**SERVICE&LEARNING TEAMS INFORMATION  
Mandatory: Please give a copy to EVERY team member!!**

**GENERAL INFO:**

* **Nicaragua** is in the tropics and so you will experience temperatures in the 90s. It may not cool off much at night. Remember to drink plenty of liquids. The sun is more intense and you will burn more quickly than in a non-tropical country**. Sunscreen is highly recommended.**
* **Spanish** is the official language although some speak some English. All ministry material/music needs to be in Spanish.
* **Safety:** While not everyone here loves Americans, you should not encounter problems just because you are foreigners. Just remember you are the visitors, and YOU must adjust to Nicaragua, not the Nicaraguans to you. We do have security guards at the ABWE Center 24/7 as is part of the culture here. Violent crime is not as prevalent as petty thievery. We suggest not bringing valuables and just being careful to know where your money is at all times. Generally, if you are aware of your surroundings, you should not have problems.
* **The national currency** is the Córdoba, and the exchange rate is 36.6 Córdobas per American dollar.
* **Food Allergies** - please send us this information if appropriate. If you have a special diet for medical reasons, PLEASE let us know. You may have to bring some of your own food.
* **Accommodations:** If ministry is done in Managua, you will be staying at Centro ABEM, the ABWE ministry center. You can see the campus at [www.centroabem.org](http://www.centroabem.org) For ministries outside Managua, accommodations are TBA. For ministry outside of Managua, we will provide information about lodging.
* **Costs**: In addition to your airfare, there is a $10 tourist visa fee upon arrival.   
  The fee for teams is $100 per person per night. This includes ALL in country expenses (food, lodging, transportation, tourist day) except souvenir spending money. A total will be sent after we have confirmed your dates. In addition, there is a $99 charge for an ABWE background check/training/insurance. This charge is only $25 for those under 18.
* **Shots:** An up-to-date Tetanus shot is required, and Hepatitis A/B shots are recommended. Malaria meds are NOT necessary, nor recommended for Managua.
* **If you are sick before you come: Please note that you will need to be fever free for at least 24 hours (without medication) to be eligible to travel. This is for the protection of your own health (to avoid relapse), that of your team, and of the Nicaraguans who do not have access to affordable healthcare.**

**PACKING LIST**

**Please note that everything on the lists is suggested for EACH team member.**

**A Valid Passport with at least 6 months from the day you leave Nicaragua until the expiration date.**

* Imodium, Tylenol, Tums, Dramamine, all prescription meds. **\*\* If you have asthma please bring all inhalers, etc. as this is a high asthma risk area.**
* Water bottle w/your name. Individual “on the go” packets of Gatorade, Liquid IV or similar drink.
* Insect repellent/hydrocortisone \*\*this is the best defense against Zika/Dengue\*\*
* Sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, pool towel
* Small flashlight with fresh batteries
* Small umbrella or light rain jacket or poncho if during the months of June-October.
* We have sheets and pillows and towels or bring your own, twin size**.\*\*If you would like to bring, use, and then donate NEW, washed,TWIN sheets, we are taking donations** to replenish our inventory at the Centro ABEM ministry center.
* **Please bring small bills 1’s, 5’s, 10’s, 20’s only, in excellent condition, no tears, markings, etc. for shopping**
* **Do not bring valuables or jewelry**
* **A photo book and testimony ready to share!** 
  + Please **bring a flip type photo book** with photos of family, church activities, hobbies, etc. **The best ones we’ve seen** also had a caption on each page in English and in Spanish (ex. Photo of self: My name is Laura. Me llamo Laura.) It’s also a good idea to include a small map (like an outline drawing) of central America and your state showing where you live and where Nicaragua is in relation. We will use these to build relationships with the kids/people that we are working with. The kids LOVE this!! **Please do not include** photos of ‘material things’ like your new sports car, etc ☺ **We will be using these daily.**
  + **Every team member should have a 5 min (max!) testimony** ready. This should focus on their salvation and what God has taught them/what God is doing now. It should not focus on the ‘baggage’ they may have had before knowing Christ. That type of thing can be summed up in one sentence like “Before knowing Christ, I was involved in many things that were not pleasing to him.” Or” I have come from a difficult family situation.” **Please practice these** many times before arriving so that they are second nature to share. **You will be sharing your testimony daily.**

**Dress:**

**Out of respect for our national partners and Nicaraguan church culture, please read the following carefully and pack accordingly. Note: short shorts are not permitted at any time.**

* **For VBS/CAMP ministry:** 
  + **Girls: Capris, lightweight pants, athletic pants (not yoga pants) jeans, joggers, or lightweight, knee length skirt, shirt with sleeves (no tank tops)**
  + **Guys: Pants, athletic pants, joggers, or jeans and t-shirt.**
* **For work projects at ABWE Center and Sports Clinic ministry- Bermuda/basketball type shorts (at least mid-thigh length) /t-shirts with sleeves, at least one set per day as it is very hot.**
* **You may also like to bring extra clothes to wear during the evenings. Short shorts are not permitted at any time, but mid-thigh length shorts are fine.**
* **For Church Services: A casual skirt or dress for the girls and khakis/jeans and a collared shirt for the guys. Shorts are not appropriate for church for guys or girls.**
* **For swimming: Please bring a shirt and shorts to wear over swimsuit for times nationals are present.**
* **Please bring clothes sufficient for your stay We do not have laundry facilities available.**

**Guide to Arrival**

* On the plane:  You will receive a form that includes customs, visa and health information.  In the place for destination write **Km 21 C. Nueva a Leon, Managua -Centro ABEM. Bruce Edgar and 8473-2952 is the contact name/phone number to use. (If you are staying outside of Managua, address information will be given.)**
* Immigration:  After you get off the plane have your **passport, visa form, and $10 US cash** ready. They will stamp your passport and give you back a copy of your visa paper, keep this in your passport.
* Baggage:  The baggage area is just outside the immigration area.  The airport is very small and easy to manage.
* Customs:  This is just where you exit the airport at the far end of the baggage claim.  Get in line with your luggage and have your customs form ready to turn in. After your bags pass through the x-ray, they may be selected for further inspection. If this is the case, just take your bags to the designated area. **Only open the bag they designate** for secondary inspection.
* Exiting: We will be waiting just through the automatic doors that lead to the **INSIDE** waiting area.  **Do not exit to the outside.**