open an account at the Assemblies of God Credit Union (AGCU) in Springfield, Missouri. Your monthly disbursement check will be a direct deposit to this account.

Please understand that your AGWM account and your AGCU account are two different accounts. The AGCU account is your own personal "bank" account. The credit union, as a full-service financial institution, offers online banking and bill payment plus other convenient services. You may put your own funds into the credit union account, if you would like, but be sure to provide contributors with your AGWM account number.

AGCU Membership Qualifications

The AGCU field of membership is open to the following:

- The General Council of the Assemblies of God (GCAG), any church or other entity affiliated with GCAG or with a district council of the Assemblies of God, and any employee or officer of these entities
- Faculty, staff, and students of Assemblies of God institutions of higher learning
- Certified, licensed, or ordained ministers of the Assemblies of God

- Retired GCAG employees
- Attendees of Assemblies of God churches in Greene County, Missouri, and the adjacent counties of Christian, Dade, Dallas, Lawrence, Polk, and Webster
- Assemblies of God World and U.S. Missions workers with a 12-month (or more) assignment
- Relatives of current members in the above categories, including spouses, children, siblings, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, and legal guardians (includes step, in-law, and legally adoptive relationships)
- Organizations of members, with board approval

If you qualify for membership, begin the process of opening an account online at www.AGCU.org. The credit union will notify you when the account is open. They will also send temporary checks, if ordered, for you to use until your official checks have been printed.

If you do not qualify for membership or desire to use a personal bank account, please complete the Authorization for Direct Deposit form attached to this manual and submit with a voided check. We must receive your personal banking information in order for you to receive your monthly per diem disbursement once you begin your MAPS assignment overseas. Please submit the form and voided check as soon as possible to your AGWM processing assistant by mail, e-mail, or fax (see “Staff Contacts”).

Failure to provide this information will result in your inability to receive monthly per diem disbursements as needed for covering your daily living and housing expenses.

Direct any questions related to opening an account or the services offered to the AGCU missionary representative at 1-866-508-AGCU (2428) or info@agcu.org.

Remember to give the credit union your change of address when you leave for assignment and when you return home.

Overdraft Protection

MAPS volunteers may participate in the credit union’s overdraft protection plan (line of credit). Participation is not automatic, but if you wish to, contact the credit union and request a line of credit.

Accessing Funds While on Assignment

You should already have an AGCU account open by the time you arrive on the field. Check with your missionary in advance to learn the best method of accessing funds on the field, since it varies from country to country. With this information you will be able to work with the credit union to ensure you have proper resources before you leave for your assignment (such as checks and debit/ATM card).

Per Diem Allowance

Using Per Diem Funds

In compliance with IRS regulations, based on concurrent living expenses, you are permitted to raise and use your per diem funds for the following expenses pertaining to your MAPS assignment:

- Lodging and meals on the field
- Ground transportation on the field
- Meals during travel to field and on the field

Funds used under the above conditions are not taxable and do not require reporting to AGWM or the IRS.

Unused Per Diem Funds

In accordance with IRS regulations, the following items cannot be purchased with funds other than per diem that you have raised for your short-term missions assignment:

- Flight insurance
- Personal hygiene items and toiletries
- Luggage and luggage carts
- Electrical adapters
- Small electrical appliances for overseas voltage
- Food items and personal gifts taken for missionary
- Mileage on the missionary’s vehicle
- Tuition or other school expenses
- Personal expenses while on assignment (such as rent and car payments)

- Camera and related equipment
- Souvenirs and traditional costumes

Remember to purchase stamps in the country from which letters are mailed. United States postage stamps are not usable outside the United States.

Disbursal of Per Diem Allowance

Once arrival/departure dates have been determined and you have booked your flight, please send a copy of your flight itinerary to your MAPS Support Specialist at least one month prior to departure.

If you are going on an assignment for 1-3 months, you must purchase a round trip ticket and send it to our offices to receive any monthly disbursement while on assignment. Upon receipt of a flight itinerary, your MAPS Support Specialist will request that your first two months prorated per diem be transferred to your credit union account for those



going on assignment for more than 3 months. Regular monthly disbursements will begin on the 10th of your third month on the field. (For example, if you depart August 12, you would receive per diem for the last 19 days of August and all 30 days of September, and regular disbursements would start October 10.)

IRS Tax Allowance

If you have concurrent housing expenses—rent or house payment—in the United States while serving on your MAPS assignment, IRS regulations allow a nontaxable per diem tax allowance for temporary living expenses. You must sign a statement for

the IRS indicating you have a permanent stateside address (your apartment or home or your family home) while on assignment.

If you are single and normally live in your family home, the rent or house payment paid by your parents or other family members qualifies.

In order for married couples to qualify, both must have a full-time assignment.

Other Funds (Not Per Diem)

If you do not qualify, you are responsible to pay taxes (self-employment and income taxes) from the funds you receive as living allowance.

In compliance with IRS regulations, you are permitted to raise and use funds for the following pertinent expenses.

- Round-trip airfare
- Airport or departure taxes, when required
- Passport and passport photos
- Visas and visa photos, when required
- Vaccines and medication for overseas travel, when required
- Other approved items (such as retreat expenses)

Funds used for these expenses are nontaxable; however, you must report them and submit appropriate receipts using financialreporting@agwm.com. The MAPS support specialist will give you further instructions regarding the use of this website.

Report expenses as soon as they are incurred. Do not wait until the end of your assignment.

Leftover Funds

You might raise more funds than you need for the ordinary and necessary expenses of your assignment. Since money donated and designated are missions funds, not personal funds, any funds remaining in your AGWM account will be used for the promotion and advancement of the MAPS program.

If you have unused funds in your possession (excluding those disbursed as your per diem), you must do one of the following:

1. Give them to the missionary you were assigned to, obtain a receipt from him or her, and attach the receipt to your report to AGWM.
2. Attach a personal check to your Expense Analysis form for those funds, made payable to AGWM MAPS.

NOTE: No funds collected and receipted (excluding those disbursed as your per diem), can be retained for personal expenses, nor can they be put toward college tuition or at-home expenses for time you spent on the field.

The Expense Analysis form is due within 30 days of the completion of your assignment—no later than December 10— in order to be receipted in the current year. Send any unused receipts with your report.

All reports must be sent as originals to your financial specialist:

AGWM Financial Services
1445 North Boonville Avenue
Springfield, MO 65802

Conversion from foreign currency to American dollars is your responsibility. HINT: Every time you exchange U.S. dollars for local currency, note the exchange rate. At the end of each day, write the rate on each receipt for that day's expenditures and calculate the U.S. dollar amount, rounding it off to the nearest cent.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

ACE/Chubb

Assemblies of God World Missions requires insurance coverage for all short-term volunteers through ACE/Chubb.

This ACE/Chubb policy is not the same as your personal health insurance policy; it is supplemental to it. Even if your own health insurance is in force while you are outside the United States, it is imperative you have the additional benefits included in the ACE/Chubb plan specifically for overseas short-term volunteers. These benefits

are specific to medical needs that may occur while outside the United States.

Cost

The cost is \$4.50 per day, including the day of departure and the day of return. This amount is included in your budget to raise

For further information, please contact the Missionary Services insurance specialist (see Staff Contacts).



TRAVEL

You must have certain travel documents before you leave the United States.

Passport

You must have a passport! A passport identifying you as a citizen of your country is required for travel in most countries other than your own and for reentry into your own country. Detailed information is available at the U.S. Department of State's Web site, <http://travel.state.gov/passport/>.

Apply in person at a passport agency in specially designated post offices. If your post office does not handle passports, ask a post office employee where you can go to apply.

The following documentation is required in the application process for a U.S. passport:

- **A properly completed passport application.** Instructions are on the back of the application form.
- **One recent color photograph.** Specific size requirements are noted on the application—be sure to adhere to them carefully! Your post office might be equipped to take this photo, or you can try a local Walmart, drug store, or photo studio.
- **Proof of U.S. citizenship.** Generally, the original or certified copy of your birth certificate is acceptable proof. (The following documents are not acceptable: Social Security card, learner's or temporary driver's license, a credit card, any temporary or expired identity card or document, any document that has been altered or changed in any manner.)
- **A fee.** Ask at the post office or check on the Web site for the exact amount. Paying by personal check may slow the process, so another method such as cash or money order is a good option.



Your passport will be sent to you by mail anywhere from two to eight weeks after applying. The process can be expedited for an additional fee; obtain that information from the Website mentioned above. or visit <http://traveldocs.com>.

IMPORTANT: Sign your passport immediately and complete the information on the inside cover. If you send an unsigned passport to a consulate when applying for a visa, the visa will not be granted. If you try to enter a country with an unsigned passport, entrance will be denied.

A passport issued to an individual who is at least 16 years old will be valid for ten years. If you already have a passport but it will expire within six months, you must apply for a renewal. Ask for instructions at the post office and/or check the Website for information.

Make several photocopies of the photo/signature pages of your passport, the pages that also contain the official stamp of the issuing agency. **Send one copy to the MAPS office.** Keep one copy with you while traveling, in a place separate from the passport itself; keep the actual passport in a safe or locked cabinet. Give another copy to a parent or close friend for safekeeping. Should your passport become lost or stolen, this copy can be used in the process of obtaining a new one.

Your passport is your best form of identification when you go anywhere overseas, whether in hotels, post offices, embassies, consulates, or other public offices. Keep your passport on your person at all times. Guard it as you would money and other important identification. Be aware that coat pockets, handbags, and hip pockets are particularly susceptible to theft.

If your passport is lost or stolen while overseas, report the loss immediately to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate and to local police authorities. Provide U.S. officials with a photocopy of the lost

passport. They also require two photos, your birth certificate, and a fee. The U.S. government will issue a temporary passport, valid at most for a year, and will contact you by letter after a few months to see if you have recovered the original. If you recover the original passport, you must turn in the temporary passport.

Visas

Once you have been approved as a MAPS volunteer, you will need to discuss visa guidelines with your missionary. If necessary, you may contact your personal travel agent for assistance in securing your visa.

The visa takes the form of stamped information applied to a page of your passport or a separate document attached to a page of your passport. The visa allows you to enter the foreign country that issued it. The visa states what is permitted and what is restricted.

You are responsible for knowing what the visa says. If it is printed in a language you cannot read, find a reliable and accurate translator to explain it to you. You are responsible to comply with the regulations of that visa.

Obtain a visa from the consulate of the country you are going to. That means your passport must be hand-carried or, in most cases, mailed to the consulate. You will receive instruction from AGWM Missionary Services concerning procedure.

Generally, someone going overseas through MAPS will be in the host country no longer than five months. If a visa is required, it will most likely be a tourist visa. Do not be confused by the name of this type of visa; it does not necessarily imply that it is only for persons entering the country on vacation! Other options are student visa, work visa, and residence visa, none of which apply to the situation of a MAPS volunteer.

Following are required items to apply for a tourist visa:

- Valid passport. It should be valid for at least six months beyond the date of the end of your intended stay in the country.
- Visa application.

- Passport-sized photographs. Again, these are not just any photos but must conform to the same standards as described on the back of the U.S. passport application.
- Travel itinerary from travel agent.
- Fee.

AGWM Missionary Services will provide specific information if you need a visa.

Generally, you will complete the application process yourself through your travel agent, a travel document system (<http://traveldocs.com>), or directly through the country's consulate. The length of time required for processing visa applications ranges from ten days to three months.

Your passport with visa is always returned to you in a stamped, self-addressed envelope that you have provided previously to the consulate.

Vaccinations for Overseas Travel

Travel in many countries, such as those in western Europe, does not require any vaccinations or medications.

However, some countries have health problems (for example, malaria, hepatitis, typhoid, or yellow fever) that necessitate the traveler taking specific precautions. In some cases the traveler will not be able to obtain a visa until he or she can provide proof of vaccination.

You should find out what measures you need to take to guard yourself while in your assigned country. Immunizations are recommended and often required for particular destinations. The immunization is made available in the form of vaccinations and/or oral medications.

To find out what is required or at least recommended for your destination:

- Contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
 - » Call 1-800-232-4636.
 - » Go to their Web page on travelers' health, <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>.
- See if any hospital or clinic in your area has a "travel clinic."

- Talk to your personal physician.
- Call your local health department.
- Talk to your travel agent, especially if the agency does a large volume of foreign-travel ticketing.

You can then make an appointment with your personal physician or with a local travel clinic to obtain your required vaccinations.

International Certificates of Vaccination

Various inoculations are required for different visas. Each must be recorded in an International Certificate of Vaccination booklet, which you can obtain from the agency where you applied for your passport.

After you receive the appropriate inoculations, the physician must sign the indicated page in the booklet. Then you must take the booklet to the local county board of health and have it stamped, which validates the inoculations.

Be sure to read the instructions inside the booklet before getting the inoculations.

Flight Arrangements

As a MAPS volunteer, you are responsible for making flight arrangements, but not until the MAPS office has sent you notification of finalized placement. We would hate to have you purchase a nonrefundable ticket and then find out the trip has fallen through for some unforeseen reason.

Travel Agents

You may use a local travel agent whom you know and trust. The MAPS office recommends Adelman Travel. They handle a lot of foreign travel and frequently work with our missionaries.

Adelman Travel
417-888-4488 or 800-248-5562
<https://www.adelmantravel.com/>

Ticketing

You must purchase a round-trip ticket.

When you receive the tickets, check and double-check to be sure your itinerary has you going to

the correct city and country. Unfortunately, a travel agent with little experience in handling overseas travel can make mistakes. You should assume the burden of making sure your tickets are correct.

You should reconfirm your flights with the airline within 72 hours of the actual departure time—both when departing for the field and when returning to the States.

Notify the MAPS office and your missionary supervisor as to date and time of arrival, airline, and flight number so someone can meet you at the airport. If you have never traveled overseas, your missionary can give you helpful information on local requirements for clearing customs.

Be sure to get your missionary's telephone number before you leave the States in case you need to call upon arrival. Usually, you must clear customs before anyone can meet you.

Packing

The most important “do not” in traveling abroad is do not bring too much! Keep in mind that most of the time you will be carrying your own luggage. Since you may want to bring back a few personal purchases from abroad, reserve some packing space for this.

Here are some helpful hints gleaned from frequent overseas' travelers:

- Leave items you cannot afford to lose (for example, expensive jewelry or nice camera) at home. Put a snapshot of the luggage you will check in into your carry-on luggage—just in case checked luggage pieces are temporarily lost. The photo will assist the airline in its search for your bags.
- Line your suitcase with plastic to protect the contents. In some airports it is not unusual for luggage to sit outside, unprotected from rain.



- When going to an African country, bringing two to six extra passport-sized photos is recommended.
- Pack several wire clothes hangers. These items can be scarce. Also pack four or six clothespins for hanging skirts and slacks.
- Bring clothing that can be layered so you can make adjustments if the weather becomes unseasonably cold or hot.
- Bring a couple of washcloths if you will be staying in a hotel or with national families. In most countries other than the U.S., these are not provided.
- Carry a change of clothing, bottled water, small packages of tissues, medications, and other necessities in your carry-on luggage—just in case your checked baggage does not arrive on time.

Luggage

Check the following with your travel agent regarding the luggage limits established by each airline on which you will be flying:

- Number of bags you are allowed
- The dimensions for each bag
- Weight limits

Here's an example of what is generally allowed for most trips abroad. You are usually allowed to check two pieces of baggage free. Measure the dimensions of each:

- The total dimensions (length plus width plus height) of a bag must not exceed 107 inches.
- No bag can exceed 62 inches in any one dimension (length or width or height).
- No bag can weigh over 70 pounds.
- Usually only one carry-on bag is allowed, which must not exceed 45 inches in any one dimension.

Check excess baggage if you need more space. Excess baggage will be charged a certain amount per piece, varying from \$20 to \$300, according to the country where you are going. Restrictions on excess baggage specify that no piece can exceed 62 inches.

Travel to Central and South America is primarily on a weight limitation of either 44 or 66 pounds. Your travel agency should furnish full, up-to-date details on limitations.

More Tips for Traveling

Plan to arrive at the airport at least two hours before departure time. This is an absolute must when beginning an international trip, even if the first leg of your trip is a domestic flight.

Make sure you have your tickets, passport, visa, and certificate of immunizations (if required). You should also be sure to have money (some in small bills) and/or travelers' checks as well as contact information of your family and the missionaries.

Check your baggage through to your final destination—unless you have an overnight layover in the United States. If you do overnight in the States while en route, you must pick up your luggage at baggage claim and then recheck it the next morning as you board the international flight. This airline regulation exists for security purposes; you are not permitted to check the baggage all the way through to the final destination if you are not going to accompany it on the flight.

Keep all baggage stubs with your tickets, making sure you were given the ones that match what is on your luggage.

All carry-on bags must be placed under the seat or in overhead storage when you board. Be certain your carry-on bags meet airline requirements in size, or they will be checked and put in the hold of the aircraft.

Put a name tag on each piece of luggage. Remember how many pieces you initially checked, since you will need to verify all of your luggage has arrived at your destination.

When exiting airplanes, cars, buses, or trains, be sure to make a final check for luggage and personal items. People have been known to allow a piece of luggage to travel across a continent without them!

When changing to a different airline for a connecting flight with a different airline, check in immediately at the corresponding ticket desk to determine the gate number and loading time and to reconfirm your reservation. You can also check the monitors stationed throughout the airport, looking for your airline and flight number and gate number listed. Proceed IMMEDIATELY to the gate, and report

to the airline’s counter at that gate to reconfirm your flight and find out when boarding begins.

When changing planes with the same airline, ask any airline agent in the terminal for the correct gate number, then proceed immediately to that gate. Again, you can also refer to the monitors stationed throughout the airport.

If your plane encounters some emergency en route that requires you to stay overnight at the expense of the airline, carefully follow the instructions of the airline personnel. You and your baggage—other than your carry-on—may be separated because the baggage has been checked through by the airline. Hopefully, it will catch up with you or arrive at your destination at the same time you do.

Immigration Card

While in flight, you will be given an immigration card to complete. If you do not understand all of its terminology, ask a flight attendant for assistance.

Here are some helpful definitions:

- Port of Disembarkation. The city of your destination.
- Port of Embarkation. The U.S. city where you boarded the international flight.
- Proof of Citizenship. When using a passport, fill in the passport information such as passport number, date issued, date of expiration, and city where it was issued (stamped inside the passport). If your proof of citizenship is a birth certificate, put “B.C.”
- Purpose of Entry. “Tourist” is the designation you should use.
- The Consulate General or Embassy. This is the issuing agency for visa holders in your destination country.
- Airline. This stands for the agency issuing the tourist card.

Customs

When Entering a Foreign Country

When you get off the plane at your destination, you should have these items within easy reach, since you will be asked by the customs inspector to show some or all of them:

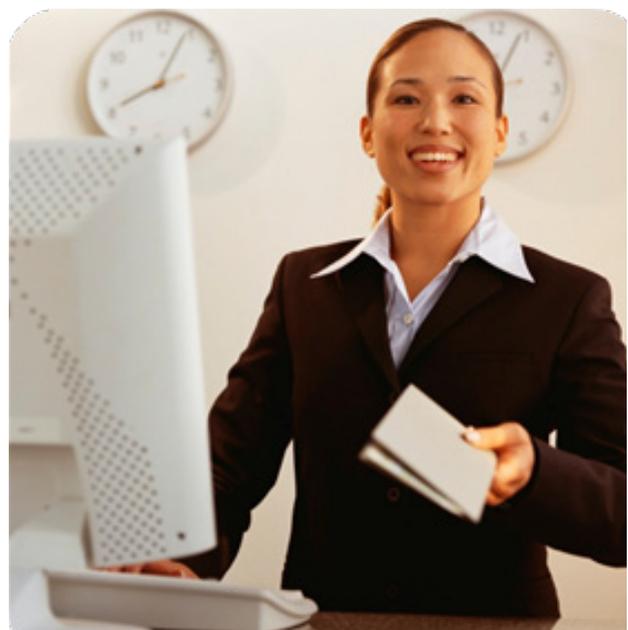
- Baggage claim checks
- Certificate of vaccination booklet (if required).
- Passport or birth certificate
- Immigration card
- Return ticket

Go first to baggage claim and claim all of your luggage. Then proceed to customs.

In some European countries there are no customs formalities. Simply choose the gate marked “Nothing to Declare” and go through it. In other countries you will need to get in line to see one of the customs inspectors.

When you reach the customs inspector’s counter, you should already have your luggage unlocked in the event the inspector asks to look through your bags.

Place all bags (including handbags, purses, attaché cases, and camera cases) on the counter. Answer all of questions respectfully. Remain patient and courteous. The customs inspector will stamp your passport, showing the date you entered the country.



When Returning to the United States

Remember that you are not permitted to bring animals, plants, or fruit back into the United States.

While in flight to the United States, the flight attendant will give you a customs declaration form. List all items (and their costs) that you purchased abroad and are bringing back into the United States. Each person is allowed \$300 duty-free purchases. In other words, you will not have to pay a tax unless the total cost of purchases exceeds \$300.

Note that when you board the flight to leave that foreign country, you may be charged a nominal tax or fee in addition to the price of your ticket. Some countries are now charging what is usually called a “customs fee” to help provide additional airport security.

Currency Exchange

It is wise to exchange some U.S. currency at the bank or exchange office at the airport before leaving the country. Be sure to carry some small bills in case of a stopover en route. This will make food or gift purchases easier. Avoid acquiring large amounts of foreign currency. A small percentage is often lost in exchanging from one currency to another.

Most international airports will readily accept U.S. currency in exchange for foreign currency. Keep in mind you may need small bills for tipping porters or cab drivers.

What To Do in Case Of...

Missed Flights

If you miss a connecting flight due to mechanical failure, weather, or something similar, the airline is responsible for getting you to your destination, paying food and housing costs, and notifying those waiting for you at your destination. However, you must make sure this happens.

If you miss a connecting flight due to your failure to report to the proper boarding gate and even though you were at the terminal on time, it is your responsibility to get another flight, pay any additional costs (including the cost of an overnight stay, if necessary), and notify those who were to meet you.

Lost Luggage

Make sure all your luggage is tagged for its correct destination. Keep all stubs. If a piece of checked luggage does not arrive by the time you do, go immediately to the airline ticket counter and fill out a claim. Be sure to give instructions as to what to do with the luggage when it is found. Get the name and telephone number of the agent you talk to in case further communication is necessary. (It is a good idea to have your name and address inside as well as outside each piece of luggage.)

SECURE EMAIL

MAPS volunteers serving 4 to 11 months are given a secure email account to promote better communication with AGWM and for sending financial reports securely by email. Instructions to access this service are summarized here:

1. Determine your log-in name from the explanation below.
2. Determine your password from the explanation below.
3. Log in at least once via the Web at <https://hqmail.agmd.org/>.
4. Set up email software on your computer.

Your Log-In Name

Your log-in name is simply your email address. It will be of the following form:

firstname.lastname@ma.agmd.org

Or you can use your six-digit account number plus two-digit sub-account, such as

12345698@ma.agmd.org

The first form makes for a friendly email address. However, if your name can have variations, such as Frederick Flintstone III, it could take you several tries to determine if it was set up as *Fred* or *Frederick*, *FlintstoneIII* or *Flintstone*, and so on, so you can use your AGWM account number instead. Once you log in, a welcome message displays your *firstname.lastname* form.

For married couples, husband and wife have separate accounts. For both, the first six digits are the head of household's six-digit AGWM account number followed by 99 for head of house or 98 for spouse. Therefore, if my name is Fred Flintstone and my AGWM account number is 123456, I could use either of the following as my login:

fred.flintstone@ma.agmd.org

or

12345699@ma.agmd.org

NOTE: If the @ sign does not work in the email address, substitute the % sign.

Your Password

Your password was composed from information in

our database that is unique to you:

- The 4th, 5th, and 6th digits of the head of household's account number.
- The 2-letter (uppercase) abbreviation of your state of birth.
- The last 4-digits of your Social Security number.

These are all run together with no spaces. For example, if my account number is 123456, I was born in Texas, and my Social Security number is 456-78-1234, my password would be 456TX1234. (If you were born outside the United States, use TX.) You can change your password after you successfully log in.

Logging In Once Via the Web

Although you may want to use HQMail in an offline mode most of the time, you should log in the first time via the Web for the following reasons:

- To make sure you have the right log-in name and password before trying to configure email client software.
- To change your password.
- To see how to use the Web interface in case you ever need it while traveling.

Go to <https://hqmail.agmd.org>. (If you forget the s of https, you will get a "bad password" error even if you use the right ID and password.)

After you log in, click *SETTINGS*. On the next screen click *PASSWORD* and change your password. From there click on *Mailboxes* and then *Inbox* to see any messages. When finished, click *LOG OUT* and close your browser.

Set Up Email Software on Your Computer

This optional step lets you read, compose, and store your email off-line instead of through the Web address, but specific steps depend on what software you choose. Most already have Microsoft Outlook or Microsoft Outlook Express, or you can use a program like Eudora. However, we offer instructions for many different email programs.

For help or instructions on any aspect of your secure email, please contact AGWM Technical Services at help@agmd.org.