

The North Carolina Cuba Partnership



Volunteer Orientation Manual

2014

Thank You!

Thank you for responding to the call for volunteers to help share the love of Christ with the people of Cuba. The task **has been** challenging and exciting. North Carolina Baptist Men has been in Partnership with the Eastern Baptist Convention of Cuba to help with the construction of a home for retired pastors, as well as other projects.

The information in this booklet is designed to provide basic orientation about the project, as well as information about Cuba and our fellow Baptists there. You will receive additional information, as needed, before your departure.

Please read each section carefully, **as this manual has been updated recently**. We feel this will better prepare you both physically and spiritually. For questions you may contact us from the information found below.

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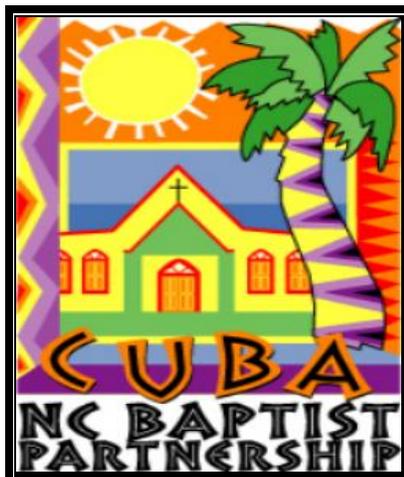


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Thank you..... 2

Table of contents..... 3

Introductory Information about the Partnership..... 4

If You Must..... 5

General Travel Information and Tips..... 6

Phone Numbers and address..... 7

Preparing for the Mission Trip 7

Airports and Travel Procedures (airports, hotel overnight, money conversion,
souvenirs and gifts, departure exit fee, etc.) 8

What to Bring (a checklist) 11

Weather 12

Safety and Health Matters..... 12

Team Leader’s Responsibility 13

General Description of Construction 13

Evangelism and Other Ministry Opportunities..... 13

Sharing Your Testimony..... 14

Gift Guide for Cuba 14

Involving Your Congregation in the Mission..... 16

Church Commissioning Service 16

Insurance – Supplemental Coverage Information 17

Insurance – Summary of Benefits 18

Incident & Medical Forms..... 20

IRS Deductions for Volunteers..... 21

Introductory Information about the Partnership:

Purpose

The primary purpose of the partnership is construction of Cuban Baptist elderly home in Santiago, Baptist camp construction and construction at the Cuban Baptist Convention office. Teams will also be made up of individuals to provide VBS, Sports Camps and Leadership Training events. Teams will have an opportunity to visit with and get to know Cuban Baptists as well as worship in Cuban Baptist churches. Team members are encouraged to share their faith with people that they meet.

Trip Cost

The basic price of the trip is \$1,600 per person. This includes round-trip airfare, visa, insurance, in-country transportation, lodging, meals, orientation materials, and T-shirt. You will need to take additional \$25 cash with you for airport exit tax, plus some extra money. (Price does not include materials that will be needed for ministry, i.e., VBS materials, building materials, etc. See below). According to U.S. law, you are not allowed to buy anything except books or maps that you can bring back to the U.S. from Cuba.

ADDITIONAL Team Cost

Each team must provide an additional amount of \$2,000 per team. This additional cost could include payment for construction materials, training events, etc. depending on the type of team you are providing. This amount must be received in our office 60 days prior to your departure date. Contact NCBM for more information.

Teams

Teams should be comprised of no more than 14 members, and no less than 7 members. (If your numbers fall outside of these guidelines, please contact NCBM for more information.) Having a Spanish translator on each team will be very helpful. If team does not include a translator, one will be provided for your team, usually a Cuban national. There will be a small additional cost for a translator. Please contact Baptist Men for more information. Construction teams should have at least two members who are strong in construction and/or block laying skills. All construction teams will be involved mostly in block laying. Applicants must be at least 16 years old to participate. Most teams travel to Miami on a Thursday and spend Friday-Friday in Cuba. Some projects are determined on when a team is available to travel to Cuba, based on the Thursday-Friday schedule.

Participation

Those wishing to participate should do the following:

- Complete the online application and send a deposit of \$500 per person, at least 90 days prior to your anticipated departure date. The final payment of \$1,100 per person is due no later than 60 days prior to the date of your departure. If you are a member of a team, you must complete your online application within 90 days prior to your trip. (Once tickets are purchased, they are non-refundable and non-transferable).
- Have a valid passport. Your passport must NOT expire within 6 months of your departure date. If you do not have a valid passport you will need to get one immediately. It usually takes 3-4 weeks to process a new passport.
- You must also have a visa for Cuba and our office will handle this. It usually takes three months to get this visa.
- Submit any necessary funds for materials to our office 60 days prior to your departure date.

Health

Team members must be in good physical health. Anyone with a chronic medical condition should not volunteer for these projects. Many areas of work will be quite hot and dusty. Volunteers will need to make sure the following shots are up to date: Typhoid, Hepatitis A, and Tetanus. Tell who ever administers your shots that you will be traveling to Cuba. (They may suggest other shots. This is up to you.)

Travel

All travel will be arranged by NCBM's Office. All trips will be seven days in duration. No deviations from dates listed may be made. All volunteers must depart from Charlotte, Greensboro, Raleigh/Durham, or Atlanta. (Travel may be possible from other cities, but may involve an additional cost.)

Living and Working Conditions

Those participating in this effort must be flexible and willing to work as a member of the team. Travel, living, and working conditions may be difficult at times. The work may be strenuous and the climate will be

hot. Once applications and deposits have been received, team members will be sent an orientation manual, which will answer many questions about the trip.

Other

Smoking, chewing tobacco, and drinking alcoholic beverages is highly offensive to Cuban Christians. Team members must refrain from these activities while in Cuba. Please pray about taking a team to minister in Cuba.

State Dept. Security *Please register your travel plans with the US State Department. You can do this by going on the State Department Web Site and registering there. You need to do this before you leave the United States. This is for your own protection and security while in Haiti should the need arise. Register as an individual. The website is:

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/index.aspx>

IF YOU MUST...

*If you must have cooking like Mom's, **BE FLEXIBLE!***

The meals prepared for you by the people in the area are a way to express their gratitude and to share fellowship, often at a great personal sacrifice.

*If you must sleep in a bed like your own and have your own private room, **BE FLEXIBLE!***

What you are offered will be the best the host has. Accept it, endure it and say "thank you". Where they live for a lifetime, you can live for a week or two.

*If you must be transported in a private vehicle everywhere you go, **BE FLEXIBLE!***

Most folks don't have cars. You can walk like they do or take the bus. Cars in other countries sometimes cost more than their houses.

*If you must do it your way or not at all, **BE FLEXIBLE!***

"Not at all" is a good choice if the alternative is the destruction of the bridges other Christians have been building for many years. Your way may be best, but that is not the point. In fact, if you ask, you can probably get a pretty good explanation for why things should be done as they are.

*If you must bring your biases and prejudices, **BE FLEXIBLE!***

You may have grown up believing that some ways of living or even some people are better than others. They are not. **You are coming to serve and to do so humbly.** Any condescending attitudes or remarks will quickly and clearly be understood even if all of your attempts at communicating the gospel are not.

On the other hand

If you will allow yourself to:

**Be taught as much as you seek to teach...*

**Be emptied in order to be filled...*

**Be open to new ways of seeing and doing...*

**Let God's love be your only motivation and interest...*

PLEASE COME!

General Travel Information and Tips:

1. **Travel to CUBA will require a valid, current passport and a Visa. The visa will be delivered to you at the airport in Cuba by an airport official when you arrive.**
2. **You will received a yellow Cuba T-shirt in which you will wear to Cuba.**
3. Always keep a travel checklist. Record those things that you will need to take as well as flight schedules, airline information, etc.
4. Carry a list of important phone numbers with you. **(Do not put this information in your baggage. You will need to have it with you).**

5. A copy of the first two pages of your passport should be carried in a place different from the original in case it is lost. You should carry two passport-size photos with you.
6. Travel light. **Please be aware: the charter flight charges a \$20 fee per checked bag + \$2.00 per pound over the 44 pounds TOTAL you are allowed for your check in + your carry-on luggage to Cuba. YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED EXTRA Weight FOR YOUR CARRY ON or it will have to be considered “check in” luggage. Again, anything beyond 44 pounds will cost an extra \$2.00 per pound. The charter flight in Miami, at this point, doesn’t take credit cards. Cash only.**
7. In contrast you are allowed two check-in bags of 50 pounds by the domestic airlines (point A to point B anywhere in the USA) **but we recommend you take just one piece of luggage + your carry-on. Most airlines are now charging a luggage fee anywhere from \$25 to \$35 for each piece of domestic checks in luggage, which would be applicable for the flight TO and FROM Miami.** You are allowed one carry-on bag + a personal item: (a computer, a back pack or a purse).
8. Carry-on bag must be able to fit in the overhead compartment or under the seat of the airplane.

For easy travel, suitcases with wheels work best. Also, using a backpack for carryon luggage is helpful.

9. Mark your luggage clearly, placing identification labels inside and outside your bags. **Use the Wilcox blue tag** on each piece of team luggage. This will allow your group to identify your luggage once you land overseas. You will also have a NC Baptist Men luggage handle tag.
10. Pack your carry-on with one change of clothes in case your bags are delayed. Also put other essentials, personal medicine, glasses, camera, etc., in your carry-on. **Remember that liquids/gels are not allowed on your carry-on luggage unless they fit the official travel size containers allowed by TSA. Below are the instructions on how to do it for your carry on:**



11. Always arrive at the airport early. At least **three** hours ahead of time **for the international flight to and from Cuba**. This **will** give plenty of time to check baggage, pass through security, meet your group and make sure everyone has the appropriate documentation.
12. Be sure to have your passport and ticket. You will have a copy of a letter on NC Baptist Men's letterhead when you'll receive your international tickets. Keep them together and in a secure place at all times.
13. **When in Cuba, please carry your passport with you at all times, unless you are at the Rest Home. It's considered a crime not to have your passport with you when you are on the road or if stopped by a Cuban officer.**
14. Check your bags from your airport of origin to Miami. Pick your luggage at the baggage claim and take it with you to the hotel. You will re-check it on the charter flight.
15. When traveling with a group, check-in is easier if you check in as a group. Checking in together helps assure your bags will arrive at the same destination.
16. Upon arrival in Cuba either **Donis Hernandez or someone else from the Eastern Baptist Convention** will be at airport to meet you.

17. Credit cards and traveler checks **ARE NOT accepted in Cuba**. Cash is the best form of acceptable payment. **Cubans deal with three types of currencies: Euros or Canadian Dollars, Cuban Convertible Pesos and Cuban Pesos**. In most cases you will be dealing with Cuban Convertible Pesos. In case you decide to take your credit cards, it is also important to have a list of your credit card numbers and the number to call if your cards are lost or stolen. **AS OF JANUARY 2014, US DOLLARS ARE THE BEST CURRENCY TO CARRY TO CONVERT TO CUC'S WHEN IN CUBA.**
18. In Flight, you will be asked to fill out an Immigration and Customs Declaration form. **They will keep your Customs Declaration form. They will give you the Immigration form back so please keep the form with your passport. You will need this form when you leave the country.**
19. Don't take pictures in airports, of military people or communications.
20. If for some reason no one is at the airport to meet your team you should wait. In case you need to make contact, phone numbers are provided **on page 10** in this manual.
21. In returning to USA, prior to landing in America, you will be asked to fill out Customs and immigration forms.
22. Make sure luggage is checked to final airport destination (Santiago de Cuba or Holguin) as you leave Miami.
23. Upon arrival in Cuba - if **you have not changed any money** you will have opportunity to do it. Let your team leader know it and he will tell the onsite coordinator. **Do not try to change money at the airport**. You may not want to change more than **\$50 or \$100 US worth**. You will need to provide **25 to 30 CUC** for airport tax upon your departure from Cuba. Make sure to set this amount aside.

Phone Numbers and Addresses:

The On-Site Coordinator and **Director of the Rest Home** in Cuba is **Donis Hernandez**. He will meet arriving teams at the airport in Santiago as they exit the baggage claim area. He will provide transportation to and from team lodgings and the worksite. **Pastor Lester Acosta**, when teams are participating in VBS, Sports, Camps, etc. will meet teams (other than construction) at the airport. In the event that the coordinator is not at the airport due to an unforeseen emergency, the team should wait in the airport and attempt to make contact. The name of the Convention is: La Convencion Bautista Oriental de Cuba. The President is **Rev. Joel Luis Dupont**. Former President was Enio Navarro Castellanos.

If your travel is through Holguin, there will be transportation provided by ABC Charter to take the team to Santiago de Cuba. The trip takes around 2 hours and 30 minutes. There may or may not be someone from the Rest Home waiting at the Holguin airport. Team leaders will be given the address where the team is staying once all travel logistics have been made. Important phone numbers will also be given at that time.

PREPARING FOR THE MISSION TRIP

Proper preparation for the mission trip will make the difference between a very positive experience for team members, and the possibility for disappointment.

It would be helpful to have at least one team member who has a good command of Spanish. In Cuba, Jose is usually the translator for NC teams. His English is very good. On site folks have limited or none knowledge of English. Neida will also translate for some groups. Her English is also very good. If you do not take a translator with you on your team and you need to use of one of our translators in Cuba, please expect to pay a wage of \$10-\$15 per day for their work. Oftentimes this is the only salary they will receive when working for our groups.

Team Preparation:

Every mission trip requires flexibility on the part of participants. No matter how much planning is done, something will not follow the form. However, the better prepared team members are for the assignment, the smoother the whole process will go. It's important for your team to meet together at least once

(several times is preferable) before the trip in order build unity and develop individuals' confidence in the team's mission. Consider these areas:

Spiritual Preparation – This is the most important preparation team members can undertake. We encourage each member to engage in personal prayer and Bible study time (quiet time). For some, this will already be a part of their lifestyles. For others, this will be a new undertaking. Do not assume each team member knows the importance of or the way to conduct a daily quiet time. Be willing to work on this. Do not be afraid to share with each other about spiritual matters. This will help unify your team for your ultimate purpose of being the light of Christ. However, you cannot be light without first being salt. Personal relationship and growth in Christ is part of being “salt” (Matthew 5:13-16). You may also want to provide age-appropriate evangelism training. Be sure you know the target group you will be ministering to (i.e. - preschoolers, 4-6 graders, youth, young adults, seniors, etc.) Opportunities to practice evangelism with a similar target in your area may be helpful as well.

Skills Preparation – Team members will feel more confident if they know their individual responsibilities. Those involved in construction should know the physical variables of each job (i.e. - height of the building, pitch of the roof, etc.), as well as what kind of tools is available, who will be responsible for materials, etc. Those doing VBS or games for children need to understand the safety factors involved, as well as have an idea of what the available play area is like. Bible story leaders should master the use of animated voices. Make sure the skills that are required match the skills of team members.

Cultural Preparation – Anywhere you go is not going to be like “home”. Team members should be prepared to experience differences in climate, temperature, terrain, customs, and language, just to name a few. Learn as much as you can about the area you are going to and the people with whom you will be working. Teams should also be aware of what socio-economic group they will be working with. Local church leaders should be able to assist you in understanding the mindset of the folks your team will be ministering to. Lonely Planet and Fodor's publish tourist guides are some resources that can teach something about the culture. Web searches are also helpful.

Physical Preparation – Team members should understand the physical requirements of each assignment. Some will be more physically demanding than others. However, a good diet, adequate rest, and proper conditioning are important in any mission situation. Team members should be made aware of this, as well as other physical factors such as projected temperature, precipitation, terrain, etc.

Mental and Attitude Preparation – After all other preparations are made, come back to this one. Encourage team members to focus on the purpose of the trip. Recall the goals of the local church and people you will be working with. It's important to meet their needs as opposed to imposing our desires upon them. Help team members understand that you are going to aid in an on-going ministry process that began before you arrived, and which will hopefully continue long after you are gone. Emphasize a servant/helper role as one aiding another in accomplishing their task. Finally, bathe everything you do in prayer.

AIRPORTS AND TRAVEL PROCEDURES

North Carolina to Miami

Check your luggage to Miami.

Need photo ID (Passport is best) and copy of e-ticket to board.

Overnight at a hotel in Miami:

Proceed to baggage retrieval. Proceed as team to hotel shuttle bus area (2nd floor). **Crown Plaza Hotel** shuttle bus runs **every 20 minutes** and pick up at 2nd level from any of the exits. Team leader will check in first and then each person will do their own check in. Your hotel room cost is included in your price to NCBM but a credit card will be required for any extra charges to your room (advice team members not to charge phone or food to room). **Please make sure to let them know at the front desk that you will need transportation between 4:00-4:30 am the next morning to the airport.**

Team leader: Please let the hotel manager knows, as you check in, that your team will be leaving very early in the morning (**around 4:00-4:30 am**) to the airport and will need the shuttle (or the mini bus, if you have a big team). Advise team to be in lobby at least **4 hours before the flight to Cuba**. Shuttles run continually in the morning.

Miami to Cuba

Ticket counter is at **Ski King/Vision Airlines or American Airlines (if flying through Holguin)**, concourse **G**. **From time to time the airline changes**. A document check will be first step. Team leader should check group together unless they are advised to do one by one. Please collect team member's passports and International Tickets with letter to ABC. Approach far right of ticket counter (without the luggage) and present passports and tickets. Sometimes you are asked to sign a travel form again and to

write down your phone number. The airline staff will check names off passenger itinerary and issue the boarding pass.

Luggage Cost: The charter flight charges a **\$20 fee per bag + \$2.00** per pound over **44 pounds weight of luggage**. **Anything over 44 pounds** (this includes checked luggage and carry on) **will cost \$2.00 per pound and has to be paid in CASH. No credit cards accepted.**

The next step involves weighing luggage. One by one team members will approach the station to the right of where the document check occurred. Baggage will be weighed (both checked and carry-on) and ticket will be requested. Once weighing occurs the traveler will be asked to pay any extra weight charge (**remember \$2 per lb**). You can ask for a discount but there is no guarantee you will get one. The team leader can remain at the station and pay for each team member. (Keep receipts).

Once all have received boarding passes, the team can head to security area at the entrance to boarding gate areas. A passport and boarding pass will be required first. All items will then be screened: belts, shoes, jackets, carry on and pocket contents. Cuba travelers are also subject to a second screening, which involves use of the wand and a pat down.

It is better to eat breakfast after check in but before going through security.

After clearing security travelers you will head to gate (G concourse) probably gate 16 at the end of the concourse). The concourse and gate do change throughout the year. Restrooms are available.

All teams will fly into Santiago de Cuba (or Holguin) on the eastern end of the Island. Santiago is at sea level. There is a one-hour time difference (Cuba one hour ahead) during the US daylight savings time period.

At Santiago Airport

The religious visa you receive in USA is a copy of the original visa sent to us by the visa person in Havana. The original visa will be given to you at the airport in Santiago. A person will meet the team leader before any team members enter Passport control. He will provide the original visa for all the team. He will leave and team leader should give these documents to each team members. One by one team should proceed to Passport control booths. The passport and Permit to Enter (visa) document is needed. You may be asked what you are doing and where are you going. **Team members should have the address of the Eastern Baptist Convention building with them along with Rev. Joel Luis Dupont, the president, as their Cuban contact.** Once through this area, travelers will have their carry-on bags checked, similar to security check in Miami. Do not have exposed packets or bulges in pockets, as you will be asked about it. **This applies to money, too.** You may be asked how much money you are carrying and whether you are familiar with money conversion rules. Obtain checked baggage, but have all team members wait at the baggage belt until you have all luggage. Proceed to doors to exit but you will pass by security staff who will take the Declarations form and may request that your bag to be searched. If a search is required the person will place bag on a table and wait. Others will proceed through the checkpoint and then out the double doors to the left, you can't wait in this area for those whose bags are being checked. Porters from airport will take your luggage and look for Convention van and/or truck; convention staff will be approaching you also. Tip porters a **\$1 a bag** (US Currency acceptable). Women will probably be asked to ride in cars while men will rides with bags in the truck.

At Convention Center/President's House or Retirement Center

Most likely you will be staying at the Retirement Home. The groups traveling under Tom Beam's projects might stay somewhere else. Tom Beam will inform you if that is the case. Donis and his family live at the Retirement Center. If, for some reason, teams stay at the President's house women or couples will be assigned private rooms; men will be assigned to one or two bunk rooms. No smoking in convention buildings, president house, churches, retirement home or on the any other property. Teams should not leave the convention Building/the President's House or the Retirement home without one of the convention leaders or a team translator with them. If a team member is picked up for any reason by local authorities it would be very difficult to deal with the situation especially if team is walking around by themselves. If the team is staying at the Retirement Center the team won't be needing transportation back and forth to the city. Otherwise, transportation to church and work will be by van or truck, depending on the number of members in a team. Bring clothes for 2 or 3 church services, **women need skirts or dresses, men need collared shirts and khaki pants.** Laundry will be offered but donation is expected (about \$3 per person). You will be taken to some points of interests in Santiago. They will take you for a tour of the **El Morro Fort** and for a walk in **Downtown Santiago**. Other tour sites may be available

according to Donis discretion and available transportation. City tour can be requested, guide costs about \$20 for van rental. Walking to the cathedral with a convention staff person or translator is enjoyable and gets people out of convention building at no cost. Tour to high hill outside of Santiago at night is very nice and will break monotony. Convention staff will take you in a van, no cost. (Suggested that you reimburse them for this expense).

Money Conversion

It is better to take US DOLLARS at this time and convert to CUC's. In some cases Canadian Dollars or Euros (depending on exchange rates) will be used to convert to pesos, which we will let you know. Team leader will pay majority of bills/donations during the first few days of arrival. Donis will take the team leader to the Convention's office. This will be done in Canadian or Euro currency (visas fee, room & board, construction materials). Request receipts. Take your Spanish translator with you, when you talk with convention contact. Convert at least enough money to cover your exit visas (25-30 CUC is equivalent to \$25-30) and no more than \$100 for miscellaneous expenses. Leave rest in US, which you can donate to building fund on the last day of your stay or have additional converted if need arrives. Team members should be polled as to how much spending money they want and collect this from the team members the morning of the first day. Have these converted to small denominations of Cuba Conversion bills. It takes a day or two for conversion funds or Donis can take you or the team to a local bank.

Food

Be prepared for a surprise or two. Food is delicious. You can request ice cream be bought for a meal (\$1 per person). You'll need to ask for hot water, for tea or for decaf coffee (If you need decaf coffee you will need to provide your own.)

DEPARTURE from Santiago de Cuba to Miami:

Ensure you have **25 to 30 CUC** (\$25-30 equivalent) Cuba conversion money per passenger. Leave remaining for building fund. Let porters take your luggage inside building, local custom, about \$1 a bag. Stand in line for the appropriate charter flight. One by one approach counter with passport and ticket where name will be checked off flight roster. Return to your luggage and move it to a line forming to right for luggage weighing. Proceed one by one to have checked luggage and carryon weighed (If people have left clothes and gifts in Cuba, then overweight should not be a problem). Once weighed, boarding pass will be given to traveler.

Proceed to the right to the booth labeled exit fees. Team leader should go first and then pay for each team member as they get to the window of the cashier. Will only need the boarding pass as exit sticker placed on boarding pass after fee paid.

Next proceed to Passport control where passport, visa and boarding pass will be checked. You may be asked what you thought of the country, people and whether you would return. Proceed from control booth to carry on screening. Don't have bulging pockets or you will be held up and items checked. Proceed to gate where you will remain until the plane comes. **Planes are many times late so you could be in this area 2 - 5 hours.** There is a small bar area which will make hot sandwiches. There are several small souvenirs stores. Most stores will take either Cuba conversion money or even US\$. There is a conversion counter in this area (10% conversion rate). Once the plane take off, fill out a Declarations document. (You may have to ask for one in English).

Arrival in Miami: Upon arrival in Miami, you will proceed to Passport control; have both passport and the NCBM's letter on letterhead to travel to Cuba available. Show only your passport unless asked for the letter. **Go to the US Citizen Line. There are new digital booths where you will fill out a new custom/declaration form again. Directions are easy to follow. Once you are cleared from Custom proceed to the "Exit" and follow the "Flight Connection" line (usually to your left) to dispatch your luggage to North Carolina (or other destinations). Pass through security control and proceed to your gate. Be prepared to walk a little. There are a few stores and places to eat or shop at the terminal (s).**

Do not carry the copy of your passport visible. It may be confiscated. Proceed to baggage retrieval area and as a team head to Customs where you will be assigned to one of three lines and may be subject to questions about activities or purchases **while in Cuba.** A search may also occur.

SOUVENIRS AND GIFTS:

Confusion about rules applies. Cubans have one opinion and US Customs have varying ideas. Cigars and alcohol are for sure items not to try and bring to US. Convention staff seeks to sell art items to team

while in Cuba, generally quality is good and prices very reasonable. **If you buy a painting in Santiago de Cuba, either from Manoel or anybody else you will have to pay a fee (around 21 CUC) and need to have it stamp by the Department of Culture in downtown Santiago. Each painter needs to be registered with their department of culture. The paint needs to be stamped before leaving the country. You might be able to do this at the airport but it will cost more and you might need to leave your paint behind.** Normally handcrafts are not subject to declaration. Customs regulations may change at any time. At US Customs they will say that nothing is to be brought back from Cuba that is purchased there.

Read all information from NC Baptist Men carefully before leaving! There may be new rules in effect.

Sometimes volunteers have been forced to check their intended carry-on luggage because it was too large or too heavy. Be sure and follow luggage limits carefully so as to avoid having to pay extra. (Be aware that these limits change from time to time without notice). There have been times when volunteers have had to allow their carry-on to be placed with checked baggage because there was no storage available on overcrowded planes. The point is – the smaller and more compact you can make your carry-on, the better experience you are likely to have. If you should be required to put your intended carry-on with checked luggage, make sure you take all essentials out and keep them with you: **Passport, tickets, baggage check claims, prescription medicines, etc.** If your luggage should be delayed, an on-site coordinator will help you fill out a missing luggage report with the airline. Normally, **there is only one flight per week** from Miami to Santiago and vice versa. For permanent identification, leather or plastic tags with big letters help greatly. Also, folks need to remember to put identification inside the suitcase, near the zipper.

Money, cameras, passports and valuables should be in a carry-on when moving through and around airports. Special care needs to be taken against pickpockets and thieves. Compartments with money and tickets should be zipped or closed with a snap. Wallets are safer in a front pocket than a rear one.

Due to the uncertainty of medical supplies in Cuba, it is recommended that one who has a serious medical condition should consider other volunteer opportunities. It may be difficult to get prescription drugs from the US in case of loss or damage.

What to Bring: (A checklist)

- ❖ Bible
- ❖ Passport
- ❖ Airline Tickets
- ❖ Clothing. Bring clothes appropriate to work to which you have been assigned. If needed it's best to dress in layers. Short-legged pants (knee length) or capris are OK for the work site, but short shorts are not, especially for women. Most men in Cuba wear long pants even on the work site. For church, most women will be dressed in skirts or dresses. Kakis and shirts are OK for men to go to church services. Ask your contact person what is appropriate for Sunday's service.
- ❖ Bring something comfortable for wearing around the house, walking in the neighborhood or sightseeing. Most of the sightseeing trips will involve walking. There will be a place or two that involves hiking.
- ❖ Light rain jacket.
- ❖ Work gloves. You may want to wear them as well as dust mask when working on site.
- ❖ Toiletry items (toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, soap, etc.).
- ❖ Towel and washcloth.
- ❖ Pillow (if you need your special one).
- ❖ Blanket – there is A/C in the bedrooms and it gets cool during the night.
- ❖ Shower shoes or flip-flops.
- ❖ Hat, cap and/or bandanas (Sun and wind protection).
- ❖ **Each team should have a basic medical kit containing bandages, peroxide, antibacterial creams, burn cream etc.**
- ❖ Insect repellent.
- ❖ Sunscreen and lip balm.
- ❖ Plastic shopping bags or trash bags (to pack dirty clothes or for return trip).
- ❖ Camera. Spare camera batteries.
- ❖ Flashlight and batteries.
- ❖ Watch.
- ❖ Women: personal mirror. There is only one mirror in the bathroom cabinet. No long mirrors available.
- ❖ Personal medicines: Tylenol, laxatives, anti-diarrhea, eye drops, prescription medicines.

- ❖ Extra eye glasses (especially if you wear contacts).
- ❖ Toilet Tissue – lots of wipes.
- ❖ Antiseptic liquid soap.
- ❖ Snack food (zip lock bags).
- ❖ Personal journal.
- ❖ Leave any items possible for them but give them to the host for distribution.
- ❖ You may wish to take small gifts for some of the people you'll meet (NC items are nice).
- ❖ Power tools or advanced electronic equipment may delay at Cuba airport and some will be subject to taxation fees. This applies to DVDs, modem and other communication or recording devices (digital cameras are fine).
- ❖ Electricity might goes off for a little while. It may be cut off at any time, usually for an hour or so.
- ❖ Suitcases need to stay closed during day and at night. Scorpions may be found in some places. Their stings are painful but not fatal. If allergic to insect stings bring the appropriate medicine. So far there have been no scorpion's stings in any of the teams.

Items to Bring For Team Use:

- Energy/sport drinks mix. (They only have 2-liter water bottles to mix drinks in).
- Sugar Substitutes.
- Peanut butter & jelly or one or the other.
- Instant grits and oatmeal (they love this).
- Toilet paper (compact rolls. Take at least 2. If you use wipes please consider taking a roll anyway).
- Disinfectant wipes.
- Hand sanitizer.
- Crackers or favorite snacks.
- Tea bags and decaf coffee.
- Individual packages of creamer for coffee, if you like. **Sometimes** milk is available.

Items for Cubans:

- Pain relievers, salves and stomach medicine.
- Vitamins for adults and kids (due to shortage of food they all like and want vitamins).
- Magazines and/or Readers Digest In Spanish (for worksite crews).
- If you bring tools to work with, (gloves, boots, etc) don't give them up until last workday. Otherwise you may not have items to use. We suggest that you give the items to Donis and he will make the distribution to whomever you designate it for:

Weather

For information about the weather in Santiago and surrounding areas:

<http://www.weather.com/weather/today/CUXX0010:1>

Safety

Safety is always an important issue when traveling abroad. Whereas medical care may not be readily available or up to the standards you are used to, it is always advisable to take extra precaution. Do not take even simple risks that you may be willing to take at home.

Health:

- Only drink bottled or filtered water. Filtered water will be available once you arrive. You do not need to bring your own.
- Do not eat food from a street vendor. Food prepared for the teams and most food at Restaurants are fine to eat. Food offered to you at someone's home is generally OK.
- Bring a small supply of personal medicines, such as aspirin, laxative, anti- diarrhea medicine, personal prescription medicines etc.
- Make sure you are up to date on Hepatitis A, Tetanus, and Typhoid or any other shots suggested by your medical personnel.
- Use lots of insect repellent.
- Wear a hat and sunscreen to protect yourself from the sun.

- Again, only those in good physical health should attempt this trip. **It will be hot and the work more strenuous than you expect.**
- Make sure and shake your shoes out each morning before putting them on. Also, shake out clothes and keep bags zipped at night. Scorpions and spiders are not uncommon.

Team Leader's Responsibility:

Each team should have a team leader. In some cases your team leader is obvious - he or she enlisted you to go on this trip. If a team leader is not apparent (mixed team), the Partnership Office will ask a team member to serve as leader. His or her responsibilities are as follows:

- ☀ Facilitate the completion and return of all Partnership applications, deposits, balances, and materials costs on time to the Partnership Office.
 - ☀ Communicate with all team members before the trip (by letter, e-mail, and/or phone) to share information. The Partnership Office and on-site coordinator will communicate primarily through the team leader only. Team leader may want to lead in a pre-trip orientation meeting (if logistics allow).
 - ☀ Communicate all needs or concerns of the group to the Partnership Office before the trip, and to the On-Site Coordinator while in Cuba. This should only be done through the team leader.
 - ☀ Communicate information from the On-Site Coordinator to the team once in Cuba.
 - ☀ Take the lead in getting everyone through check-in at the airport. (See Travel Tips). If team members are flying out of the same airport, team leader should arrange for members to meet together at the airport at the check-in counter so the team can check-in at the same time.
 - ☀ Serve as or designate a Devotions Coordinator, responsible for enlisting a devotional leader for each day. A different person should lead each day. It is highly desirable that the team meets 20-30 minutes before breakfast for a devotion/prayer time each morning, and after supper each night for a time of reflection and sharing. The team leader should make sure this happens. This is also a good time to relay work related or other information to the team.
- If team will be participating in a construction project, the team leader should organize the team to complete tasks. He or she may want to designate a "construction leader" to supervise the actual work while on the work site.
 - The team leader (or designee) should be prepared to lead in case of a dedication service on the last day of work at the site. This will likely involve folks from the community.

General Description of Construction:

Be aware that construction techniques in Cuba (as with many places around the world) are quite different from that in the US. Do not assume that anything will be perfectly square or level. There is no mortar mix. Portland cement is mixed with coarse sand to make a mortar that sets up quickly in the Cuban heat. All masonry walls are put up in small segments. Reinforcing columns of cement are formed and poured to connect these segments. Re-bar placement and the use of horizontal tie-wires also differ from that in the US. It is very important that the team be flexible and open to the Cuban way of building. Please do not criticize or "suggest" what you believe to be a "better" way of doing it.

We do not want children playing near where our volunteers are laying block because of the danger involved to the children. If children come around and a couple of your group would like to play games or conduct VBS with local children, it should be done in the vicinity, but at a good, safe distance.

Evangelism and Other Ministry Opportunities:

Every team will be encouraged to engage in evangelistic opportunities in the area they serve. Each team will have the opportunity to pray for the community, families, and the local church. You may have opportunity to share Spanish tracts or Spanish New Testaments to folks as the Holy Spirit leads.

It is possible to conduct some nightly worship services during your stay. We encourage your team to creatively utilize their talents such as preaching, music, drama, puppets, etc. during these services. If you are interested in this, let the on-site coordinator know.

We encourage team members to bring VBS (or other) materials to be used with the children. They have almost no Children's material for Christian education. Of course, these materials must be in Spanish.

The team will have opportunity to worship in the community on Sundays and some week days. **Make sharing the love of Christ with the Cuban community a priority, whether it be in word or in**

deed. Many Cubans are searching for answers. Help them find *the* answer - Jesus Christ - any way you can.

Sharing Your Testimony

The purpose of any mission trip is to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Even if you are going to do something other than evangelism, you should go prepared to share your testimony. Spend time in prayer before you go. Pray that God will give you opportunity to share. Pray for those with whom you will share.

Many of you will have the chance to give your testimony in a church service. It may be that God provides an opportunity for you to share your testimony at the local market, on the construction site, in a city street, or somewhere else where you may not have the use of written materials (tracts). Although these can be effective tools, it is important you learn to share your testimony "hands-free". Perhaps this outline can help you prepare to share your faith.

1. **HOW I REALIZED I NEEDED CHRIST** (20% of your testimony):
Look back over your life. What was your life like without Christ? This should be the shortest part of your testimony. Don't dwell on all the bad things you did in your past.
2. **HOW I BECAME A CHRISTIAN** (20% of your testimony):
Share briefly the circumstances of how you came to realize you needed Christ in your life. What did you do? Be prepared to share "the basics" of how one can accept Christ.
3. **HOW CHRIST HELPS ME IN MY LIFE TODAY** (60% of your testimony)
How has your life changed? How has your thought processes changed? What has Christ in your life enabled you to do?

Write your testimony out. This will help you focus on important points you want to remember. **You should be able to give your testimony in no more than 2-3 minutes.** People will initially listen to something if it is 2-3 minutes. If they want to ask questions and develop further dialog, the conversation will continue. You should give them a chance to respond to what you have shared with them within the first two minutes of the conversation.

Remember, when you share your testimony you are sharing what Christ has done in your life. Don't feel that your story needs to be dramatic to be effective. Trust the Holy Spirit, not only to lead you to the person who needs to hear your testimony, but also to work in that person's life.

The following are some scripture passages you should try to know from memory:

John 3:16

Romans 3:23-25

Romans 6:23

Romans 10: 9-10

Romans 8: 38-39

Here are some helpful hints in sharing your testimony:

Be positive	don't argue
Listen	Offer to pray for the person
Encourage feedback	Try not to be defensive

GIFT GUIDE FOR CUBA

Volunteers who spend **\$1,600** or more to go on a mission trip to Cuba are by nature generous and loving people. They like to give gifts to those with whom they work. Their churches often desire to send something to Cuba to bless the people there. Volunteers are not expected or required to take items to give away. If they wish to do so, great. If not, that's fine. Volunteers are already making a great sacrifice of time and money to go to Cuba.

If you want to give a gift (money, clothes, etc) to a Cuban Baptist, an interpreter or church, give it to Donis Hernandez at the Eastern Baptist Convention and let him give it to that person or that church. This will help avoid many problems that come up as result of individual gift giving. **(Note: most teams do leave tips for those who serve them during the week they are there: the coordinator, the cooks, the translator and the drivers. If you want to know more about this please calls our office for more information).** However, there is no problem in giving a donation to a church by placing a gift in the

offering plate at a church service. The preferable currency in making a gift is Convertible Cuban Currency.

ALL GIVE-A-WAYS NEED TO BE CLEARED WITH PASTOR DONIS OR PASTOR LESTER before being promised to any church or individual. In most instances, Pastor Donis or Pastor Lester will collect items and distribute evenly. Be aware that problems sometimes arise when folks bring too many give-aways. For example, when Group A gives away toys and candy and bookmarks and pencils and notebooks, the children expect the next group to bring loads of the same. If it does not, the children go home disappointed. If your team has been blessed with an amount of school supplies (or some other helpful item), the Cuban coordinators are glad to discuss with you where it can accomplish the most good.

Here's some guidelines we have developed over the course of our Partnerships that can help us avoid these problems in the future. If you *do* choose to bring gifts:

1. Please bring practical gifts. Small toys are okay, but a small notebook or pencil lasts longer than a piece of chewing gum and is of more value than a plastic car. **Plan to give all gifts to Pastor Donis or Pastor Lester for them to distribute.**

Possible gifts for children:

pencils, small notebooks, crayons, coloring books, children's scissors, baseball caps, short-sleeve button-up shirts, nice used tennis shoes, socks, soccer balls, hacky-sacks, baseballs, baseball gloves

Possible gifts for construction co-workers:

sturdy trowels, a tape measure in inches and metric, a brick hammer, toolbox, saw, 2' or 3' level, gloves, nail apron, hack saw, baseball gloves.

Possible gifts for nationals (host pastor, host family, etc.):

T-shirts with the name of your church, baseball caps, bath or face towels, toothpaste, soap, candy, flashlights, watch, family photos to remember you by.

Possible gifts for churches:

Hymnals in Spanish (Himnario Bautista; word-only edition), discipleship materials, 1960 Reina-Valera Bibles or New Testaments, Spanish language choruses or Christian music cassettes, guitar strings, Sunday School story posters, craft materials (with instructions).

2. **Please do not give away items at the work site, except on the last day**, remembering to give all items to Pastor Donis or Pastor Lester for their distribution.
3. There are real needs in Cuba. It is the responsibility of the Eastern Baptist Convention and the local associations to state what the needs are. Often, the volunteers see only the needs of the church or family with whom they are working. Just as in the case with individual workers, jealousy can naturally arise if a host church is continually receiving gifts, while others, who may not be able to be hosts, get nothing. Many needs exist in other churches or other parts of the country that may be greater than the ones you see. We ask volunteers, therefore, to talk to the coordinators before giving large sums of money to local churches. Any gift of \$25 or more is considered a large gift. If the team perceives a need, it may ask the on-site coordinator about meeting that need. **Be careful not to promise anything to local pastors without first speaking to the on-site coordinator. If Pastor Donis or Pastor Lester indicate that the need is there, then follow their instructions on giving to the church or person. If Pastor Lester or Pastor Donis indicate that the need is not as great as you or your team perceives, please respect them and do not give to church or person.** Remember that in this culture; even the *hint* of a promise may be taken as just that – a promise.

Many times, team members develop close relationships with Cuban nationals, whether in a church, working together on a project, or with an interpreter. In the process of developing those relationships, team members may sense a need. Any perceived need should be discussed with Pastor Donis or Pastor Lester. If Pastor Donis or Pastor Lester confirm that need, then the team member (or members) can make preparations to meet that need. Please do not make promises from a perceived need. Many times team members do not know circumstances in which an individual or church has found themselves in.

If an individual wants to try to send an item or items to Cuba for individuals or churches where a need has been verified, the person sending the item or items must pay for any extra luggage costs and extra weight

costs. Most teams traveling to Cuba, with the weight restrictions, already have their maximum weight allowance and taking items for others adds to the luggage and weight costs. The office at NC Baptist Men is always willing to answer any questions.

Involving Your Congregation in the Mission

Prayer Support:

The support of your church for the mission project is very important. Key to this is prayer support. Of course, team members should be encouraged to pray daily for the trip and its preparation. But prayer support should extend to the whole congregation as well. Begin involving the church family early on in the mission's process, so that prayer support can undergird each phase of the process – development and planning, travel, ministry, and follow-up.

Here are some ideas how:

1. Choose a prayer coordinator.
2. Make a monthly prayer list/calendar available to the congregation.
3. Distribute a needs list.
4. Encourage prayer warriors to be in prayer for:
 - The spiritual maturing of the team members.
 - Those with whom ministry will be conducted.
 - Those who will hear the Gospel.
 - The working of the Holy Spirit throughout the project.
5. Seek personal prayer partners for each individual on the team.
6. Hold cottage prayer meetings two-three weeks prior to the trip.
7. Involve prayer partners in the Commissioning service.
8. Ask prayer partners to write notes of encouragement to team members to be distributed while at the ministry site.
9. Include a prayer partner testimony as part of your team's sharing/praise time with the congregation upon your return.

Financial Support:

Each church will deal with this issue differently. Some will ask team members to support themselves and the project completely. Some may be able to finance trip expenses (materials, supplies, etc.) and half of each team member's way. Others will support the entire project, including project costs and team members travel. There is no right or wrong way to do it. However, if the team will be seeking funding from the church, here are some suggestions:

1. Develop a complete, detailed, and realistic budget.
2. If possible, begin a year in advance and request inclusion in the church budget.
3. Take up special offerings – perhaps every 5th Sunday.
4. Determine the cost for each person to make the trip and ask for financial adoptions.
5. Develop a designated account for continual giving with regular announcements of progress toward the overall goal.
6. Hold fund-raising projects, such as dinners, banquets, etc.

Church Commissioning Service

Consider conducting a dedication service for the mission team on the Sunday prior to their departure. This allows the church to formally participate in the sending out the group as their missionaries. There should be time for participation of both team members and the congregation in the service. Team members should be challenged to focus on their role as "carriers of the Good News". The congregation should be challenged to be active participants through the ministry of prayer.

You may want team members to sit together in a designated area toward the front of the church. The theme of the service (including music) should be mission's service and commitment. Consider testimonies from one or two team members about how God has been working in their lives to prepare them for service. A responsive reading, led by the pastor, which includes challenges to the team members and the congregation, would be appropriate. Finally, the team may be asked to kneel at the front while church members come by to lay hands on each individual and offer a quick prayer or words of Christian encouragement.

Sample Commissioning Service

Congregational Hymn

Opening Prayer

Scripture Reading

Scripture Commitment and Group Confession (team may read together Psalm 51: 16-17; Psalm 139: 23-24 for example)

Congregational Hymn

Message (John 13 – Jesus’ Servant Example; Luke 10 – Commissioned by Jesus; Isaiah 6 – Isaiah’s Call)

Litany of Commitment

Congregation: We present these servants before you, Oh Lord, committing to pray consistently for them in their service to you.

Mission Team: We present ourselves to you, thankful for Your call to service, thankful for your provision for service, and thankful for your leadership in our service.

Congregation: We send these, your missionaries, out as an extension of ourselves, seeking your protection and wisdom for them.

Mission Team: We acknowledge we can do nothing without you, Oh Lord, and all that will be accomplished is because of you and through you, Mighty God, in your Son Jesus, and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Use them, Oh God. Use us, Oh God.

Mission Team: Use us all Oh God.

Prayer of Dedication

Laying on of Hands

Congregational Hymn

Closing Prayer

Insurance - Supplementary Coverage Information

We hope everyone will have a safe and enjoyable experience in Cuba. However, with so many people involved, it is possible there will be a medical need at some point. This will either be of an emergency or a non-emergency nature. Each team leader should be certain his/her team is knowledgeable of the procedure for each.

Your insurance coverage with **Gallagher Charitable International Insurance Services** through the North Carolina Baptist Men is “Supplementary Coverage”. It is necessary because it often covers expenses that might not be covered by your primary insurance. A Volunteer who encounters medical expenses overseas should first report to their primary insurance carrier. (We recommend you check with your carrier before leaving on your trip to see if they cover bills from overseas).

Please note: if there are medical needs in a foreign country, **the hospital and doctors usually require payment at the time of service**. You should have a credit card on hand for making payments to the hospital or care facility. You should send your receipts to your primary carrier and then, in case they don’t cover your expenses, you should contact **Gallagher Charitable International Insurance Services**. Be sure to obtain documentation from all medical personnel and facilities rendering service for turning in to the insurance company.

An insurance card might be enclosed with this manual or it has been emailed to your team leader or to you. Please take it with you overseas. In case you need to contact **Gallagher Charitable International Insurance Services** please refer to the Policy Number provided on the card.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR TEAM LEADER AND/OR ON SITE COORDINATOR FIRST. He/she knows what steps to take for the fastest care available to you. Your team leader or the onsite coordinator will contact your family or church in the USA for you if there is a need to do so.

[Insurance Summary of Benefits](#)



Gallagher Charitable International Insurance Services Travel Insurance

SUMMARY OF COVERAGES

Accidental Death and Dismemberment Principal Sum <i>(reduced to \$10,000 for those under age 12 and over 70)</i>	\$100,000
Medical Expense, \$100 deductible <i>\$2500 of this limit is available to pay US providers: no pre-existing condition exclusion</i>	\$10,000
Emergency Medical Evacuation <i>Coordinated by SAS: will bring insured back to USA: no pre-existing condition exclusion.</i>	\$100,000
Family Coordination & Repatriation of Mortal Remains <i>Combined limit for both benefits Includes \$2,500 sublimit for extra expenses incurred during an approved medical evacuation</i>	\$25,000
Assistance Service <i>Available 24/7/365 for assistance with worldwide medical emergencies: provided by SAS</i>	\$100,000
Crisis Management Service <i>Available 24/7/365 for assistance with worldwide non-medical emergencies: provided by SAS</i>	\$100,000
General Liability <i>Worldwide jurisdiction: covers volunteer and sending organization; includes coverage for injury to a volunteer</i>	\$1,000,000
Property Property <i>Replacement cost coverage: includes checked baggage: "door to door" coverage</i>	\$2,500
Disability Income	
<i>First 100 months - Accident</i>	\$1,000 / per mo.
<i>Months 101-200 - Accident</i>	\$500 / per mo.
<i>50 months - Sickness (after 3 month waiting period)</i>	\$250 / per mo.

This brief summary is not an insurance policy; rather, it outlines some of the features of this coverage. For specific details, please consult the Master Policy. This is not a major medical policy. Major Medical Coverage is available for individuals and groups on Short-Term and Long-Term Volunteer missionary assignments.

Gallagher Charitable International Insurance Services - Missionary Insurance Services is our Specialty

Telephone: (803) 758-1400 | **Toll Free Client Services Line:** (800) 922-8438 | **Fax:** (803) 252-1988

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INCIDENT REPORT FORM

(This is for use by the team leader in case of accident, injury, or other incident)

PLEASE PRINT

DATE OF REPORT _____ INJURY ___ ILLNESS ___ OTHER _____

DATE INCIDENT OCCURRED _____ TIME _____ AM/PM

LOCATION INCIDENT OCCURRED _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DISCRIPTION OF WHAT
HAPPENED _____

NAME(S) OF THOSE HURT / ILL / OR OTHER:

_____ ADDRESS
S _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ AGE _____ MALE ___ FEMALE ___

DESCRIBE WHAT ACTION WAS TAKEN:

WITNESS _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: _____

YOUR NAME (PRINT) _____ TITLE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ TELEPHONE _____

YOUR SIGNATURE _____

CUBA / NORTH CAROLINA BAPTIST PARTNERSHIP

GENERAL MEDICAL INFORMATION & RELEASE FORM

(To be filled out by applicant and kept by team leader for medical reference in case of incident during the trip)

Name: _____ Birthday: ___/___/___ Age: _____ Sex _____
(last) (first)

Address: _____ City _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: () _____
Marital Status: _____ Weight: _____ Height: _____

Emergency Contact Person: _____ Telephone: () _____

Medical History:

a. General Health: _____

b. Limitations: _____

c. Any history of the following (circle): trick knee weak ankles bad back other _____

d. Are you subject to (circle): diabetes epilepsy heart disease hypertension other _____

e. Appendix removed? _____ f. Tetanus shot updated? _____

g. Medicines taken: _____

Reason: _____

Reason: _____

h. Allergies(food, drugs, other): _____

Medications used to treat allergies: _____

i. Medical treatment received in the past year: _____

j. Have you had or been exposed to any contagious disease in the past six months? _____.
If so, what? _____

Physician's Name: _____ Office Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

CONSENT

I hereby give permission for my son / daughter / self (if over 18 years of age) to receive emergency medical attention from a physician in the event of illness or injury.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

HEALTH INSURANCE

Insurance issued in the name of: _____

Address of insured: _____

Name of insurance company: _____

Address of insurance company: _____

Policy number: _____

PHYSICIAN (optional)

I have examined the applicant and find that he/she is in fit health for participation in the Cuba/NC Partnership.

Physician's Signature _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____
Provide this signed form to your team leader before departing for your trip. If an individual (not member of a team), make sure you fill it in and take it with you.

IRS Deductions for Volunteer Mission Projects:

In consultation with the auditors and the Business Management Department, the following information may be helpful to you in obtaining an IRS charitable contribution deduction relating to your expenses for volunteer mission project.

Generally, you can claim a charitable contribution deduction for travel expenses necessarily incurred while you are away from home performing services for a charitable organization only if there is no significant element of personal pleasure, recreation, or vacation in the travel. This applies whether you pay the expenses directly or indirectly. You are paying the expenses indirectly if you make a payment to the charitable organization and the organization pays for your travel expenses.

The deduction for travel expenses will not be denied simply because you enjoy providing services to the charitable organization. Even if you enjoy the trip, you can take a charitable contribution deduction for your travel expenses if you are on duty in a genuine and substantial sense throughout the trip. However, if you have only nominal duties, or if for significant parts of the trip you do not have any duties, you cannot deduct your travel expenses.

Deductible travel expenses include air, rail, and bus transportation; out-of-pocket expenses for your car; taxi fare or other costs of transportation between the airport or station and your hotel; lodging costs; and the cost of meals.

(Information from Publication 526, 2011 ed. of the IRS, p. 5-6)

To secure such deduction, all payments should be made through your local church or directly to NC Baptist Men.

⁹ During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia (CUBA) and help us." -

Acts 16:9 (New International Version ©2011)

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Orientation manual compiled by Archie Jones, Richard Brunson, Executive Director/Treasurer NCBM, David Alabaster (Cuba Volunteer from Snyder Memorial B C in Fayetteville), Tom Beam and Fatima Roma. Edited by Fatima Roma, International Missions Projects Assistant –NC Baptist Men –