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Extended Stay Policy

All those who are interested in going to Guatemala are encouraged to participate on one of our teams. This is optimal because it provides the volunteer with a team/community experience, including appropriate training, and enables them to participate directly in various aspects of our organization. The Board of Directors of Loving Arms strongly recommends that all volunteers travel/stay within the team dates. They recognize that this may cause some disagreement with volunteers and are willing to listen to each volunteer on a case-by-case basis.

This policy applies to volunteers who wish to serve Loving Arms in Guatemala for a time period longer than or outside the duration of a team trip. Team Trips are usually 1-2 weeks.

The following items must be given careful thought and planning. A volunteer must be able to present their responses to the President/Board. The Extended Stay Form must also be completed and submitted.

- i. Purpose – a clearly defined purpose is required from the volunteer. i.e. why do you want to go?
- ii. Role – the Extended Stay volunteer (ESV), and the President will determine a clearly defined role, including a work plan. This role will be discussed and communicated in advance to the Guatemalan Director and any others involved.
- iii. Expectations – working together with the Guatemalan Director, specific expectations will be discussed and agreed upon by the ESV, the President, the Guatemalan Director and if applicable the Team Coordinator. Expectations will be set regarding:
 - Involvement with local staff or team activities
 - How will the ESV spend their time in Guatemala
 - What will be their role on the team or with the volunteers? To what capacity will they be involved, for example, in meetings?
 - What activities/programs will they be involved in?
 - What is the plan & policy regarding time spent with volunteers outside of regular scheduled events?
 - Finances including travel arrangements and costs in Guatemala
 - All costs will be pre-determined and a payment plan developed.
 - Is it appropriate to set up a fundraising plan? What should come out of the ESV's own pocket?
 - How will their expenses (travel, food, accommodation) in Guatemala be paid for?
 - Administrative responsibilities (i.e. paperwork required)
 - The ESV must complete all paperwork required by Loving Arms. This includes signing waivers, obtaining travel medical insurance, etc.
 - Volunteer (ESV) support and accountability – during preparation and while in Guatemala.
 - Who will this person report to while in Guatemala? What will the accountability structure look like?
 - Communication - while in Guatemala
 - Any and all requests for changes to the agreement between the ESV and Loving Arms must be made to the President either in person or by email.
 - Gifts
 - No donations or gifts (monetary or material) are to be given to Guatemalan children or local staff without permission from Loving Arms Board/President. This could jeopardize your future trips with Loving Arms and may jeopardize their relationship or employment with Loving Arms. This is meant to protect both you and our workers from miscommunications and conflicts of interest, as well as for safety.