



Siguatepeque Bilingual Christian School
Siguatepeque, Honduras
Central America
www.ceehonduras.org



PROSPECTIVE VOLUNTEERS' FAQs

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

When is a good time to come?

Volunteer opportunities are available year round. If you would like to work with students or on a school related project, the school year is from late August to mid May.

Sometimes during the summer, there are opportunities for volunteers to work on projects around the school, since the students are not in class. This depends each year on which staff members will be at the school during the summer months. Please contact the English Program Coordinator if you are interested in coming in the summer.

Will there be time to travel during my volunteer time?

Yes! There is time to travel on the weekends. Also, many volunteers come and work for 2-3 weeks and then take 1 or more weeks to travel. Please inform the English Program Coordinator of your potential travel plans so they do not interfere with your volunteer time.

What are some volunteer placements?

Volunteers have assisted in classrooms, painted, taught special art classes, worked in the library, and helped with curriculum development. If you have an idea of what you would like to do, please discuss it with the English Program Coordinator prior to arrival, so the school can see if they are able to accommodate your wishes.

FINANCES

How much does it cost to live with a family?

It costs \$100/week, including meals to live with a family. If you do decide to come, this is due when you arrive and needs to be paid in US dollars to the English Program Coordinator or English Program Assistant who will then provide you with a receipt.

What other expenses will there be?

The volunteers are asked to pay for their own flight to Honduras. Also, there is \$100 school administrative fee, which helps to cover your airport pick up and drop off. If you would like to travel/ buy gifts during your time here, you should plan accordingly. Depending on where you want to travel and how long you will be in the country, you should bring about \$150-250 for travel/gifts.

There is also an exit fee, which is about \$40 USD. You pay this at the airport, in cash, either in US dollars or Honduran lempiras.

Some volunteers decide to raise additional financial support from their church, friends and family at home. If a volunteer would like to do this, the school is happy to provide an official letter outlining your volunteer role at the school.

Recently, the school has become an affiliate ministry of Latin America Mission, Canada (LAM, Canada). This makes it possible for volunteers to raise support through LAM, Canada. If you would like more information about this, please inform the English Program Coordinator.

How much money should I bring with me?

You should bring, in US dollars the cost of living with a family, as well as the school administrative fee. Also, you should bring extra cash (US dollars). Once you arrive in Siguatepeque, you can exchange your US dollars to Honduran lempiras at the local bank.

ACCOMODATION

What is like living with a family?

Families are chosen by school staff and normally families have students who attend the school. Many times, the families only speak Spanish, but usually there is a bilingual student/person in the household to assist with communication.

The homes are located close to school so you can walk or sometimes the family has another type of transportation.

The family also provides all meals during the week and on weekends.

Is there Internet at the home stays?

Sometimes there is Internet at the home stays. If there is not Internet, the school has a computer lab that can be used during school hours and also wireless Internet that is available anytime for volunteers that have brought their own laptops.

Who will pick me up from the airport?

The school will send a staff member to pick you up from the airport and transport you back to school & your home stay. If you are arriving very late at night, it is a good idea to spend the night in San Pedro Sula. The English Program Coordinator or English Program Assistant can help you make arrangements for overnight stay. The school will send a staff member the following day to pick you up from your hotel.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL INFORMATION

What is the weather like in Siguatepeque?

The average annual temperature range in Siguatepeque is 18-30°C (65-85°F). During the “rainy” season (not constantly raining, however) – June through November – you may want a lightweight, water repellent jacket or parka. From December through February, when the temperature dips occasionally down to 8°C (40°F), you may feel chilly because houses have no central heat. Layered clothing works best on cooler days, so bring a fleece, sweater, sweatshirt, etc. to wear under a windbreaker.

The “dry” season is from February to May, with the hottest months being April and May, with temperatures reaching a peak of 32°C (95°F) but it is still relatively comfortable because of the low humidity. This means that you may not see any rain what-so-ever for these three months, leading to water shortages and poor air quality. Once the dry season begins, the temperatures during the day will average 28 degrees Celsius. Evenings can be cooler, and a sweater will be needed.

How do people get around in your city? How is the public transport? How much does it cost?

The easiest (and cheapest) way to get around the city is by walking. It takes about 15 minutes to walk from the school to the centre of town. Within a few minutes walk of the school, there are lots of small stores, restaurants, a swimming pool and our local hospital.

Otherwise, it is very easy to travel around the city by taxi. This normally costs \$1-2 USD, depending on how far you are travelling.

There are also public buses that travel around the city and to other cities. There are different types of buses, from very economic (and slow) “chicken” buses, to very comfortable luxury buses. The cost of bus travel ranges widely depending on what type of bus you choose. The middle of the line buses will charge about \$8 USD to travel 2 hours to either San Pedro Sula or Tegucigalpa (the 2 major cities in Honduras).

Should I buy a guidebook for Honduras?

It’s a good idea to buy a guidebook. Both Lonely Planet & Moon have guidebooks that include Honduras. A few of the teachers who are at the school have copies of these books that might be available for use.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Does the school have a religious affiliation?

Yes, the school is a Christian school that requires all teachers who work at the school to agree to our Statement of Faith and values of the school and Christians in Honduras.

In regards to volunteers, the school accepts volunteers of different faith backgrounds, but asks volunteers to uphold the values of the school and Christians in Honduras, as well as participate in school related activities.

What resources are available in the classrooms?

The students have access to various textbooks and workbooks for most of their subjects. We are also developing a specific English curriculum for our teachers. We have a number of English resources available to teachers as well. There are not a lot of physical resources in the classrooms, but we are trying to purchase more games, puzzles, etc. for students to use. Most volunteers try to bring down some resources to donate to the school, as well.

What type of curriculum does the school use?

In the Spanish classes, the school follows the national Honduran curriculum. For the English classes, we are in the process of developing a school-specific curriculum, to ensure continuity from Junior Kindergarten to Gr. 11. It will be draw from curriculums from various countries, both ESL and traditional English curriculums.

What are the different English classes that are available in each grade?

Kindergarten/Preparatoria - Jardín Bilingüe Siguatepeque

Our kindergarten program is offered to children ages 4-5. At this age, most of the students begin school without speaking any English. English is taught to these children in a playful manner, including rhymes, songs, games, story telling, etc. We use Pearson Educations’ “Pockets 1” in Kindergarten and their “Pockets 2” in Prepa. We also use the Jolly Phonics program to begin teaching students the sounds of the alphabet.

Elementary school - Escuela Bilingüe Siguatepeque

The elementary School Program at is offered to student’s grades 1-6. Our students spend approximately half of their day with their Spanish teacher and half of their day with their English teacher.

In English, students receive the following classes: Language, Reading, Spelling and Science. In Language class, we use McGraw Hill’s “MegaFlash Plus” program. In Reading, we continue using the Jolly Phonics in Grades 1 and 2, as well as the A-Z Reading Program. We use the Balanced Literacy Model to structure our reading time as well. In Science, we use the McGraw

Hill's "Blue Planet – English Through Science", supplemented with various other Science textbooks.

Secondary School - Instituto Bilingüe Siguatepeque

Our secondary students receive the following classes in English:

Gr. 7 – English, Spelling, Conversation, Science, Physical Education, Home Economics, Art

Gr. 8 - English, Spelling, Conversation, Science, Physical Education, Home Economics, Art

Gr. 9 – English, Spelling, Conversation, Science, Physical Education, Home Economics

Gr. 10 – English, Physical Education, Psychology

Gr. 11 - English, Physical Education, Philosophy, History

Is there an English library at the school?

Yes, the school has a library with English and Spanish books. There are not very many reference books, but there is quite a good selection of novels and other fiction material. We are also in the process of developing classroom libraries, so every class has quick and easy access to reading material.

Are there computers at the school? Are they in each classroom?

There is a computer lab at the school, with a class set of computers. Each grade takes computer classes each week. We currently do not have any computers in the individual classrooms.

Is there Internet at the school? It is available in each classroom?

There is wireless Internet available at the school and in most of the classrooms. Also, a few of the computers in the computer lab can access the Internet.

Would I be able to use my personal laptop while I'm here?

Definitely! Especially if you are volunteering as part of a practicum or university placement, we highly encourage you to bring your laptop to complete your work while you are here.

Our school also has a video projector, which can be hooked up to your laptop to show movies, PowerPoint presentations, etc. The projector is located in the library.

What are the mandatory working hours for volunteers?

Classes begin at 7:30 and end at 2:15 for elementary, and 2:30 for secondary, Monday to Friday. Volunteers have weekends free to get to know their family and Siguatepeque, or see other sights in Honduras and just relax.

What is the school dress code like?

For women, a knee-length skirt, dress pants and khakis are acceptable. For shirts, anything modest is acceptable. Either shoes or sandals may be worn. For men, polos or button down shirts with casual pants and shoes (not sandals) are appropriate. Fridays are more casual days and nice jeans may be worn. If you are working in the classroom, the school asks that you follow this dress code. If you are working in another area of the school, jeans would be permitted. If you are working on projects (ie. painting, building, etc.) you will need to bring specific clothes for this type of work.

Does the school offer Spanish lessons for English-speaking volunteers?

The school does not offer Spanish lessons, but we can help you set up classes with a teacher in town. The cost for a 1-hour private lesson with a teacher is about \$5.00 USD.

What does a sample year calendar look like?

The following are the important dates for the 2010-2011 school year:

Foreign Teacher Airport Pick-Up Date
Teacher Orientation

Aug. 10th, 2010
Aug. 11th - 24th, 2010

First Day of Classes
Christmas Holidays
Easter Holidays
Final Day of Classes
Completion of Teacher Contract

Aug. 25th, 2010
Dec. 18th, 2010 – Jan. 4th, 2011
April 16th-24, 2011
May 27th, 2011
June 25th, 2011

What materials are required to volunteer?

To apply to be a general volunteer at the school, you need to fill out and submit an application, 2 professional references, 1 pastoral reference, and national police check. If you are volunteering as part of a Jan-Term, Alternative Practicum or Interim, you also need a copy of your university transcript and immunization record. If you would like to receive the application materials, please contact volunteer@ceehonduras.org.

I still have more questions. Who should I contact?

Email volunteer@ceehonduras.org and either the English Program Coordinator or the English Program Assistant will be happy to answer any additional questions.