



HdIFF TRAVEL GUIDE

Updated 18 June 2026

Trip To Do List

Now

- Register on the website for a team at hdlff.org

- Pay your trip fee

- Purchase your airline ticket

- Book your hotel in Antigua

- Purchase Travel Evacuation Health Insurance <https://www.insuremytrip.com/>

- Register with the State Department <https://mytravel.state.gov/s/step>

- Email Maggie (eye teams) at eyeteams@hdlff.org or Fel (medical teams) at medicalteams@hdlff.org a list of equipment and supplies you will be bringing with you so they can obtain the necessary permits to clear customs

- Upload required certification documents (see page 9 for more information).

3 weeks before departure

- Attend the team Zoom meeting

2 weeks before departure

- Fill out your online declaration for [Guatemalan customs](#) up to 15 days prior to departure and take a photo of the QR code with your phone
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1 week before departure

- Download WhatsApp on your phone
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Trip Payment

Surgeon, Anesthesiologist, Dentist.	1,399 USD
Pediatrician, Internist, Maternal Child Health, Resident, Fellow, CRNA, NP, PA, Nurse Midwife, Optometry Doctors, HdIFF Board Member.	799 USD
Registered Nurse, Audiology Student, Soccer Coach.	499 USD
OR Tech, Anesthesia Tech, LVN/MA, Ear mold Specialist, Dental Assistant, Interpreters, Biomed/Industry rep.	399 USD
Audiologist, Therapists (Speech, Music, Massage).	699 USD
Medical Student, Nursing Student.	599 USD
Non-Medical General/Family (minimum age 17).	1,899 USD

What Is Covered

- Your first night in a Guatemala City hotel, including breakfast and airport shuttle.
- A shared room for that first night, though you can pay an extra \$50 for a private room.
- Transportation to and from the hospital.
- Your food and housing while staying at the hospital.

What Is Not Covered

- Airfare.
- Expenses in Antigua, should you choose to stay there the last 2 days.
- Transportation from Antigua to La Aurora airport in Guatemala City.

How the Trip Fee Works

The fee is adjusted based on your specific role to account for different income levels. This payment covers your immediate travel essentials and funds the continuous, year-round operations at Hospital de la Familia.

Travel Information



Required Documents

Passport:

Must be valid for at least six months beyond your entry date.

Customs:

Complete the online declaration up to 15 days before departure and save a photo of the QR code.

Booking:

Purchase your own ticket, ensuring your times align with the full duration of the trip.



Flights & Insurance

Travel Agent:

Need help? Contact Matt Mast at matt@goldenruletravel.com or 941-960-6947.

Insurance:

We strongly recommend comprehensive travel insurance with evacuation, compare options at insuremytrip.com.





Luggage & Packing

Personal Items:

Pack all your personal gear in one carry-on. We will stop for toiletries, DEET, snacks and other personal supplies at a grocery store on our way to the hospital.

Team Supplies (Checked Bags):

You will likely be asked to check 1-2 duffels of team supplies.

- Bags must be under 50lbs and 62 linear inches.
 - **No boxes allowed.**
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Baggage Fees:

We will have a fee waiver for United Airlines.



Medical Supplies & Medications

Permits:

You must send us a list of any drugs you are bringing (include Drug Name, Quantity, Expiration Date). Please do this with at least 4 weeks' notice.

Strict Rule:

Absolutely NO expired medications.

Donations:

Clean, non-sterile supplies (gowns, drapes, sponges) are welcome.



Typical Itinerary



DAY 1 – SATURDAY

Travel to Guatemala City; overnight at Hotel Barceló.



DAY 2 – SUNDAY

Early AM depart for hospital; lunch, setup, clinic, and orientation.



DAYS 3 - 7 – MONDAY TO FRIDAY

OR and clinic



DAY 8 – SATURDAY

Travel from the hospital to Antigua.



DAYS 9 - 10 – SUNDAY TO MONDAY

Antigua (Optional).

Certification Requirements

The Guatemala Ministry of Health Requires these documents to approve your participation. **Please submit immediately after registering for a team.**

How to Submit

Print any needed verifications from your licensing organization's website. Scan or take a clear, high-quality photo of your documents and upload them to the registration site.

For Doctors

- **Diploma:** A copy or a photo of your diploma.
- **Medical License:** A copy or online verification. *(Note: Surgeons and Anesthesiologists must have this notarized).*
- **Specialty Certificate:** A copy or online verification. *(Note: Surgeons and Anesthesiologists must have this notarized).*

TIPS:

- You can use an online [notary](#).
- [How to certify a copy of a document.](#)

For Nurses

- **RN License:** A copy of your online verification. *(No notary needed).*

Guatemala City

The Foundation arranges your airport transfer and first night at Hotel Barcelo in Guatemala City, which is included in your trip fee. Breakfast is also included.

The bus or van to Nuevo Progreso departs the next day at 6:00 AM sharp unless your trip leader advises otherwise. Please wear comfortable clothing and layers for the 5–7-hour journey and bring motion sickness medication if needed.

If you leave the hotel, please let your team leader know and take at least one other person with you. Use transportation arranged by the hotel. Uber is also available and safe. **Avoid taxis from the street.**



Nuevo Progreso



- **Facilities:** 3-story complex with security and housekeeping staff available daily; 4 bathrooms per floor with warm showers; towels/soap provided.
- **Water Safety:** Use the coolers provided or fridge ice (filtered) for drinking and brushing teeth. Do not drink from any sink or shower.
- **Toilets:** Put all toilet paper and sanitary products in the trash can, never the bowl.
- **Food/Drink:** Three meals provided daily in our dining room. A shared fridge has water, local beer and soda. The dining area food is very safe. However, local vendors and market food often cause illness.
- **Laundry:** Daily service is provided, allowing you to pack light.
- **Environment:** It is noisy, bring earplugs for nighttime. Observe a strict 10:00 PM quiet time to respect resting patients/staff.
- **Medication:** You can bring DEET, antibiotics like Cipro or a Z-Pak, or Pepto Bismol at your discretion.
- **Electricity & Connectivity:** 110V (same as the US). Bring 3-to-2 prong adapters. Cell Service and Wi-Fi available although spotty with storms.

Working at the Hospital

- **Schedule:** Breakfast is at 7:00 AM. Work starts at 8:00 AM, OR starts by 8:30 AM. Lunch is at 1:00PM, and cases typically end around 5:00-5:30 PM.
- **Attire:** Scrubs are provided and washed daily. Bring your own OR shoes, protective eyewear, and personal hats/N95 masks.
- **Behavior:** Wear your name tag, smile, and do not photograph patients without written permission and confirmation from the HdIF Social Worker.
- **Post-Trip:** Team leaders must submit a post-trip team report to Maggie and Fel.
- **Patient Fees:** Access is guaranteed to all, regardless of financial capacity. If a patient has questions, please direct them to our HdIF social worker.



Antigua (end of trip R&R)

- **Accommodation Logistics:** You must book and pay for your own accommodations.
- Daniela Valenzuela at info@alacartatours.com, +502 4290-5013) can assist with bookings, tours, and shuttles.
- **Recommended Hotels:** Hotel Porta, Hotel Camino Real, Casa Santo Domingo, Hotel Aurora, Posada de Don Rodrigo, Hotel Mesón de María.
- **Airport Shuttle:** Takes 1-3 hours. Book it at your hotel upon check-in.

Packing List

- Passport

- OR Shoes (or comfortable shoes)

- Shoes for walking on cobblestones or hiking boots: at your discretion

- Sandals / flipflops

- Underwear: 5 pairs

- Socks: 5 pairs

- Compression stockings: if you use them at home, you will need them

- Lightweight tops: 4

- Shorts or pants: 2 pairs

- Pajamas: remember the bathrooms are down the halls

- Light jacket or sweatshirt

- Swimsuit (some hotels in Antigua have pools)

- One "nice" outfit for the team dinner in Antigua (but not necessary)

- Reusable water bottle (lots of filtered water stations available)

- Ear plugs: at your discretion

- Personal items: medications, toiletries, mosquito repellent with DEET, sunscreen, etc. Remember these can also be purchased in Coatepeque. Only bring items that you know you won't find overseas.

- Flashlight, camera, computer, chargers

- Your OR must-haves: fanny pack, loupes, Bluetooth speaker, etc.

- Quetzales

Money & Currency (The Quetzal)

Before You Leave

- **Order Cash:** We encourage ordering Quetzales from your home bank before leaving the US.
- **Bank Notifications:** Double-check that your debit card works internationally and notify your credit card company that you will be traveling to Guatemala.

Getting Cash in Guatemala City

- **Hotel Barcelo ATM:** Look for the "5B" ATM at the hotel.
- **Withdrawal Limits:** ATMs often limit you to 2,000 Quetzales per day.

Spending Your Money

- **In Nuevo Progreso:** Pay only with Quetzales. You won't need much money in the area where we work, but there is a local market where you can do some shopping with cash.
- **In Antigua (Last 2 Days):** You will have easy access to money exchange locations and ATMs. Most places here accept credit cards.

Many volunteers describe volunteering at Hospital de la Familia as the most rewarding work of their careers. We hope you will feel the same after your trip!

But beyond the reward you may feel, please know this: what you are doing matters deeply. The patients you will care for, the hands you will hold, the lives you will touch; none of it would be possible without your willingness to show up, to give your time, your skills, and your heart.

You are not just volunteers. You are healers who chose to go further, to reach those who need it most. That is a rare and beautiful thing.