

Planning a Mission Trip through the CBFNC-Belize Partnership

CBFNC and Belize are in partnership to make the best use of the resources of both organizations in providing for the growth of God's mission in Belize and in North Carolina churches. To assist in this, Brenda Hipp, CBFNC Lay Mission Coordinator for Belize Missions, BelizeBaptistPT@gmail.com, and Henry Baizar, Executive Secretary Treasurer (EST) of the Baptist Association of Belize (BAB) Belizebap@btl.net, are the contact persons for NC churches planning a mission trip to Belize.

1. As you make arrangements for your trip, share with Henry and Brenda where you plan to work and what you plan to do. Some sites require approval from the BAB or Education Board. (Form to record information available from CBFNC website or from Brenda)
2. Travel needs to be planned months in advance to get the best rates. The team leader should contact the group desk at one of the airlines providing flights to Belize: US Air, Continental, American or Delta. Some will lock in their best rate, but then lower it if prices go down. Check whether the airfare includes the exit tax of around \$37.50 (If not, everyone should pack US money for the tax and put it where they will not spend it until flying home.)
3. Transportation in Belize also needs to be planned in advance. Plan with rental agencies such as Panchos (panchosrental@btl.net), for the size, number of vehicles and the length of time needed. Request their "missions" rates. (Henry also has a few vehicles.) Most mission groups add the rental fees to the projected cost of fuel and divide the sum by the number of team members, and this is part of each person's trip cost. Fuel and rentals are more expensive than in the US. You may also want to rent a phone and/or buy phone cards for use in Belize.
4. Arrangements for housing need to be made in advance. Some places will provide assistance with meals. A number will give best rates if informed of association with the BAB. Henry may help with this. If you wish to stay at The Baptist Training Camp, arrangements need to be made well in advance with Eric or Julie Maas at www.BelizeBTC.org. If you want meals prepared at the camp, ask Eric to put you in contact with Ms. Jane or another cook.
5. A preliminary visit is recommended for any construction team. If this is not feasible, Henry may be able to send you digital pictures of the construction site. Some equipment and most supplies are available in Belize. Some tools may be borrowed from the Association office.
 - a. You may send a check and a list of materials to the BAB and have supplies ready when you arrive. The check should be made out to the Baptist Association of Belize. Address the check to: Henry Baizar, PO Box 338, Belize City, Belize Central America.
 - b. When you ship or bring supplies, at least a month ahead of the trip, send a packing list for each suitcase/container to Henry to submit to the Comptroller for low/no customs.
6. Medical personnel must provide copies of the medical licenses prior to providing any services in Belize. This is a lengthy process. An advance trip may be needed to arrange for medical clinics. Scott Hagaman scott.fbcm@charterinternet.com can share about medical mission trips. For use of a dental van, contact Buddy Hardy ralphhardy@bellsouth.net for availability.
7. If you would like to consult or assist at the Baptist High School or other Baptist schools, Henry will get this approved by the Education Board of the BAB. If you wish to do music, a set of tone bells are available from the BAB, and hand bells and guitars are used at some churches.
8. Eric and Julie Maas eric@seekervesave.org and Julie@seekervesave.org also have contacts for projects near the Baptist Training Center.
9. Plan ways to acknowledge the connection of your work with the BAB. Consider a covenant partnership with a church or the Bible School or one of the Baptist camps.
10. Following the trip, provide an evaluation that notes what was done along with any helpful suggestions or cautions for other groups. (Added to form in #1 above.)