

HELPS International

Statement of Understanding

HELPS International is a guest in the country that we serve. Our priority is that we have a positive affect on the lives of host country and our volunteers. HELPS has been and is a role model in these communities and we act accordingly. In this respect we:

- a. Represent the United States
- b. Represent U.S. medicine and/or U.S. technologies and/or other systems
- c. Represent HELPS and our affiliated organizations
- d. Represent institutions within Guatemala that benefit from our work
- e. Respect the local culture and morés of the people we serve

We want our volunteers to have an experience that honors themselves, their family, their community, their church or other organization. Therefore we:

1. Avoid the consumption of alcohol during the actual field time of the mission. The definition of that time is from the time a volunteer enters the bus from the originating city, until they arrive in the “rest and relaxation” portion of the trip, alcohol is not to be consumed. When in the “rest” phase, if a volunteer desires to drink, please drink responsibly. It is strongly suggested that, volunteers who have personal issues with alcohol and/or this policy, not go on HELPS trips.
2. In the area of romantic involvement, HELPS simply asks people to be adults and recognize their role in the mission, the group, and the effect on their personal and family life. Culturally the Indigenous populations are very conservative and do not openly exhibit their romantic interest. It is considered disrespectful and therefore we abstain from forward behavior.
3. We want to leave people their dignity and do not want to create hordes of children chasing through the streets begging from outsiders. Therefore, we do not give things out, such as candy, gum, money, photos etc. except through a HELPS staff person.
4. HELPS staff pays for services rendered by “locals”, therefore, volunteers should never attempt to pay for services outside of the areas of normal commerce.
5. We respect the culture where we work as to mores and societal appearance. Therefore, we respect the issues of the culture by wearing clothes or manners of clothes that are appropriate. Please do not wear shorts or go sleeveless, but dresses or baggy pants, especially when on the front gate or triage.
6. Personal conduct should always be above question.

Notes:

- (1) **Conduct detrimental to HELPS by any team member or employee is cause for that person not to be invited for further HELPS projects. The team leader or HELPS management will make such determination.**
- (2) **If necessary team leaders or HELPS management reserve the right to return an individual to the United States, such individual forfeiting any rights to financial or other remuneration.**

I Understand and agree to conduct myself in a manner consistent with the above statement.

Signed _____ Date: _____

HELPS is delighted to have you as a volunteer. The experience will hopefully be richly rewarding and, perhaps life-changing. Your suggestions are welcomed and encouraged.