

NCBC Mexico Team 2021

Information and Application Packet

Since 1996 teams from New Covenant have taken over 15 trips to Mexico and built 43 houses for Mexican families living in material poverty. This summer, we plan to take up to 34 of our high school students, parents, sponsors, and other church members/attenders. Registration closes on April 26th, or when all spots are filled (after which a waiting list will be established). The wall display in the High School room will show how many spots remain. No construction skills required, simply a willingness to work hard without complaining and follow directions.

Why Do We Go?

To show God's love by building homes for people in poverty. To learn that the world is bigger and more diverse than we ever imagined. To experience teamwork and the completion of a task. To develop loving relationships within our team. To get away from our comfort zones and experience the discipline of hardships. To confront the poverty in our own lives: pride, ethnocentrism, judgmentalism, etc.

When Is the Trip?

Saturday morning June 12th until Saturday evening, June 19, 2021.

Where Are We Headed?

We'll be serving in Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, Mexico, which is right across the border from Del Rio, Texas. Material poverty is widespread in Acuña, a city of about 180,000. *Casas Por Cristo* (Houses for Christ) is the organization we'll be serving alongside. This will be New Covenant's 17th time working with Casas.

How Much Does It Cost?

We endeavor to keep our costs as low as possible, this is very much a "no frills" trip.

Per Person Trip Costs	
Cost	Expense
\$465	Building Materials
\$75	Food, Bottled Water, Ice
\$75	Lodging
\$235	Transportation + Insurance
\$850	Total

Additionally:

- If you don't already have a passport or passport card, you will also see an added cost to acquire one of those.
- You'll also need a sack lunch along for the first meal as we drive down, and money for up to 8 fast food meals on the road.

There are 2 Payment Options for this trip:

1. \$850
2. \$425 + 25 hours of fundraising projects.

What's Our Tentative Itinerary?

Saturday, June 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7:00 AM – Luggage to church. Final instructions. Load vehicles. • 8:00 AM – Commissioning prayer for team. Roll out. Sack lunch while driving, stop for supper on the road.
Sunday, June 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:30 AM – Arrive in San Angelo, TX. Buy breakfast. Pick up the week's food at Sam's club. • 1:00 PM – Arrive in Del Rio, Texas. Meet our <i>Casas</i> staff and get BBQ for lunch. • 3:00 PM – Cross the border. Get settled at Mexican church lodgings. Eat dinner, prep tools for the next day, sleep.
Monday, June 14 – Wednesday, June 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build 2 homes
Thursday, June 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish homes. Dedication ceremony. Time allowing, stop at local market. • 3:00 PM – Cross border back to Texas. Check into hotel, showers, pizza dinner, time of reflection and sharing about the trip. Sleep.
Friday, June 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to Wichita, KS and spend night at a hotel.
Saturday, June 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive back to NCBC. • 6:30 PM – Sharing time at the church.

What's The Daily Schedule Like?

- 5:30 AM – Get up for quiet time/breakfast.
- 7:00 AM – Arrive at work site.
- 4-5 PM – Return to church
- 5 PM – Dinner

Can We Really Build An Entire House In 4 Days?

Yes, it's an amazing thing to realize that 15-20 people can put together a building that will be called "home" by a family for years and years to come. All projects start from bare ground, leveling the dirt, building forms, smoothing cement, framing walls, raising & decking the roof, installing the electricity, applying stucco to the outside walls and insulating and drywalling the inside. You'll learn skills that will last a lifetime!

Who Decides Who Gets A Home?

Casas works in partnership with a local committee of Mexican pastors. The pastors solicit applications from church members, neighbors, and families in their communities. Every application must receive approval by the committee. Selection is based on the families' needs to obtain sufficient housing and means to do so. Each family must be able to prove ownership of land, provide water, and have the land generally cleared and level in preparation for arrival of the team. Families are not required to be Christians or go to their sponsoring pastor's church. *Casas* is a tool for the use of the local pastors to evangelize the community in Acuña. *Casas* has approx.. 25 full time staff, all of whom are support-based missionaries.

What Will We Eat And Drink In Mexico?

We will purchase food in Texas for our 11 meals in Mexico. Expect simple, but nutritiously-balanced meals. Let us know if you have special dietary needs (with as much advance notice as possible). We will buy bottled water, since the tap water there is unsafe for us to drink. To avoid dehydration, we're instructed to drink a gallon of water/Gatorade per person per day. We are careful to brush our teeth only with bottled water.

Where Will We Stay In Mexico?

We'll be sleeping on the concrete floor of a Mexican church. Likely not air conditioned. Bring a single air mattress for one person, or a queen if you'll be sharing with another person, or a king for 3 people to share (this can help with luggage space in your tub if you coordinate amongst yourselves). Don't plan to shower much (if at all while across the border). Water is limited and often not hot anyways! If they are available, you'll be asked to take military showers. Get wet, turn off the water, soap up, rinse off. Don't drink the water in the shower. Those who survive without a shower the entire time we are in Mexico are inducted into the esteemed "SPAMS Club" (Smelly People Against Mexican Showering).



Do We Need Any Shots?

A tetanus shot is the only one required by *Casas*. We recommend it be within the last 5 years, **and it is required to be within the last 10 years**. CVS, Walgreens, and HyVee Drugstore can be good places to get that shot.

Any Other Health Guidelines?

It's the responsibility of every team member to consult with a travel doctor or other health professional to find out what specific immunizations and medications or other steps are uniquely needed. We will have general medical/first aid kits, but **you are responsible for your own unique healthcare needs**. You are expected to bring a sufficient number of any unique meds or other treatments you may reasonably expect to need on the trip (such as insulin, blood pressure medication, allergy meds, EpiPen, ADHD meds, etc.) It may be difficult or impossible to obtain safe, non-standard medications while across the border.

What About Insurance?

New Covenant will purchase emergency medical insurance for all team members. The coverage covers most medical issues (though there may be limitations on pre-existing conditions) and includes emergency medical evacuation from Mexico. In most cases we will need to pay at the time of treatment and get reimbursed when we return from Mexico. Details of the coverage/policy available on request.

Is It Safe?

We'll use common sense, follow the direction of *Casas* staff and take safety precautions, such as not drinking the tap water. There's risk every time you leave your home, but we are trusting God to work through this trip in comfort or challenge as He wills. In the over 5,000 houses that *Casas* has built they have not had a single incident of crime (other than theft, mostly due to unlocked vans). Our *Casas* staff maintain contact with their office in Texas, and there's an emergency room across the border if needed. In our fourteen trips we've only had to cross back over three times for medical attention for (1) walking pneumonia, (2) spider bite, and (3) a kidney stone. To view *Casas'* risk management policy, check out their website, www.Casasporcristo.org.

What About The Mexico/America Border Violence In The News?

The violence we used to hear about in the news over the past decade or so was largely between police and drug gangs. Rarely were Americans involved and, even more rarely, missionaries. Through situation reports, talking with locals and *Casas* staff, etc., the Missions Committee/Elder Board determined in 2015 that it was reasonable to go again. Trips in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 confirmed this feeling of safety. Today, the missions team continues to monitor conditions. Those signed up for the trip will be kept informed as needed. If security concerns rise above a certain level, the Missions Committee and Elders are informed to get their input. While we hope never to exercise this option, we reserve the right to cancel a trip at any time due to security concerns.

Can We Call Home From Mexico?

- Plan not to. Acuña has poor cell coverage, if at all.
- In an emergency, the best way to reach the team is through the *Casas* office. Families will receive contact numbers before the trip.

Can We Bring Our Phones?

During this trip, our focus is on missions and growing closer to God and each other. Separation from friends/family back home is part of missionary life we want to fully experience.

- Phones are not allowed on this trip for students (we will provide a safe place to keep them at the church if you would rather do that than leave them with a family member).
- Adults are permitted to bring phones, but we ask that you keep your use to only necessary contact as we seek to maintain the spirit of disconnecting from technology. The one encouraged use of adults' phones is to take lots of pictures during the trip!
- Family and friends back home can follow our progress on a Facebook group/Smugmug album. They should expect few updates (if any) during the days we are in Mexico (reception dependent).

What Will We Wear?

The cross-cultural experience is very evident here. Most conservative churches in Mexico consider shorts indecent so we'll need to be respectful of our environment. Shoes, shirts, & pants must be worn at all times in Mexico. No cut-off shirts or pants or ripped clothing. We want to do only those things that build up the reputation and witness of the local churches we'll be serving. No yoga pants are allowed as per *Casas* rules. For sleepwear in Mexico, everyone should plan on long shorts (at the knee or longer) and a t-shirt. Long pants are required for the trip down (as you'll arrive in MX in whatever you wear for the trip). Details will be given in the packing list you'll get at the orientation prior to the trip.

What Do I Bring?

A full pre trip checklist will be given out at the orientation meeting on **Sunday, May 2, at 12:30 PM**. A few things you may want to start gathering now:

- Personal insulated water jug (2 quart or larger)
- Wide brimmed hat, sunscreen
- Air mattress or a camping pad (if desired).
- 16oz minimum hammer (framing hammer recommended)
- Safety glasses or impact resistant sunglasses
- Work gloves, tool belt/nail apron, Tape measure

Those who wear contact lenses may want glasses along if the dust is bad. Hair dryers and curling irons are not permitted on the trip (electrical concerns across the border).

Do We Need Passports?

Yes. Federal Law requires anyone crossing the border to have either a passport (valid globally) or passport card (valid for land crossings to Canada/Mexico). **You may not apply for this trip until your passport/passport card have been applied for.** Note also that U.S. Border Patrol strongly prefers passports that aren't within 6 months of expiring, so check your expiration date and renew accordingly. Costs vary by your age. Passports are usually \$105-\$135 for adults, passport cards usually \$40-\$55. Good for 10 years for those 16 and up, 5 years if under 16.

What Will We Pack In?

Every team member will be issued a standard 27 gallon luggage tub to ensure everything fits on the trailer and for increased organization both on the trailer and at the host church. With a couple exceptions, everything you bring on this trip must fit in your tub (air mattress, clothes, tools etc.) The church will loan you your tub, which will be given out at the **Sunday, May 2 Orientation (12:30 PM)**.

What Else Can I Bring?

In addition to the luggage tub which will be on the trailer, you can carry with you a pillow and one small backpack to be stored under your seat on the vehicles. If it does not fit there you'll need to keep it at your feet or in your lap. There won't be a lot of extra room so everyone will need to pack light!

Will There Be Any Fundraisers?

Yes! If you opt to do the \$425 payment plan + 25 hours of fundraising projects (or some combo of fewer hours and more money). We will be doing group projects together in the months leading up to the trip. If you would like to write funding letters to family and friends, you are more than welcome to do so as well (sample letter at the end of this packet). There will be details later in this packet of how people can donate towards your trip either by check or online (through your "Public Profile" in Managed Missions – you can do this when you set up your profile).

Here's how group fundraising works:

1. The planning team will announce periodic work days such as raking, yardwork, helping people move, etc. When these opportunities arise, they will be posted at <https://tinyurl.com/2021MexicoWorkDays>. RSVP on that site so we know to expect you.
2. There are a limited number of projects, based on those we want to "hire" help from our team. We cannot guarantee there will be enough jobs for you to make it to the maximum 25 hours. Sending out fundraising letters may be a better decision for some if your weekends are full (most of the projects take place on Saturdays).
3. In order to get the discounted \$425 trip price, you must have logged a total of 25 hours of fundraising project work by the due date of June 6th. If you have not completed your 25 hours by then, we will total your current hour count and credit you \$17/hour for the work you did do, at which point you will then need to pay the difference remaining towards your trip cost. Total hours logged are tracked at <https://tinyurl.com/2021MexicoWorkHours>. If you see a need for a correction there, contact Jacob Bran at jacobbran116@gmail.com

Will There Be Any Scholarships?

We encourage everyone to write letters asking for prayer for the trip and, if needed, financial support. Any monetary donations directed to you can offset the portion you would have to pay. If finances are still a hindrance to you attending, please contact Pat Rieck (pat.rieck@nbc.church) to explain the situation and we'll work with you to make a decision from there. Depending on an assessment of your needs it might be possible for you to participate in extra Group Fundraising Projects beyond the 25 hours to further lower your costs.

Are There Any Other Expectations?

1. Unless otherwise approved before you apply (contact Jacob Bran at jacobbran116@gmail.com with questions), team members must be:
 - a. Freshmen in high school or older
 - b. Regular attenders of New Covenant Bible Church
 - c. Physically, mentally, and emotionally well enough to handle the rigors of a trip like this.
2. Prior to our departure, each team member will be required to read a couple chapters of the book *When Helping Hurts* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (chapters to be announced at the May 2 orientation, when you'll also be loaned a copy of the book). These chapters will be discussed during the trip.

Are There Orientation Meetings?

Yes! We will have two required orientation meetings on **Sunday afternoons May 2 and June 6** in the **High School room at New Covenant** (both meetings begin at **12:30 PM**). We'll be covering the local culture there, some missions training, more details on some topics in this packet, etc. We want everyone to be as prepared as possible to have a positive experience entering into another culture in a healthy way and having the right mindset about helping others there. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory to come on the trip, if you have an emergency and cannot attend, contact one of the planning team and we'll connect with you at another time to help you get up to speed with whatever was covered. At these meetings you'll also be receiving items such as your luggage tub, detailed packing list, learning about the families we will be helping, and have a chance to pick which build team you want to be part of (we'll honor those choices best as possible, but may adjust some people based on experience levels etc. to balance the crews).

Will There Be A Trip Report For Family And Friends After The Trip?

We'll do our trip report immediately upon our return. We plan to arrive home at 6:30 PM on Saturday, June 19. Before even unloading the trailer we will all come into the High School room to share a report of the trip! Once that's wrapped up we'll unload and go home! Be sure to bring a large garbage bag or box for your stuff, you'll need to turn in your tub before you leave that night at which time we'll also give you your passport back.

How Do I Sign Up?

We're glad you asked! The application is coming soon, right after you read the rules below.

Mexico Trip Rules

Decision Making

NCBC Trip Leaders (and any other designated adult), and Casas por Cristo leaders have the authority to make decisions and are to be obeyed at all times. If you disagree with a decision or rule, your obligation is to immediately comply, and later bring your concern to one of the trip leaders.

Respect

Every team member has the right to be treated respectfully at all times. Any problem, concern or disagreement with a leader or with another team member should be handled in a biblical manner (following the principles in Matthew 18).

Safety

For safety reasons, team members must always remain in the vicinity of the leaders. We must always know how to reach you in case of an emergency. Be where you are supposed to be when asked so the group is not waiting for you. Also, do not give out your address, phone number or email to individuals you meet.

Participation

Unless you are ill, every team member is expected to actively participate in the planned activities during the Mexico trip, including team meetings, devotions, debriefings, and other activities planned by the team leader or national leader.

PDA

No Public Displays of Affection between couples, unless you are married. Our trip is not a date: it is a group experience, where we treat each other equally as brothers and sisters. Non-married couples may not hold hands, cuddle, lay on one another, isolate themselves, flirt, etc.

Sleep

Stay out of sleeping areas of opposite sex. Bedtime is firm: no staying up past or getting up before the times designated by the trip leaders. Men and women will sleep separately, including the overnight drive. Married couples will not have private accommodations.

Courtesy

Our focus will be on building relationships and on creating a spiritually uplifting atmosphere away from distractions. Therefore, there will be no gambling, profanity, or immodest attire. Students

Serious Discipline must be required for the following and will likely result in a discussion about how best to send you home: Sexual activity; Wandering off by yourself; tobacco; drug; or alcohol use; Blatant or repeated disrespect; and/or disobedience to leaders.

Application deadline: April 26 or when the spots are taken.

Application Checklist

To hold your spot, you need to complete these FIVE THINGS:

1. **PASSPORT** – To apply you must provide your Passport or Passport Card number or the date of passport application. You'll need to turn in your passport at the orientation meeting prior to the trip – we have a safe where we'll keep them until the trip
2. **TETANUS SHOT** – To apply you must verify that you have had a tetanus shot in the past 10 years, preferably in the last 5 years.
3. **\$100 DEPOSIT** – To apply you must pay a \$100 deposit, which must be paid with a credit/debit card. This payment happens when you set up your online account (#5 below). The deposit and subsequent balance payments are refundable if for some reason your application is not approved or if you withdraw and someone takes your spot. [The full balance will be due by June 6.]
4. **FOUR APPLICATION FORMS** (found on the next page of this packet)
 - a. NCBC Mexico Trip Paper Application Form
 - b. New Covenant's "Medical, Liability, and Info Release" Form (2 pages)
 - c. "Disclosure of Risk, Agreement of Waiver, Release and Hold Harmless" [Required by Casas **this will be emailed to you after you register**]
 - d. "Parental/Guardian Consent for International Travel" form (for those under 18 only) **This will be emailed to you if we'll require a form for your trip. *note below***

Note on Form d We need this notarized consent form giving us permission to take minors across the border. The US State Department's website states: "Notarized consent from parent(s) required for children under age 18 traveling alone, with one parent, or in someone else's custody". Most banks offer notary service, and there are several notary publics in our church, including Gina Kaufman and Sharon Pagel. People 18 and older don't need this form.

5. Create a Managed Missions Account and complete the online application.

Your last step before turning in your paperwork will be to set up an online account through our Managed Missions system (or log in if you have gone on a past trip and already set up an account). Once set up or logged in, complete the online application. All New Covenant mission trips use Managed Missions for tracking payments and for team communications. It is also how you set up a way for people to donate online. Two important notes: If it asks you to select a trip, just hit next and skip that step. Using the link below will take you to the Mexico application. Also, if you don't have a Passport number yet, just skip that question. We can fill it in when your Passport arrives. To set up your account go to:

<https://ncbc.managedmissions.com/MissionApplication/Start/24135>

or

<https://www.tinyurl.com/2021-NCBC-Mexico-Apply>

Once these requirements are completed and approved, your spot on the trip will be reserved and your name will be put on the wall!

NCBC Mexico Application Form

This application is for participating in New Covenant's "Mexico Team 2021" trip to Acuña, Mexico.

Applications will not be accepted if any of the items below are missing or unanswered.

FULL LEGAL NAME (of person attending)

- I have had a tetanus shot within the last ten years. Yes No (comment if "No" _____)
- By June 6 I plan to have paid a total of...
 \$850 \$425 plus 25 Fundraising Hours \$425 plus some combination of \$ and *Fundraising Hours (*work project hours are valued at \$17.00/hour*).
- I have set up my online Managed Missions account, completed the online app, and paid the \$100 deposit. Yes
- I have my passport/passport card already: Yes
 - Date you applied for your passport if it has not arrived yet: _____

Team Member's Declaration of Cooperation

I have read the above information and guidelines for the Mexico trip and I want to be a part of the team. I will work hard without complaining, and I am aware of what standard of conduct is expected of me, including leaving my cell phone at home (if student). I understand that should I violate the rules I will be sent home at our own expense.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Parent's Understanding of Trip Information and Rules

Our child named above has our permission to attend the New Covenant Bible Church trip to Acuña, Mexico from June 12-19, 2021. We have read the information and guidelines for the Mexico trip and we give our consent for our child to attend. We also give our consent for the enforcement of the above guidelines, realizing that we will be consulted should any serious discipline be necessary. We are willing to arrange and pay for transportation of our child back home after consultation with trip leaders and the church office should dismissal be deemed necessary.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Return this application and other forms to:

**Attn: NCBC Mexico 2021 Planning Team
3090 N Center Point Road | Cedar Rapids, IA 52411**

Medical, Liability, and Info Release Form

For New Covenant Global Outreach Short Term Mission Teams

One form needed for each short term mission team participant.

FULL LEGAL NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
HOME PHONE (_____) _____ CELL PHONE (_____) _____
EMAIL _____
BIRTHDAY ____/____/____ AGE _____

HEALTH HISTORY AND INFORMATION:

List all known allergies: Insect Stings Hay Fever Drugs: _____

Other allergies: _____

Other Medical Conditions (including any for which you take medication):

Heart Condition Chronic asthma Epilepsy Diabetes

Other _____

If you checked any of the above, please give written details on the back of this sheet or on another sheet of paper (i.e. include normal treatment of allergic reactions).

Name and dosage of any medications that must be taken: _____

If person listed is a minor, do you give permission to administer OTC medication (i.e. Tylenol, Advil, Pepto-Bismol, Dramamine, etc.) as needed: No Yes

If person listed is a minor, any swimming or activity restrictions: No Yes (If "yes", explain)

DOCTOR _____

CITY _____ PHONE (_____) _____

HEALTH INSURANCE

Do you have health insurance? No Yes (If "no," skip this section)

Insurance Company Name: _____

Insurance Company Phone #: (_____) _____

Policy Number: _____

Name of Insured (usually head of household): _____

Place of Employment: _____

Employment Phone #: (_____) _____

MEDICAL RELEASE FOR NEW COVENANT GLOBAL OUTREACH SHORT TERM TEAMS

"I _____ the undersigned listed below, do hereby authorize any necessary examination, anesthetic, dental, medical or surgical diagnosis or treatment by any duly licensed physician or dentist and hospital service that may be rendered to me under the guardian, specific, or special consent of the temporary custodian of me; whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of the physician or dentist, or at a licensed hospital. I authorize the physician or dentist to call in any necessary consultants at his/their best judgment as to the requirements of such diagnosis or medical, dental or surgical treatment. It is further understood that those persons who have temporary custody of me will attempt to talk with the emergency contact via the telephone numbers listed below before treatment is rendered."

PHOTO AND INFORMATION RELEASE

"I hereby give permission for the use of pictures and/or video/audio recordings of the individual (or minor) listed on this form for the purposes of promoting and reporting NCBC events, including on NCBC websites, without compensation to me or the minor. I agree all pictures and recordings remain NCBC property. I release NCBC from any liability arising out of the use of such pictures or recordings. I also give permission for use of pictures and captions containing my name to be displayed in printed materials and on social media such as the website Facebook."

LIABILITY RELEASE

Every activity sponsored by this church is carefully planned and adequately supervised by mature adults. However, even with the best of planning and precaution, unforeseen events can occur. Knowing this, "I agree to assume and accept all risks and hazards inherent in church-related mission trip activities. I also agree not to hold this church or its employees or volunteer assistants liable for damages, losses, or injuries."

If signing for a minor: "I understand that I am signing for the minor listed on this form and in my own capacity as parent or legal guardian and the signature is for medical, liability and photo/information release."

I have fully read the medical, photo/information, and liability release statements and understand them.

Short term trip destination: Ciudad Acuña Dates: June 12-19 2021

Signature of team member: _____ Date: _____

Printed name of Team member: _____

Signature of Parent or guardian if under 18: _____

Printed name of Parent or Guardian if member under 18: _____

Relationship to Minor: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Emergency Contact Phone #: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Emergency Contact Phone #: _____

To Whom It May Concern: I/We,

_____ (Full Name(s) of Custodial and/or Non-Custodial Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s)) am/are the lawful custodial parent and/or non-custodial parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of: Child's full name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____ U.S. Passport Number: _____ Date and Place of Issuance of U.S. Passport: _____

_____, (Child's Full Name) has my/our consent to travel with: Full name of accompanying person: _____ U.S. or foreign passport number: _____ Date and Place of issuance of this passport: _____ to travel to _____ during the period of _____. During that period, _____ (Child's Name) will be residing with _____ at the following address:

Number/street address and apartment number: _____
City, State/Province, Country: _____
Telephone and fax numbers (work, cell phone and residence) _____

Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s): Full Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Full Name: _____
Signature: _____

Date: _____ Witnesses: Signed before me, _____, this _____ (Date) at _____ (Name of Location) Signed before me, _____, this _____ (Date) at _____ (Name of Location)