



# Welcome Home Outreach Ministries

## Casa Hogar Bienvenidos

Vicente Guerrero, B.C., México

A 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION

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### INFORMATION FOR MISSIONS TEAMS

We look forward to welcoming your missions team to Casa Hogar Bienvenidos, Welcome Home Outreach (WHO), and want to make you aware of the following guidelines and tips that will make your visit to WHO productive, meaningful and enjoyable. We ask that all members of your team be aware of these guidelines prior to your trip, and that they commit to following them.

#### BACKGROUND and MISSION

Welcome Home is a non-profit agency that is sponsored by a U.S. Board of Directors comprised of Christians from several faith backgrounds. The facility has been serving children of migrant farm worker families in the Vicente Guerrero region of Mexico since the mid-1980s.

WHO operates a year-round daycare (*guarderia*) for pre-school age children of farm workers. Care for these children is provided at no cost to the families. WHO is dependent on donations from churches and individuals to underwrite the ongoing operational costs of the facility.

In addition to the daycare operation, the WHO staff assists needy families and individuals with basic needs such as clothing and food, and directs house building and other construction projects when possible. Biblical teaching and evangelism are part of the ministry as well. We also work with and do our best to support other ministries in the community.

#### INFORMATION

While we are delighted to host missions teams at Welcome Home, group members must keep in mind that WHO is a fully-operating facility with a normal daily routine – and a residence for several staff members. With that in mind, we ask that visiting groups adhere to some basic guidelines:

#### COSTS:

Lodging costs: \$15 per night per person

OR

\$12 per night per person for “Partner” churches

(Supports at a level of \$200 monthly to assist in the daily operations at WHO).

House build projects: \$5,500 (subject to change)

## TRAVEL:

WHO is located about 4 hours south of the Tijuana border. The route to Ensenada is on a well-maintained toll road (with 3 toll sections, each about \$2/car). Once past Ensenada, there is a single road (Hwy 1) that takes you straight to Vicente Guerrero. Depending on your departure, some groups stop off for bathroom breaks and/or lunch in Ensenada (which is about 2 hours south of the border). Other best options for snack or bathroom breaks are at Pemex gas stations (although some may ask 5-10 pesos for its use) or OXXO and VIP stores (similar to 7-Eleven). **ALL vehicles are required to have insurance as of January 1, 2019. You can purchase Mexican insurance via [www.bajabound.com](http://www.bajabound.com).**

## VISITORS VISA:

We recommend that individuals apply for an FMM (Forma Migratoria Múltiple is an "admission document"). The law was amended September 2015, requiring all foreign visitors to apply for documentation to legally enter the country. The "tourist visa" is free for 7 days and approximately \$35 USD for up to 6 months. An online application can be found at <https://www.bajabound.com/before/permits/visa.php>. However, it is a very simple process to complete the form in person at the border entrance. \*Note that the FMM must be stamped at the INM office (Instituto Nacional de Migración) just past the border crossing. This usually takes no more than 10-15 minutes. Baja Bound's link has clear instructions and pictures.

## ARRIVAL:

For the safety of groups traveling and to make sure there is time for introduction of facility we ask that groups arrive on their intended day **BEFORE** 7:00pm. Please keep in contact with the host throughout the travel day to let them know of your arrival time. When groups or individuals arrive, there will be a debriefing meeting about the week and guidelines.

## WATER:

Water is a valuable resource in Mexico and should not be wasted. SHOWERS are available at WHO, but we ask that they be taken on an as needed basis and be kept to 5 minutes or less. TOILETS should be flushed only when there is solid waste.

## DRINKING WATER:

Do not use tap water to drink or brush your teeth. Purified water is available in the WHO cafeteria. Please bring your own drinking container for water (marked with your name), so that you can take water with you to job sites or to other destinations. Some groups/individuals choose to bring cases of plastic water bottles instead.

## PLUMBING:

No toilet paper or other paper products should be put into the toilets. There are receptacles next to each toilet for TP. We know habits are hard to break and that accidents will happen. If TP is accidentally dropped into the toilet, it must be removed.

## ELECTRICITY:

Electrical service in Mexico is very expensive, therefore conservation of electricity is a must. Please help by using lights, fans and other appliances only when necessary, and remember to turn them off when you exit a room. Be mindful that most of the time you will not need any plug ins.

## MEALS:

Meals served at Welcome Home are healthy and well-prepared, but **we are not able to cater to special dietary restrictions**, so please bring any food items you would need. If you are on a specific diet, please let the host know to be able to inform the kitchen staff. If you require special food, you will be asked to make your food after the meals are prepared. Our daily room & board fee includes two meals per week day. Breakfast is served at 7:30 a.m.; lunch at 12:30 p.m. The kitchen staff expects that visiting groups will eat with the children at those times and prepares food accordingly. If off-site projects keep group members away from WHO at meal time, or you make other plans, your group leader needs to notify Welcome Home staff so the correct amount of food may be prepared.

Group DINNERS and most weekend meals are on your own; you are welcome to use the WHO kitchen for your meal preparation. If preparing evening meals on site, you will need to clean up after yourself and use the same cleaning procedures. A refrigerator is available for your group to use during your stay. We do ask, however, that you clean it out before your departure. You may also visit one of several recommended restaurants in the area. Meals run about \$5-10 depending on the restaurant (and how much you eat/drink). Most local restaurants accept US currency. We recommend that you pay in small bills (\$1 or \$5) as you will receive change in pesos.

#### **WEEKEND MEALS:**

We can provide your group with one weekend breakfast meal on Sunday depending on your arrival and departure, if needed. Other than that, no other weekend meals will be provided. Please communicate your needs before your arrival.

#### **KITCHEN DUTY:**

Groups are asked to assign 4 individuals to assist with kitchen clean-up for each meal. Interns and staff will be working with the kitchen staff to prepare meals. If there is one or two people that would like to help with preparing for the meals, you are encouraged to help set up the tables and chairs for the children. One or two people may also help with serving the children about 10 minutes prior to meal time. Please do not "hang out" in the kitchen area as staff will be working to prepare the meals. If you are staying and you are not part of a group, you are encouraged to help with dishes as well.

#### **SLEEPING:**

Sleeping areas are furnished with single beds (some are bunk beds), with sheets, a blanket and a pillow provided. You may also choose to bring a sleeping bag or your own items as desired. We only have 1 downstairs room with a queen sized bed for married couples or those unable to climb stairs. Please let us know ahead of time if you would like to use it. There is also a play pen available if needed. Please let us know of any special needs **before** you arrive.

#### **QUIET HOURS:**

Every morning, Monday through Friday, staff leave Welcome Home at 6:00 a.m. to pick up the daycare children and return with them at about 7:00 a.m. Therefore, we ask that groups respect the **quiet hours from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.** **If you are in a common area, near a sleeping area the quiet time is 9:30p.m.** **There is a fire pit available, but the fire needs to be out by 9:30p.m.** Please let the staff who live on campus know if you will be doing a fire. Staff housing will need to close their windows.

#### **LAUNDRY:**

WHO has only one functioning washing machine, which is reserved for daycare and staff (living on site) use only. We are happy to direct you to a nearby laundromat if needed.

#### **DRESS CODE:**

American Christians visiting in Mexico should dress modestly in keeping with the standards of the Mexican Christian community. Pants or shorts for both women and men of all ages should be knee-length or below (**no short-shorts, no mini-skirts**). Please, no tube tops, halter tops or bare midriffs; no excessive cleavage; no exposed underwear. Bathing suits should be worn only when at the beach (one-piece suits or 2 piece with something covering on top). In our area it is extremely rare to see women wearing a bathing suit. Most women swim with clothes over top. Bikinis are simply not socially acceptable.

**On construction sites, Welcome Home requires that all persons wear close-toed shoes (work boots or tennis shoes). Absolutely no sandals or flip flops on construction sites. This is for your own safety.** Workers may want to bring a sun hat, sunscreen and gloves for construction.

#### **CHURCH:**

You are welcome to attend a local church service while you are here, but it is not required. Two common church choices and hours of services are

- The Mission Church - Sunday: 10:00am & 6pm and Wednesday: 6:00pm
- Calvary Chapel - Sunday: 10:30am and Wednesday: 6:30pm

**ALCOHOL/DRUGS/SMOKING:**

**No alcohol, drugs, smoking, or profanity are allowed on the Welcome Home premises at any time.**

**CLEAN-UP:**

Please help us keep the WHO compound neat and tidy. Be respectful and responsible in using the facility. The bathrooms, sleeping areas, and common areas should be checked regularly for trash and personal belongings.

**DEPARTURE:**

There will be a brief meeting at the end of the stay with the whole group. The time of this meeting will be set up with the group leader and host.

When your group prepares to depart the WHO compound, we ask that you do the following:

- Bedding: If you used our pillow/pillowcase, and sheets, please take them to the laundry room area. We will provide you with clean linens to remake your bed.
- Rooms: Sweep out or vacuum your sleeping areas. You should find brooms and dust pans in each area; if not, please ask.
- Bathrooms: Assign group members to do basic cleaning of the bathrooms. Take out trash and replace liners; sweep floors.
- We really appreciate it if you leave the quarters in as good – or better – condition than you found it! (since turn-around for the groups is often tight and our staff is limited)
- Be sure to check your area to make sure you have everything!

**REMEMBER** that you are a guest in this country and community. You are representing Jesus Christ and His love. **All GLORY, HONOR, and PRAISE be to our Lord Jesus Christ!**