

## Up to 9 months ahead:

- Reserve air travel.
  - Contact the mission office to find out when and where you should arrive and depart.
  - Call your missionary travel agency for the best airfare. Investigate group discounts.
  - Make air reservations.
  - Notify the mission field office of your arrival and departure plans, especially if someone is meeting you!
- Apply for [passports](#).
  - After you submit your application, photos and identification documents, passport issuance usually takes four to six weeks.
  - Keep two photos of yourself and a photocopy of your passport information page separate from your passport in case it's lost or stolen. (See the U.S. State Department's web page for passport application forms, instructions and fee schedules or call your missionary travel agency office.) [ [State Department web site](#) ]
- Check visa information.
  - Ask your travel agent about visa requirements of your destination country. Get needed forms.
  - Seek low-cost accommodations.
  - Have your travel agent reserve budget lodging for your group through the airline or through his or her sources.
  - Check immunization suggestions and requirements.
  - Call or contact the Centers for Disease Control (404-332-4559) to find out which immunizations are necessary. [ [CDC web site](#) ]
  - Consult the nearest International Travel Clinic for medical advice and services.
  - Receive needed immunizations. Allow time between vaccinations if multiple shots are needed and especially if you need them as proof for obtaining visas.
  - Ask if updated immunizations for diphtheria/tetanus, polio or measles/mumps/rubella are advised. Depending on where you are going, typhoid fever or gamma globulin (for Hepatitis A) vaccinations may also be recommended. Also ask about anti-malarial medication. If necessary, have all immunizations listed on a card from the World Health Organization.

## Up to 6 months ahead:

- Begin visa application process.
- Submit signed passports, required photos, completed visa applications and WHO card as requested.
- Purchase insurance.

- Have workers check their current medical policies for overseas coverage. Make sure the policies provide evacuation services to come home due to illness or injury.
- Suggest that workers buy supplementary travel accident and sickness insurance, plus evacuation services, if their policies don't cover these, your missionary travel agency may be able to suggest reliable carriers.

### Up to 3 months ahead:

- Research baggage regulations.
- Ask your travel agent or airline. They can tell you the maximum free allowance per person and fee for excess bags.
- Remind your travelers of any items excluded from import into your destination country.
- Buy airline tickets.
- Your travel agent can tell you when your tickets must be issued to retain the lowest fare. (Unless your fare is an "instant purchase," you should have reserved your tickets prior to this, up to one year or nine months ahead.)

### Up to 2 weeks ahead:

- Arrange transportation to the airport.
- Make sure each worker has
  - Airline ticket
  - Passport with visas
  - Vaccinations and WHO Card (if needed)
  - Anti-malarial medication (if needed)
  - Supplemental insurance
- Notify Field Office of your arrival.
- Make sure someone from the mission field office will meet you and ask them what to do if no one is at the airport!
- Obtain the address and phone number of the U.S. Embassies or Consulates in your country or countries of travel. These are available from the U.S. Department of State [ [go to web site](#) ]

### 3 days ahead

- Call the airline(s) to confirm your flights.
- Be sure to do this 3 days prior to your return flights also.

### On departure day:

- Review documentation with group members
  - Passport with visas

- WHO Card (if needed)
  - Airline ticket
- Tag Your Luggage. Use brightly colored tags identify your group. Some travel agencies provide these for you.
- Two or three people can handle baggage to reduce confusion.