



Service. Healing. Transformation.

General Volunteer Packet

Honduras



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The Role of the General Volunteer

We cannot keep a medical mission running smoothly without the help of our general volunteers! General volunteers contribute to our mission by supporting the work in the surgery center and on the ranch. By cleaning the ORs between cases, helping to wash medical instruments, and filing and scanning patient charts, they help the surgery center run efficiently. On the ranch, they support our NPH partners by helping in the kitchen, garden, and other workstations. Just like the clinical volunteers on a mission, each general volunteer is an important and valuable member of the medical mission team!

Our Approach

One World Surgery adheres to best practices for international volunteering and short term missions. Among these best practices is allowing the community to identify its own needs and priorities. The role of international volunteers should be to empower and support the local community in carrying out its own solutions. Since international volunteers have limited information about the dynamics of a local community and the cultural context, they risk creating projects that will not be useful and at worst, may inadvertently harm the community. Even with the best intentions, volunteers may disrupt local power dynamics, take away paying jobs, or create dependence.

To avoid these pitfalls and make a sustainable impact, our approach is to collaborate with our NPH partners and our local staff in Honduras, to determine the jobs and projects that will best meet their needs. Whenever possible, we work alongside local people who lead our volunteers in these projects instead of trying to do the job for them.

Another best practice requires that only skilled volunteers perform skilled jobs. Again, this practice ensures that volunteers do not cause harm in the communities in which they serve. This is why volunteers in the surgery center are only allowed to perform duties within their training and experience. Similarly, this is why volunteers are generally not permitted to serve in caregiver or teacher roles at the NPH home. These types of projects and assignments are only available when a volunteer has the required skills and when it is appropriate for a short-term volunteer to fill the role, instead of a paid local person.

Special Projects

Adult general volunteers may be assigned to special projects within the surgery center or on the NPH ranch according to their unique skill sets. Please complete the special skills survey included in your registration follow-up forms. If we find a match between your skills and a current need at the surgery center or NPH, our Program Assistant will contact you with further information about potential projects. **Please keep in mind that there may not always be a match between the skill set you would like to use and the projects available at the time of the mission.** Additionally, our interpreters are prioritized to the surgery center, and often, we do not have the resources to enable non Spanish-speaking volunteers to provide specialized services on the ranch (i.e. teaching, counseling). **If the One World Surgery team does not reach out to you about a special project prior to your trip, you should assume that you**



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will be participating in the typical general volunteer assignments described in the rest of this packet.

Assignments

Rather than being assigned to a single role for the entire mission, general volunteers will usually rotate among various jobs in the surgery center and on the NPH ranch. Each evening after dinner, nonclinical volunteers will sign up for the next day's shifts (morning and afternoon) with the Program Assistant or Hospitality Coordinator.

We will encourage all general volunteers to work both in the surgery center and on the ranch. For patient safety, we need to limit the number of general volunteers in the surgery center at any given time. We may ask you to take a turn at a ranch workstation to give another volunteer an opportunity to work in the surgery center. We may ask you to serve in a role that really needs to be filled in order to keep the mission running smoothly. Come willing to help out wherever and whenever needed and to fully participate in the service aspect of the trip. **It will not be possible to spend the entire trip observing, shadowing, or scrubbing in to cases.**

Examples of General Volunteer Assignments

Descriptions of possible ranch and surgery center jobs and activities can be found in the tables below. Please note that available jobs are subject to change due to constantly evolving needs on the ranch and in the surgery center and may be different during your particular mission.

All jobs and activities will be discussed during the Sunday surgery center orientation. The surgery center orientation will start with a session for all volunteers. Then, we'll break off into groups of clinical and general volunteers. During the general volunteer orientation, we'll review details for the surgery center and ranch work stations and activities including what to wear, what to expect, and where to meet for your shifts.

Please note that some jobs and activities have capacity and minimum age requirements. Children under 13 must be supervised by a nonclinical adult parent or guardian during all jobs and activities.

The Surgery Center Experience

While we love exposing young people and those considering a career change to the medical field, our primary goal is to provide high-quality surgical care to the under-resourced. Patient safety and quality of care always come first. If you do not have the training or education required to perform a specific skill in the U.S., you will not be permitted to perform that skill in our surgery center in Honduras.

General volunteer jobs in the surgery center will include tasks that help keep the surgery center running efficiently and can also be learned quickly during the on-site orientation. All general volunteers, including students of health professions, will be required to assist with these jobs. If they would like to observe surgical cases (age-permitting), general volunteers will be assigned to observation shifts to ensure that everyone is contributing to the mission of the week. Additionally, the number of observers in each surgery will be limited due to patient safety.



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Please note that when we have small missions or few general volunteers, we may combine surgery center roles in order to best utilize our volunteers. For example, turnover crew may be asked to help with instrument cleaning during down time, or the trash helpers may be asked to keep the kitchen clean.

Job	Description	Notes
Turnover Crew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean and sanitize ORs after each case to prepare for the next case • In between cases, perform general upkeep by removing trash and laundry throughout the surgery center and replacing supplies (i.e. paper towels) 	<p>Must change into scrubs</p> <p>You will come into contact with blood and other bodily materials. This job is not for the squeamish.</p> <p>Age Requirement: 13 and up, under 13 with the assistance of parent/guardian</p>
Instrument Helper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with cleaning, sterilization, and preparation of surgical instruments • Wrap sterilized instrument sets • Fold towels and surgical gowns 	<p>Must change into scrubs</p> <p>Will work with at least 1 trained sterile processing specialist</p> <p>You will come into contact with blood and other bodily materials. This job is not for the squeamish.</p> <p>Age Requirement: 18 and up</p>
Surgery Observer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe a surgery in the OR 	<p>Must wear scrubs and mask and other proper attire if scrubbing in. No cell phones allowed in OR.</p> <p>At any time, a clinical volunteer may ask you to leave the OR.</p> <p>You must observe a case before you can scrub in to a case.</p> <p>A physician or OR staff must watch you scrub.</p> <p>Age Requirement: 15 and up to observe, 18 and up to scrub</p>
Kitchen Helper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the surgery center kitchen clean and organized (i.e. wipe down tables and counters) 	<p>Do not change into scrubs</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare coffee • Cut and prepare fruit • Communicate with surgery center coordinators regarding late meal arrivals • Empty kitchen trash 	Age Requirement: 13 and up, under 13 with the assistance of an adult
Trash Helper	Carry surgery center trash to respective bins outside the surgery center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick up trash around the outdoor surgery center waiting areas 	Do not change into scrubs Age Requirement: 13 and up, under 13 with the assistance of parent/guardian

Additionally, we may have several ongoing projects or small tasks that general volunteers can work on during down time or in between shifts in the surgery center.

Job	Description	Notes
Photographer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as official mission photographer for the week, documenting all aspects of the mission • Capture photos on shots list to be used for One World Surgery marketing purposes • Assist with developing slideshow to show during final night of the mission 	Age Requirement: 15+
Communications Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take photos and videos during the mission for future use on One World Surgery social media platforms • Prepare draft social media posts 	Age Requirement: 18+
Clinic Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in scanning and filing patient charts • Organizing X-rays • Supporting patient coordinators with special projects 	Age Requirement: 13+, under 13 with adult supervision



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Research Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting the Research Coordinator in inputting patient information• May assist in finding charts and completed surveys	Must be comfortable using a computer Age Requirements: Depends on the project available, typically 15+
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The NPH Ranch Experience

Safeguarding and upholding the rights of the NPH children are of utmost importance, and we will never neglect these duties in order to provide a volunteer with a “feel-good” experience. Please keep in mind that NPH frequently hosts visiting groups (medical mission and other), and we want to integrate ourselves into ranch activities in a way that minimizes disruption to the routines and resources of the ranch and all those who live and work there. For children who have experienced a traumatic or unstable upbringing before coming to NPH, following a strict routine helps create a feeling of security.

We are also sensitive to the fact that creating bonds with many short-term volunteers may lead to or exacerbate attachment issues in the children, and we recognize that many jobs working with children are better suited for individuals who are trained, speak the local language, and understand the local culture. For all of these reasons, there are limited opportunities to volunteer with the children, and the following activities are not available to our volunteers:

- serving as a caregiver (tío or tía)
- observing or teaching classes at the school
- participating in activities at the school, during school hours
- activities with school-aged children after school during designated homework and chore time
- waking children up or putting children to bed

We also strive to respect the privacy of the children who live at NPH. If you would like to visit an hogar (children’s home), the school, or workshops outside of a scheduled workstation or activity, you should first check with the Program Assistant to make sure it is an appropriate time to do so.

You should expect that at least one of your ranch assignments during the week won’t go as planned. Perhaps the NPH worker will be late or the opportunity will suddenly become unavailable at that time. There are many reasons why this might happen. Maybe the worker’s bus is running late. Maybe another task or project has been determined to be a higher priority at the moment. The way of life on the ranch will likely be different than what you’re used to back home. Be patient and flexible. Our team will help you find another assignment if your original one doesn’t go as planned.



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You should also expect that there will not be interpreters at the ranch workstations. We concentrate our resources on providing interpreters for our patients and clinical volunteers in the surgery center, where understanding one another is critical to providing safe care. If you don't speak much Spanish, use this as an opportunity to practice, and there's a lot that can be communicated with gestures. Time and time again, we see our volunteers form relationships with local staff despite language barriers. Don't let the fact that you don't speak Spanish deter you. Be willing to step outside of your comfort zone!

Job	Description	Notes
Garden	Tend to the garden (weeding, raking, picking vegetables), which helps to provide food for the ranch.	Long pants, closed-toe shoes, insect repellent, and sun screen are strongly recommended Bring water with you All ages
Medical Mission Breakfast Helper	Prepare breakfast for the medical mission group (chopping, peeling, cleaning, doing dishes, etc.).	Long pants and closed toe shoes required Start time is earlier than other jobs, and you will then sign up for a second job on the ranch Age Requirement: 15 and up, 10 and up with the assistance of parent/guardian
Ranch Lunch Helper	Prepare lunch for the entire ranch, including the medical mission group (chopping, peeling, cleaning, doing dishes, etc.).	Long pants, closed-toe shoes, short sleeved shirt required Bring water with you Age Requirement: 15 and up, 10 and up with the assistance of parent/guardian
Medical Mission Dinner Helper	Prepare dinner for the medical mission group (chopping, peeling, cleaning, doing dishes, etc.).	Long pants and closed toe shoes are required Age Requirement: 15 and up, 10 and up with the assistance of parent/guardian
Tea with the abuelos	NPH Honduras is also home to Casa Eva, which houses elderly individuals who do not have family to care for our support them. Visit with the "grandparents" who live at Casa Eva.	We recommend that you bring games from Moscati to Casa Eva so you have activities to do with them (Jenga, puzzles, etc) All ages



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Playtime with Casa Suyapa	Play with kids ages 3-8 during their afternoon playtime.	Playtime should be outside, if it starts raining the kids will go inside and you should contact the Visitor Coordinator to find a new job on the ranch Please do not give the kids anything during playtime (your phone, keys, candy, food etc)
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Meals

Breakfast is delivered to the surgery center at 8 AM. If you will be going to a ranch work station in the morning, please eat from the breakfast items available in the Moscati Center guest kitchen (cereal, fruit, toast) before heading to your work station. Lunch is delivered to the surgery center at 1 PM. If you're participating in an afternoon ranch work station, you can have lunch in the surgery center before your shift, or you can choose to make a quick lunch in the Moscati Center guest kitchen (i.e. peanut butter and jelly, leftovers from dinner). All participants will meet at the Moscati Center at 7 PM every night for dinner.