

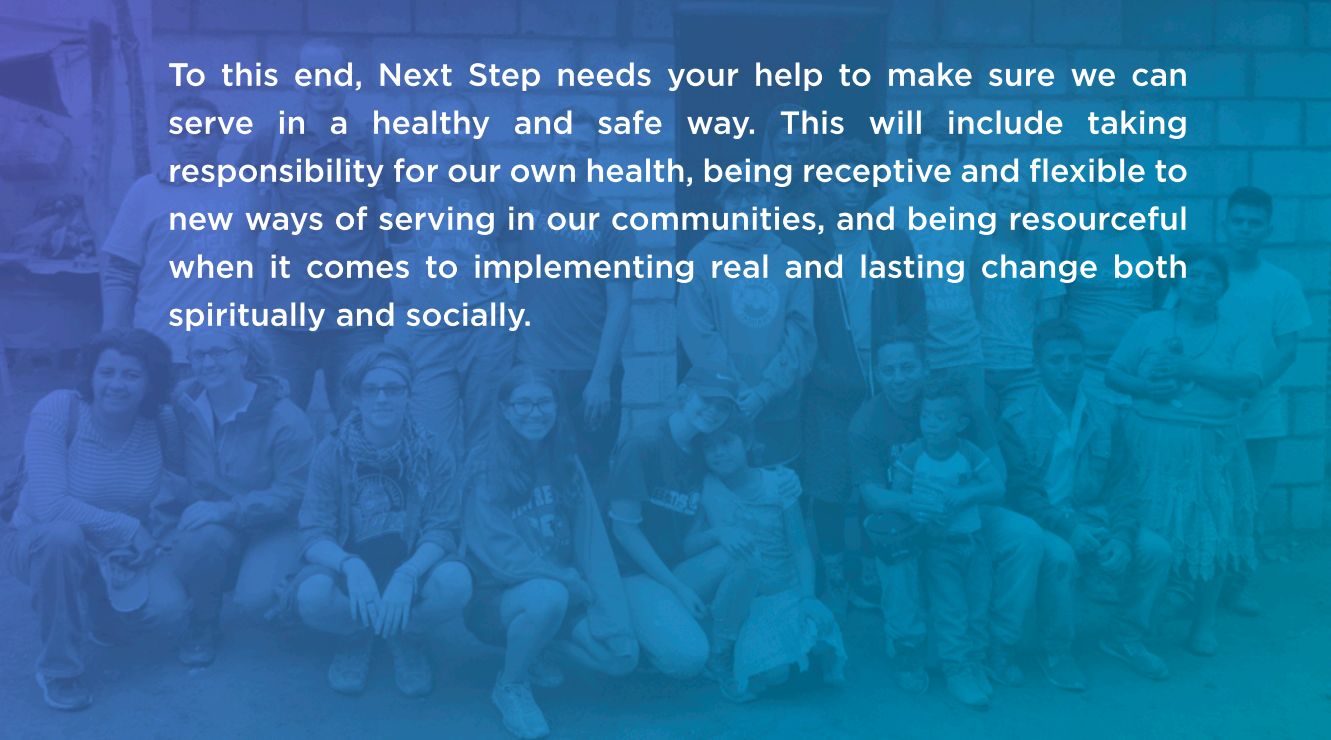


A Guide to Staying Safe this Summer

Next Step Ministries is called to short-term missions that collide with long term community development. This means, meaningful construction projects, high energy and engaging worship, serving alongside community members, and providing tools for our volunteers to take the mission back to their homes.

During these trying times with Covid-19, it has clearly become difficult to meet in groups and travel. Next Step has and continues to make changes to make sure all of our trips are safe and maintain safe social distancing requirements. We are constantly reviewing the policies of the states where you will be departing from, but also the locations you'll be serving in.

To this end, Next Step needs your help to make sure we can serve in a healthy and safe way. This will include taking responsibility for our own health, being receptive and flexible to new ways of serving in our communities, and being resourceful when it comes to implementing real and lasting change both spiritually and socially.



BEFORE YOUR TRIP

- We will ask all trip participants to monitor their symptoms for **seven** days before departing for their trip. We will provide a symptom tracker for your students to easily keep track of their symptoms.
 - If a student is showing more than one symptom consistent with COVID-19, we would ask that they get a COVID test before coming on the trip.
 - If a participant gets a positive COVID test, we would ask them to not attend the mission trip and we will provide a credit for that person's spot to go toward a future trip.
 - Our heart behind this is keeping community members as safe as possible when we enter into their community. Some people we work with are more at risk than others and we want to ensure we are loving like Jesus would love and not bringing harm into the communities we are serving alongside.
- Summer staff will take a COVID test on a weekly basis. We are optimistic that rapid tests will be available and widely used by summer. Our goal is for our summer staff to be tested on every Saturday.
- If NSM full time staff travel to any sites during the summer, they will have tested negative prior to their travel.
- All summer staff will be trained this year on COVID-19 and how to handle all protocols.
- Any items used by previous groups (first aid kits, tools, coolers, etc) will be sanitized and ready to go before each group arrives.
- If there is a vaccine available, Next Step encourages but will not make it mandatory for all participants to get the vaccine before coming into the partnering community.

HEALTH SCREENING DURING TRIPS

- Our summer staff will complete health screenings on themselves every day during the summer. This screening will include:
 - Temperature check
 - Symptom check:
 - **Primary symptoms:** Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
 - **Secondary symptoms:** fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting or diarrhea, nasal/sinus congestion or runny nose, or fatigue.
- We will be asking youth leaders to perform daily health screenings on their team members. We ask that this screening include:
 - Temperature check - please plan to pack thermometers with you. Here is an option we have found [this no-touch option](#).
 - Symptom check:
 - **Primary symptoms:** Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
 - **Secondary symptoms:** fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting or diarrhea, nasal/sinus congestion or runny nose, or fatigue.

- If a participant has one primary symptom or two secondary symptoms, this participant has two options.
 - We will ask for them to be immediately quarantined while arrangements are made for that individual to return home.
 - Stay at a hotel and leave with the rest of their team at the end of the week.
 - Both of these options would be at cost to the group.
- If a summer staff has one primary symptom or two secondary symptoms, they will immediately get tested for COVID and quarantine until the results come back. If results come back positive, this individual will quarantine at a local hotel for 14 days.

SANITIZING AND CLEANING OF FACILITY

- We will be following CDC recommendations for how to clean and disinfect hard surfaces. We will do so frequently on high-touch areas.
- Our Hospitality Leaders will be trained on cleaning and disinfecting and will lead groups in daily cleaning tasks to help keep the facility clean. Staff will oversee cleaning to ensure that areas are disinfected well each night.

MASK REQUIREMENTS

- We will require masks to be worn anytime your group is around summer staff, members of another church group, or around community members. When your group is by themselves, masks will not be required.
- We will not require masks during sleeping. Please see the sleeping arrangements section for more information on how we will address safety concerns while sleeping.
- We will ask that all participants bring their own masks for the week. If someone forgets a mask, we will have a few on hand but please be sure that you encourage your students to pack their masks.

MEALS

- Next Step staff will wear a mask at all times when preparing food. Next Step staff will serve all meals and will be wearing gloves and masks.
 - Participants will wash and sanitize their hands before going through the line.
 - Masks must be worn in the food line or anytime a participant gets up from the table.
- If there are two or more groups present on a trip, we will provide the option of having separate lunch tables so that groups can make their lunches without worrying about cross contamination on high-touch surfaces. We can also provide the option of our summer staff making lunches for each participant.
- We will ask different church groups to sit at separate tables for meals that are at least 6ft apart.
- Dishes will be cleaned using warm soapy water and dish sanitizer.

FREE TIME

- We will ask groups to maintain social distance during free time. Groups can co-mingle and play outdoor games if they can maintain 6ft distance between each other.

SHOWERS

- Church groups will shower at separate times and the shower trailer will be sanitized between group use. Masks should be worn to and from the shower facility.

SLEEPING

- We will be installing dividers in sleeping areas so that groups can feel comfortable sleeping in the same space. Our goal is to maintain 6 feet of distance between groups during sleeping but these dividers will provide extra security.

PROGRAMMING

- There may be mask requirements during worship based on which community you are serving in and our host church's requests.
- There will be a 6ft distance between church groups during nightly programming.
- While we don't have our experiential worship element planned out completely, we will be sure that this element allows for social distancing.
- We will not have our typical high-five tunnel at the beginning of programming.

WORKSITES

- Crews will be smaller to ensure social distancing can take place while on the worksite.
- We will ask groups to wear masks while around community members. Interaction with community members will look differently this year and we will ask groups to respect social distancing whenever they are around community members.
- We will ask participants to sanitize their tools each night when they return to the church from the worksite. Our goal will be to not share tools between groups.

FRIDAY FREE DAY

- In order to keep other groups and summer staff safe, we encourage groups to participate in free day activities that are outdoors and have minimal interaction with other people. These could include but are not limited to hiking, visiting a lake, outdoor picnics, etc.