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Loving Arms Code of Conduct

To ensure the integrity of Loving Arms, and for your protection as a volunteer team member, the following code of conduct has been established. By signing at the end of this form, you promise to adhere to this code.

Please remember that our goal is to minister to those in need while acknowledging and respecting their culture and customs. The list below, while not exhaustive, is intended to set the "spirit" of how we should act. Humility and dignity for all are the watchwords.

Team members are expected to actively participate in whatever task is given to them. Exceptions may be given due to poor health or other extenuating circumstances.

Group Attitudes

I will accept and submit to the leadership and authority of the trip co-coordinator/facilitator and promise to abide by decisions as they concern this volunteer team trip. I understand that the trip coordinator will have the final say on all decisions, and that those decisions will be based on the consideration of the group's safety, finances and project outcomes. Much effort has gone into the planning of this trip but many unforeseen situations can arise. I will work to make the trip a success for everyone. Many times coordinators are aware of the "big picture" and why things should be done a certain way. I will give them the benefit of the doubt or discuss any concerns in private. Any changes to the work plan, or other activities that involve our Guatemalan Team, must be directed to the Team Leader(s) who in turn discusses the request with the President for approval.

If there is work to be done, I will do it. If someone needs comforting, I will comfort. If there is a schedule to be met, I will be on time. I will be a person who comes to give attention, not to receive it.

I will be flexible! From the time I make the commitment to travel on the volunteer team trip until the time I return home, I will be flexible. Daily circumstances almost always require revision: therefore, I must be willing to adapt easily to change. Remember, the word is **FLEXIBILITY**.

I realize the living and travel accommodations will not be equal to those enjoyed in North America. I acknowledge that I may be inadvertently exposed to certain risks, including, but not limited to, poor food and water, diseases, pests, and poor sanitation.

I agree to be a team player and will endeavour to include all team members whenever possible.

I promise to do my best to not offend or cause embarrassment to the local hosts and to help them maintain their reputations and attain their long-term goals. I will attend **all** team meetings, both prior to departure, during, and after the trip.

I understand that every member of this group is expected to share freely of any particular talents. I agree to participate as fully as possible.

I will expeditiously follow up on all requirements for passports, criminal background checks/reference letters, financial obligations and all other requested documentation or requirements.

I will respect the culture of Guatemala and adhere to the advice concerning attire, eating, drinking, language and other such traditions that will help me assimilate into the local community.

I understand that this is a Volunteer Team Trip and not a vacation and will not abuse any right that has been awarded by the Loving Arms' organization or its designated coordinator/facilitator.

DRESS

If I am a male, I will wear long pants to church services and I will wear a shirt at all times.

If I am a female, I will wear clothing that covers the knees, shoulders and midriff and has a modest neckline.

I will wear a Loving Arms' T Shirt for all daily activities. These shirts act as our identification within the communities that we serve.

The clothing I wear will be conservative and functional. It will not be revealing, tight fitting or suggestive. T-shirts or hats that do not have language or graphics that could be considered offensive would be a good choice.

All jewellery is discouraged to avoid it being lost or stolen. For safety reasons, expensive jewellery should be left at home.

SAFETY/ HEALTH

We work within a 'buddy' system, so that each team member must be with another team member **at all times**, and remain with the group on the worksites unless the President, or designate, gives permission to leave.

I will abide by the curfew of the President/team leader in order to help ensure safe conditions for myself, the team, and hosts.

I realize there is potential health risk and agree to consult a travel clinic, or if one is not available, my family physician, and to give very careful consideration to their recommendations for prevention of disease.

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

In general, the team remains together and attempts to mingle with each other, every day, during leisure time. Attempts to include all other members are essential to team spirit.

I agree to abstain from making derogatory comments or having arguments regarding people, politics, sports, religion, race, or traditions while on the trip.

My use of language will remain appropriate at all times. The use of foul or inappropriate language will not be tolerated.

I will abstain from any excessive display of affection and will not be involved in any sexual behaviour that could be interpreted as anything less than a Godly relationship. Team members will naturally form relationships with people they meet in Guatemala. These relationships must remain platonic and professional AT ALL TIMES.

Arrangements may be made for team member(s) to stay in Guatemala after the volunteer team trip has concluded. This additional time is considered to be the member's own time (e.g. Vacation time), but approval for these arrangements must be obtained from the Board via the President before leaving Canada.

Extended volunteer work can be arranged at the discretion of the President.

If I am an adult team member I am expected to know the special considerations that apply to participants under the age of 18, and to take the responsibility to help support and enforce these on the worksites and elsewhere.

If I am under the age of 18, I must respect the authority of the adult team members and will accept the adult chaperone assigned to me.

I will accept the room accommodations assigned to me. Room accommodations will be at the discretion of the President. Members must sleep in their designated room

only. Under aged children will be in their parent(s)/guardian's room. (Exceptions will be at the discretion of the President.)

DRUGS/ALCHOL/SMOKING

I will refrain from use of drugs that are illegal in Canada. Alcohol use is only permitted at the place of our accommodations or with supper. Excessive drinking, as determined by the President, will not be tolerated. Alcohol should not be consumed while in the presence of any of our Guatemalan Team members, supporters, workers, families or others associated with the Loving Arms organization.

If I am under the age of 19, I will refrain from consuming any alcohol. If I am a smoker, I must refrain from smoking when children are present. Prior discussion/acknowledgement of tobacco usage must be disclosed to the President before leaving Canada.

GIFTS/MONEY

I agree to **not** make promises of any kind to children, families or our Guatemalan Team members (including promises of future help, projects, buying of material items). Any such donations can be facilitated only through the Loving Arms President or Board.

I will have all gifts approved by the President or Board of Directors. Gifts will be distributed only in accordance with the President's discretion. **NO** member is to give any of Loving Arms workers, supporters or families gifts or money without first discussing this with the President or the Board.

I understand that I will receive a tax receipt for the trip donation and that this excludes the cost of personal expenses, required immunizations, passport, food while in transit, lodging during flights if required, cancellation and exit fees. I will **NOT** be refunded by Loving Arms for any amount of the donation, should I decide not to go on the trip, or if I must return home at a time other than the original scheduled time. I am aware of the exclusions built into any and all travel insurances purchased by me.

In the unfortunate case of a member failing to adhere to the above guidelines, the participant will be asked, at the sole discretion of the President, to leave for home early at his/her own expense.

If the participant is under age, the parents/guardians will be immediately notified, with the consequence of early departure being at the parents' expense.

I have read and understand the above guidelines and understand that they are not debatable. *

Print Name: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

If under 18 years of age – both parents are to sign.

Parent Name(s): _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name(s): _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

*This is a cross-cultural experience for you as well as for the people you are serving. Therefore, in order for everyone to receive the maximum benefit, the above guidelines have been carefully designed with your safety, comfort and satisfaction in mind. However, please be aware that these guidelines may be subject to modification at any time.

Total trip donations are based on past experience and the number of team members.