

Sante Total Volunteer Trip Guide

The following guide should answer most, if not all, of your questions regarding the medical relief trips. If we missed anything, please email alison.annette.smith@gmail.com or santetotal.healthcare@gmail.com.

Booking Your Flights: All participants must book their own travel, and all must be on the same flights in and out of Port-au-Prince. Flight information will be provided well in advance of the trip so you can buy tickets and work out connecting flights. Please purchase all your flights together. This prevents you from having to re-check your luggage and from having to pay the luggage fee for a second time! The least expensive flights can be found on www.aa.com or www.expedia.com. The website www.flyforgood.com is also able to find discounted ticket prices for people going on humanitarian missions and can book any flight that you request, as long as you show them proof for your trip. The flights come with two free checked bags which can cut down on costs a little bit.

Trip Fees/Pre-Trip Paperwork: The cost of food, lodging, and transportation within Haiti is \$500. Please make a check out to “Sante Total” and send it **at least one week prior** to the trip (Sante Total, 3350 Ridgelake Drive, Suite 295, Metairie, LA, 70002, please mark “donation” in the memo). You can also pay via Paypal by following the link from our website, www.santetotal.org. If possible, we prefer checks to ensure that Sante Total receives your entire donation, as Paypal typically takes a 2-3% cut. You will receive a tax receipt for your trip fees.

Everyone must complete an Emergency Contact form, waiver, and provide a copy of your Passport. Returning trip members must complete only the waiver prior to each trip. Please have this paperwork emailed to mmatossi@tulane.edu or alison.annette.smith@gmail.com **at least one week prior** to the trip.

Failure to complete the necessary paperwork or pay the trip fee prior to the trip will result in you not being able to attend.

Vaccinations and Medications: It is a good idea to contact a Travel Clinic about 4-6 weeks prior to the trip to schedule any necessary vaccinations and pick up prescriptions.

The CDC recommends the following vaccinations for Haiti: Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Typhoid. You should also ensure that you are up to date with routine vaccinations including Tetanus (DPT) and MMR. The Rabies vaccine is optional; you will not be at risk while in Jacsonville (there are bats that periodically live in the Mission House near where we stay), but if

you intend to spend additional time in Haiti and your travel plans involve camping, hiking, and/or frequent contact with animals or bats, you should consider getting the Rabies vaccine. Your travel doctor will discuss these vaccines with you in detail.

You should begin taking malaria prophylaxis prior to the trip. Many different antimalarial drugs are available, and your doctor will discuss your options with you.

Your doctor may recommend you fill a prescription for Cipro or some other antibiotic to treat diarrheal illness. We have plenty of Cipro at the clinic in case you do get sick, but feel free to bring any additional medications your doctor recommends for peace of mind.

For more information about traveler's health in Haiti, please visit the CDC website:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/haiti.htm>

Tulane Travel Clinic, (504) 988-6929

Travel documentation: A valid US passport is required for entry into Haiti and re-entry into the US. You do not need to get a visa of any kind if you are a US citizen. Be sure to double-check your passport expiration date prior to departure! Please email a copy of your passport at least a week prior to travel.

You can register with the State Department to let them know about your plans in Haiti. This is recommended as the situation in Haiti can sometimes change unexpectedly.

<https://step.state.gov/step/>

Please visit the US State Department website for Haiti-specific travel information, including embassy locations, current security situations, trip registry options, etc:

<https://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ha>

Immigration Form/Customs Form: Before landing in Port au Prince, please fill out the immigration and customs form. The address in the country is: 14 Rue Cristophe Pignon. Phone number is 36444929. The reason for travel is "pleasure" and you do not have anything to declare. You will need to retain the small departure card in your passport to leave the country.

Entrance Fee: You must pay a \$10 fee in the airport to enter Haiti. Please bring enough cash to cover this.

Staying in Port au Prince: If you need to stay in Port au Prince overnight for any reason, here are a few guesthouses near the airport that you may consider.

<https://www.parishprogram.org/matthew-25-house/>

<https://www.facebook.com/haiticommunitere/>

Transportation: Upon arrival in Port au Prince, you will go through Immigration then proceed to baggage claim. Your bags will either be coming out on the belt or behind the “gated” off area behind the belts. You need to give your claim ticket to the attendants and they will retrieve your bag (no need to tip). You have to get your bag tickets checked off by the airport employees before leaving so do not lose your baggage ticket claim sticker. We will proceed through Customs as a group. Once outside the airport, please hold on firmly to your bags and refuse anyone who is helping. It is very chaotic and we want to avoid any issues.

We usually rent a van to drive us to Jacksonville. We will meet our driver and other contacts once outside the airport. The drive is approximately 4-6 hours. Please prepare ahead of time by bringing bottled water and snacks. Also, please take motion sickness pills if you need them. The roads are very windy. If you are prone to motion sickness, make sure to tell the trip leaders when we load the vans, and you will get preferred seating.

When you get into the village, it will most likely be in the evening. So we find it useful to keep your headlamp readily available when you’re traveling in the van. The luggage will be loaded on top, and you won’t be able to reach it if it is packed away!

Accommodations: The group lives and works at Lakay Missionaire (Mission House) in the center of the village. The clinic is operated on the ground floor, while the bedrooms and main living area are on the 2nd floor.

There are typically 2-3 people per room depending on the size of the group, and there are three bathrooms with fully functional toilets and showers (one upstairs and two downstairs). A mattress, sheets, pillow, bath towel, and toilet paper will be provided, and there is enough water for everyone to take one shower per day (although please be prepared to minimize your water use by taking fast “military-style” showers).

Electricity is usually available via a generator for a few hours every evening. There are outlets to charge cell phones and other devices.

Laundry can be done for you during your stay if necessary.

Food and Water: The piped water at Lakay Missionaire is fine for showering and hand washing, but is not safe for drinking or brushing teeth. Clean water will be provided every day in the form of large jugs or plastic sachets.

Three good-sized meals per day are prepared for the group by community members. Staples include eggs, rice, beans, chicken, goat, and plantains. There are occasionally snacks available throughout the day, but it is a good idea to bring a stash of granola bars or other nonperishable snacks if you tend to get hungry between meals. Vegetarians should consult with Alison prior to the trip.

Tread Lightly Principle: Jacksonville burns or buries its trash. Our group has a huge impact on the amount of trash generated during our week-long stay. Please unpack products prior to packing for your trip in order to minimize waste when in Jacksonville. Also, consider bringing personal recyclable waste home with you. We collect all empty medicine bottles in the pharmacy and ask that volunteers transport them back home, where they can be recycled.

Clinic Duties: Medical volunteers will perform vital signs, do patient consultations, and provide treatment regimens and appropriate follow-up care. Nonmedical volunteers can assist with vital signs, perform eye exams, aid in translation (French, Spanish, or Haitian Creole), work in the pharmacy, and manage organizational and/or educational projects as needed.

Daily Schedule and Activities: Breakfast and a team meeting are typically held between 7 and 8am. Clinic begins at 8am and runs until around 6pm (this varies depending on how many patients show up each day). We eat lunch in waves so the clinic is always staffed. Dinner is served around 7pm and the rest of the evening is free time.

A party is held for all clinic volunteers and community leaders at Lakay Missionaire on the last night of each trip. There is frequently a mid-week party for the whole community held at the local bar/club, with plenty of music and dancing. Please enjoy yourselves at this activity but please be safe and respectful. Please do not post pictures online of the trip that involve alcohol.

Volunteers are free to walk around the village after clinic each day, and there are usually youth soccer games and other activities going on that you can watch or join. Local women sell souvenirs outside the clinic a few days of the week (including hand-sewn table cloths, scrubs, aprons, and children's clothing, paintings, wood carvings, etc) so be prepared to take a break and work on your haggling skills. We encourage you to purchase the local souvenirs to support the community. Bring additional cash (small bills included!) with you if you want to purchase gifts – they accept US dollars.

Safety: Jacsonville is a small, close-knit community and you and your belongings will be very safe during your stay. Other volunteers and several community members are readily available to provide assistance if you need it.

The group will always be together en route to/from and in the airports. Generally speaking, as with any trip abroad, it is recommended that you stay vigilant and keep an eye on your belongings and your surroundings while in public areas.

Communication: AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon (GSM capable phones only) work in Haiti, but please check with your individual wireless provider before travel to get rates and activate your phone if necessary. There is a local group cell phone available to make international calls for a small fee. There is also USB internet available at the Mission House (but this is not always reliable).

Cash: It is a good idea to bring some cash with you in case of emergencies or unforeseen costs, and if you plan on buying souvenirs. There is no need to change money in the airport – American dollars are accepted as payment in most places in Haiti. In summary the things you will absolutely need cash for: Custom fee into Haiti (\$10), purchasing souvenirs, alcohol.

Alcohol Fee: At the end of the day, after the clinic closes, to wind down we often relax on the roof of the Mission House building where you can enjoy a beer or rum drink if you would like. Furthermore, at the end of the trip party, we will request you to pay a small amount for the alcohol. If you are interested in enjoying the delicious local beer (Prestige) and/or world famous Barbancourt rum, please bring additional cash. This is not covered by the trip fee. The amount we request from you varies for each trip, but please be aware that this is an additional cost.

What To Bring: Note: the following is NOT an exhaustive checklist, but should provide some guidance while you are packing.

1. Clothing – Lightweight, comfortable clothing is best for clinic, particularly scrubs. Casual clothes (shorts, t-shirts, tank tops, etc) are fine for non-clinic hours. Please bring one nicer outfit (as in, not scrubs) for the party. Bring extra socks for the rainy season trips!

The weather is very hot and humid around the clock during the summer and fall trips. In winter and spring, temperatures can dip dramatically in the evenings (as low as the 50s and even 40s during January) so bring some extra layers.

2. Shoes – Comfort is key during clinic, as you'll be on your feet for most of each day. During

the rainy season (May – October) the ground gets extremely muddy so bring shoes for walking around in after clinic that you don't mind getting dirty.

3. Insect control – Bring a mosquito net. If you are one of those lucky people who are extra attractive to mosquitoes, pack plenty of bug spray, particularly during summer and fall. Mosquitoes are around during the dry season but are a lot less plentiful. Bug wipes are also extremely useful.

4. Sun protection – You will be indoors most of each day, but it is always smart to bring sunscreen and a hat.

5. Lighting – We strongly recommend you bring a headlamp. Handheld flashlights are fine too, but the headlamp will really come in handy during clinic if/when treating patients after sundown. The generator is typically only turned on from 7 – 11ish every night, so you will need some kind of light source to get around in the off hours. Remember to bring some spare batteries.

6. Linens – As mentioned earlier, a bath towel, sheets and a pillow are provided. Feel free to bring your own if you prefer. January volunteers: bring a blanket, it does get cold overnight.

7. Clinic materials – Medical volunteers, please bring your own clipboards, pen lights, and stethoscopes! Odometers, ophthalmoscopes and blood pressure cuffs are helpful. We have a few medical reference books (in English and Haitian Creole) and language dictionaries, but you are welcome to bring your own as well. Hand sanitizer will be provided.

8. Miscellaneous (including items mentioned earlier in the trip guide) – Water bottle, snacks, duct tape, medications, passport, extra cash, camera, earplugs

Respect for the Community and Our Mission: Please keep in mind that in Haitian culture, it is typical for the people we work with to request monetary donations or electronics. The best way you can help Sante Total to help the community is by donating money to support our projects or money to support specific causes (i.e. education for certain individuals, etc).

Post-trip Survey

Please go to the following website to complete an anonymous post-trip survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/P7N8T3S>

Emergency Contacts

Gabriel Thelus, 01150936444929

Berteau Zephir, 01150937582454 or 01150934620398

Emergency contact in the US: Paula Smith, 412-373-2076 or jdsmith5@verizon.net

References

Great introduction to Creole <http://sllc.ku.edu/open-educational-resources#Hai>

English/Kreyol Medical Dictionaries

https://www.amazon.com/dp/1584320729/ref=cm_sw_r_tw_dp_x_71FUybS9T76AS

https://www.amazon.com/dp/1884730752/ref=cm_sw_r_tw_dp_x_353-ybQC8XXS7

Kreyol Dictionary

https://www.amazon.com/dp/0967993717/ref=cm_sw_r_tw_dp_x_13FUybSP0F36V

Mountains Beyond Mountains (Paul Farmer's biography)

https://www.amazon.com/dp/0812980557/ref=cm_sw_r_tw_dp_x_S4FUyb70SGHG7

Song of Haiti (Story of Dr. Larry Mellon)

https://www.amazon.com/dp/1891620134/ref=cm_sw_r_tw_dp_x_q5FUybSGM9E2E