

Short Term Missions Handbook

North Peace Mennonite Brethren Church

Missions Ministry Team

2009

Section I – NPMB Church-Initiated Short Term Missions

Accepted by Membership – February 2009

Not yet drafted: Section II - Other Short Term Missions

Section I – NPMB-Initiated Mission Trips

Short Term Missions (STM) will refer to mission ministries of less than 2 years in duration. Exceptions in Short Term Missions procedure must have the approval of the Missions Ministry Team and the board of Elders.

These guidelines are designed to clarify the way NPMB church and the Missions Ministry Team will administer Short Term Missions activity, enabling us to consistently solve problems. It is not meant to stifle service to the Lord, but to define when and how we as a church will be involved.

It is the desire of the NPMB that individuals, especially members, will be drawn to ministry in similar or cross-cultural circumstances outside of our church building as God leads.

The goals of Short Term Missions are:

- bring Jesus Christ to people outside our church building
- strengthen individual team member's relationship with Christ
- strengthen NPMB's relationship with missionaries we support
- strengthen/clarify the call to missions individuals may hear

Steps for a short term missions to be approved and supported by NPMB

1. An initial consultation and interview with the Missions Ministry Team (MMT) to discuss early thinking regarding a Short Term Mission. Recommended lead time is 10-12 months.
2. The submission of NPMB Short Term Mission Leader Applications to Missions Ministry Team.
3. A presentation by leader(s) of the proposed Mission at a Board of Elders meeting.
4. Approval for trip and selection of leaders by the Missions Ministry Team and the Elders.
5. Upon approval, the completion and submission of a Short Term Mission Pre-Trip Plan to the Missions Ministry Team. (This should include how the trip will be promoted at NPMB, when, where, and purpose of pre-trip training classes and overview of content of those classes. This should also include preparation for a debriefing session and report upon return from the mission.)
6. The STM leaders are to advertise the missions trip to the church body in Sunday Services, in the bulletin, on the church website if appropriate, and in other ways so that NPMB membership are aware of the opportunity.

A: NPMB Church Initiated Short Term Teams

1. Financial

There is one budget source for short term mission trips organized within NPMB, and no budget source for funding of individuals on STM with other agencies.

Sources of Funds for NPMB Short Term Mission Teams:

- 1) Budget fund that is designated for Short Term Trips (available for use only during the current annual budget period) is subject to the availability of funds on hand within the specified church budget period (May 1-April 30)
- 2) Designated funds received through approved Mission Ministry Short Term Missions Trip Project offerings.
- 3) Designated funds received from special donations that are stipulated as being available for support of Short Term Missions trips.

2. Short Term Team Leaders

Selection of Team Leaders

The Missions Ministry Team/designated committee will select the Team leadership. The Team leader(s) should be chosen early in the process (preferably before the preliminary meeting) so they can take responsibility for the trip and the team from the onset. Until a Team Leader(s) is selected, the Missions Ministry Team or designate will coordinate the trip.

It is recommended that the interview panel be comprised of one or more MMT member, at least one pastor or elder and other NPMB members as needed.

Requirements for Team Leaders

1. Have a clear written testimony of how he/she came to know Jesus Christ as Saviour, and how He is presently working in their lives.
2. Exemplify Christ-like behaviour.
3. Be active in the life of NPMB church, including regular attendance in Sunday School and Worship.
4. Demonstrate a heart for missions.
5. Submit a Short Term Missions Leader Application package to the MMT and follow the '*Steps for a short term missions to be approved and supported by NPMB*' outlined on page 1.
6. Attend all orientation and training meetings and carry out all assignments as determined by the Team leadership in preparation for the trip.
7. Sign covenant agreements (part of orientation and training in preparation for the trip) made with other team members and the NPMB church releasing them from liability issues.
8. Be willing to adapt to other cultures and not exhibit any form of racial prejudice.
9. Meet specific trip qualifications based on the needs and nature of the project.
10. Be physically, mentally and spiritually prepared for short-term service.
11. Be prepared to share their experiences with the church body upon return from their assignment.
12. Be a member of NPMB church at least one year prior to date of departure or newer member with clear intention of returning to NPMB for an extended period of time.
13. Complete the NPMB STM team member application for complete information.

3. Short Term Team Members

Selection of team members

Once the leadership is identified, they will have input about individuals chosen for the team, based on the requirements as listed above. Size of team will need to be determined and advertisement of the trip should be done straightaway. Someone may be denied for a number of reasons including: lack of attendance at team meetings, being unable to raise the required funds by the established date, a negative reference, and problematic behaviour on a prior STM team.

Requirements for Team Members:

1. Have a clear written testimony of how he/she came to know Jesus Christ as Saviour, and how He is presently working in their lives.
2. Exemplify Christ-like behaviour.
3. Be active in the life of NPMB church, including regular attendance in Sunday School and Worship.
4. Demonstrate a heart for missions.
5. Complete an approved Short Term Missions Application package at least 3 months prior to date of departure and have their STM application approved and signed by one of the Missions Ministry Team, Elder, or Pastoral Staff. Exceptional circumstances will be taken into account.
6. Attend all orientation and training meetings and carry out all assignments as determined by the Team leadership in preparation for the trip.
7. Sign covenant agreements (part of orientation and training in preparation for the trip) made with other team members and the NPMB church releasing them from liability issues.
8. Be willing to adapt to other cultures and not exhibit any form of racial prejudice.
9. Meet specific trip qualifications based on the needs and nature of the project.
10. Be physically, mentally and spiritually prepared for short-term service.
11. Have written approval by parents if under 18 for trips of 1-11 weeks, at least high school graduation for short term trips of 3-5 months.
12. Be prepared to share their experiences with the church body upon return from their assignment.
13. Be a member of NPMB church at least one year prior to date of departure or newer member with clear intention of returning to NPMB for an extended period of time.

Participants from other churches:

People who are not members of NPMB may go on short-term teams if they meet the following qualifications:

- a. They must meet all the qualifications above as they apply to their own local church, and all other requirements as outlined in this Handbook.
- b. There must be an opening that has not been claimed by a member of NPMB by the deadline for turning in the deposit for the trip.

Preparation

In order to prepare for a STM team members will be required to participate in a Short Term Missions Team training program (length may vary depending on circumstances) as well as the preliminary meeting. These meetings are a key opportunity to build relationships and to pray for each other and for people in their host country.

Field Behaviour

1. Team members will submit to the Team Leadership authority.
2. Members must refrain from using abusive language, the use of any form of tobacco products and illegal substances, and regular use of alcohol.
3. Each participant needs to be sensitive to the cultural and political climate in which they serve. They are asked to refrain from expressing his/her political opinion.
4. If a participant's behaviour constitutes a serious problem, the Team leadership has the authority to ask that person to return home after reasonable attempts have been made to resolve the problem.
5. Any additional costs incurred as a result of this action will be at the participant's expense. A brief of these circumstances will be shared with the board of Elders upon the earliest convenience.
6. Notarized Parental Consent forms for participants under 18 years of age require parents to accept responsibility for additional costs incurred if a youth is asked to return home early as a result of problematic behaviour. Guidelines for these situations will be included in the Training program and parents should be informed of these before Parental Consent forms are notarized.
7. Due to the partnership nature of the trip, participants will be asked to abide by the regulations and restrictions set by the field missionaries. Participants may be asked to limit their personal speech, actions, habits, and dress in order to enhance the overall effectiveness of the team and to fulfill the strategic objectives of the field missionaries

4. Application Procedure

1. STM opportunities are to be announced in the church bulletin, church website (unless a STM trip will go to restricted countries and the in-country contacts must not be compromised) and through general announcement to the church body.
2. A completed application, up-to-date Criminal Record Check, two letters of personal reference and one pastoral reference (filled out and sent directly to the Missions Ministry Chair or the Short Term Co-leadership team, not the applicant and mailed in a timely manner). Applications are available from the church office or from the Missions Ministry Chair.
 - An application is needed from every team member, even those who have been on previous STM trips. An applicant's contact information may change.
3. The leadership team will review the applications and arrange for personal interviews by a panel which includes the leadership team, one or more MMT member, and a pastor or elder or NPMB member.

4. Upon approval of a team member, he/she will be required to put down a deposit during the designated sign-up dates. Amount of deposit will be determined by intended location. International trips will require a larger deposit due to ticket purchase. Booking and payment of tickets will be under the direction of the team leadership.

The Team Leader(s) must receive the full amount of the cost of the trip by the scheduled deadline date or a spot on the team cannot be guaranteed. Should a person be forced to withdraw from a trip, a refund of money paid by the participant will be made unless airline and/or mission handbook make it too late or impossible to be refunded. If a person withdraws from the trip and funds have been received on their behalf from other contributors, those funds will be re-allocated to another team member still needing funds, or to the Missions Ministry Project.

If the church receives funds for a specific participant in excess of the cost of the trip, the excess money will be allocated to another team member still in need of funds or to the Missions Ministry Project offering. The team leaders and members must insure that the intention for dispersion of excess monies or funds received for a team member, or the whole missions team who do not go on the trip must be included in the fundraising letters and advertised during fundraising events.