

Mennonite Air Missions Handbook- English

To the workers, supporters, and visitors of Mennonite Air Missions: Welcome to Guatemala, a land referred to as 'Land of Eternal Spring'. It is a beautiful country, but like every country, filled with people who need Christ, people who are living in bondage to sin. We believe God has called us to share the Gospel here, and we want to faithfully do that. We're blessed to have you available to help. You will find that MAM workers are ordinary people who rely on the same grace you need to work in God's Kingdom. So come prepared to pray, work, sacrifice, and share for the cause of the church in Guatemala.

From its beginning in 1972, MAM has had a Biblical goal of establishing indigenous churches. We aspire to the faith and practice of the early New Testament Church. To promote this vision, the administration upholds a fervent prayer life, sound Bible preaching and teaching, a consistent Christian atmosphere, warm fellowship, brokenness in spirit, and high Christian standards in all areas of daily life.

We encourage all workers and visitors to maintain a servant's attitude. We are involved in a spiritual battle- the rescue of souls. While Guatemala is a beautiful country with many interesting sights, we encourage all visitors to focus first on church work, evangelistic pursuits, edifying workers, and sharing the burden of prayer. Some touring and sightseeing is great, but it should be seen as secondary.

Please be helpful with daily tasks. Help with the work you're part of, whether cleanup, dishes, cooking, maintenance, or any other way you can lift the load of Mission personnel. Remember that missionaries pay their own expenses for food and fuel, etc. The more you share in the work, the more fulfilled you will be and the more you will bless the cause of Christ.

MAM is blessed to have many supporters. Because of the volume of visitors, we strongly encourage you to check with the Mission about scheduling your trip and your intended travel plans before you finalize them. As much as possible, let us know your itinerary and expected length of stay.

When travelling to and from Headquarters and other mission stations, try to keep the Mission personnel in charge of meals informed that you intend to be present and how many nights you hope to stay. Remember that being on time for meals makes less work for the cooks. Before visiting or serving with MAM, become familiar with this handbook. If you're coming as a worker, prepare to comply and live in harmony with its guidelines. If you're coming for only a short visit, we do not expect complete compliance, but we would appreciate if you would respect our standards as much as possible and help encourage them while working with MAM. A visitor staying over two months should file a formal application for worker status.

We trust the information found in this handbook will help you prepare for service with MAM, so that together we can have a spiritually uplifting experience in Guatemala and that souls for Christ will be our reward.

Lifestyle:

- I.** A fresh, up-to-date walk with God is very important. Each person should maintain a daily time of Bible reading and prayer. Attend and support church services and activities where you are stationed or visiting. Even if you do not understand the language, your presence and prayers are a blessing, while your absence would be a poor testimony and could be discouraging.
- II.** We should be true disciples of Jesus, not giving our time to living in pleasure. All participation in professional sports, carnivals, circuses, theatres, dancing, playing with poker or Rook cards, etc., is to be avoided. Swimming in public pools is prohibited. If swimming at beaches, stay clothed and a distance apart from the opposite gender (clinging, wet clothing is immodest). Time should be given to visitation, encouraging people in Christ, Gospel singing, and sharing Christian literature, etc.
- III.** The internet and cell phones are both technologies that can be used in God's work. Both, however, carry great risks of temptation and misuse. All members and visitors with MAM should use a filter/blocker while using the internet. Guard against wasting time in needless web surfing, extensive news reading, or foolishness in chat rooms, blogs, or text messaging. Avoid electronic games with immoral or violent content. We prohibit watching entertainment movies. Radio and TV use are not acceptable. Be open to accountability.
- IV.** Music is a gift from God. We encourage singing in our services, in witness efforts, and as we go about our daily lives. Wrong music has led many astray. We prohibit the use of music where the beat or rhythm is dominant or syncopated. All workers and visitors need to be open to Mission administration about their use of music. Leave musical instruments at home.
- V.** Each worker is expected to respect and observe both the standards of their home church and the standard of the MAM churches concerning their personal appearance. In addition, MAM has a minimal standard for all those who serve as mission personnel;
 - A.** For *Brethren*: Brethren should present a well-kept appearance. Standard shirts are to be worn (not T-shirts nor polo/3-button shirts). Long-sleeved shirts should be worn with the top button closed for worship services. Western style shirts are not to be worn. Modestly sized jeans are permitted for work and recreation, but not for formal occasions. Brethren should be clean-shaven, with the exception of a beard and mustache worn for conviction's sake. A goatee or a mustache alone is not permitted. A belt or suspenders should be worn, and shirttails tucked in. If weather requires additional top wear, the plain suit should be used in formal occasions.
 - B.** For *Sisters*: Dresses should be long (at least mid-calf). Skirts need to have enough fullness to be modest and to not reveal form or underclothing. Each dress should have a modest, unadorned cape. Necklines should follow close to the neck, not V'ed, sculptured, nor ruffled. Arms should be modestly covered. Sleeves should cover elbows in formal wear. Tight pullover sweaters are not

acceptable. If nylons are worn, they should be of a dark colour. Socks can be worn but should cover at least to the hemline. Light-coloured, transparent, and glittery socks are not to be worn. Eyebrows should not be styled nor any makeup used. The hair needs to be uncut and modestly arranged. Sisters are to wear black veils, which come at least to the front of the ear at the crown of the head and hang at least to the bottom of the hairline. Veils should not be sculptured or edged with lace.

- C. *Children*: Children's clothes should be of sufficient size and length and consistent with their parents' convictions on simplicity and modesty.

VI. Additional Guidelines for Single Workers:

A. Leaving the home setting and entering into a different culture brings special emotional and relational challenges. We deem it unwise to consider cross-cultural dating during the first two years of service. Any courtship during service with MAM needs to have the full approval of parents and MAM administration. Couples should avoid extended trips without a chaperone, especially at night. Consult with your pastor or the mission director.

B. Curfew is at 10:00 PM, except by special permission. When mission activities call for working beyond 10:00 PM, single workers are to retire promptly and quietly to their room when the work is completed.

C. Single workers should notify the appropriate persons of their plans and whereabouts when going to town or travelling away from their place of service.

- Check with those to whom you are responsible to see if your plans are suitable.
- When a vehicle is to be used, clear the use with the one in charge.
- Be back by dark, unless permission is given otherwise.

Sisters are not to be out on the streets alone, and even two or more should not be out at night without brethren being along.

VII. Lines of Authority:

A. All Mission workers are to consult with the business committee and/or director for guidance concerning Mission expenditures.

B. Single workers at Mission Headquarters are directly responsible to the house parents. Those who work elsewhere are responsible to their local church leadership and the Mission director and bishops.

C. When personnel problems arise, Matthew 18 is to be applied. If assistance is needed, consult with the director and/or your local church leadership.

D. All Mission personnel are responsible to the Director and Mission Board to uphold and abide by the guidelines outlined in this handbook.

VIII. What to Bring:

A. For legal documentation bring a valid passport with at least six months time before expiration date. If you intend to serve more than six months, it is good to bring your birth certificate, marriage license (if married), driver's licence, and police report. It is advisable to check with MAM field personnel to see if anything should be done through the Guatemala Embassy in the US or Canada prior to coming.

B. Sweaters or light jackets are sometimes needed in certain parts of Guatemala. Heavy coats are not needed.

C. If you are coming for an extended stay, you may wish to bring some personal books, photos, mottos, etc., to help you feel at home in your new setting.

D. For personal enrichment, it is profitable to bring along study and inspirational books and a portable CD player, with recordings of good Christian singing and some encouraging messages that can encourage and challenge you, especially if you are not yet fluent in Spanish.

E. A supply of US stamps comes in handy in sending mail back with visitors for mailing upon their return to the US or Canada.

F. Bring a servant's heart and a willingness to live a simple lifestyle that will both honour God and bless the Guatemalan Brotherhood.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28: 19, 20

Por tanto, id, y haced discipulos a todas las naciones, bautizándoles en el nombre del Padre, y del Hijo, y del Espíritu Santo; enseñándoles que guarden todas las cosas que os he mandado; y he aquí yo estoy con vosotros todos los días, hasta el fin del mundo. Amén.

Mateo 28: 19, 20