

## Short-Term Missions FAQs

**Q: Why does CVM sponsor short-term missions around the world?**

**A:** It is a calling to be part of and support the worldwide mission movement – God is continuing His redemption of this world. Short-term mission trips provide opportunities for participants to grow in their faith, learn to use their veterinary skills and abilities in Christian service, gain the benefits of working within other cultures, and develop new relationships with people around the world.

**Q: What can non-vet volunteers do?**

**A:** Non-vets can do things like work pre- and post-op care, help with meals, check in patients, meet with the families and children while their animal is being cared for, lead devotions, lead worship, help with scheduling, and so much more!

**Q: What does ministry typically look like on a trip?**

**A:** Empowering the local church and community through evangelism outreach like VBS, discipleship teaching, children's ministry, home visits, etc. Teams can also train community members in community development. They share their testimony everywhere they go. Veterinary clinics also serve as the door to ministry and conversations.

**Q: How does CVM handle trips regarding safety when you are traveling to a more secure area?**

**A:** All volunteers are provided with an Emergency Contact Form with information about the embassy, STEP, local contacts, and insurance. A risk assessment is prepared by the local host or trip leader for each trip. Generally, CVM travels to the same location multiple times year after year, so we have a good relationship with the host and local community that allows us to plan accordingly before each trip.

**Q: Do DVMs and Vet Techs need a license to travel to a specific country or reservation?**

**A:** In the USA, all Native American trips do not require DVMs to have a license for that state since it is federal land. Those USA trips outside of reservations usually require DVMs to obtain a license for that state. International trips usually do not require a license. However, some countries do require you to obtain a temporary license for a small fee.

**Q: What does pre-trip training look like?**

**A:** CVM enrolls each team member in a group chat on the CVM app so you can communicate with your team. We also enroll each person on an eLearning pathway for their specific continent. This pathway has 14 online courses that can be taken (or more if desired!). We encourage the free courses that Duolingo offers so at least some language can be obtained for the location you travel to. Each volunteer should also receive communication from a CVM region representative to pray with them and answer questions. Trip leaders should have several Zoom meetings to allow volunteers to get to know each other.

**Q: What does post-trip debriefing entail?**

**A:** We are developing a better communication platform with the volunteer's host church so that they are aware that the person went on a trip and how to help them debrief. Trip leaders may also follow up a trip

with a post-trip email or Zoom call. Finally, we are working on developing several emails that will go out to volunteers to help with debriefing, processing, staying engaged in missions, how to share with your home church, and more!

**Q: Why should you consider international trips if you have only gone on U.S. trips?**

**A:** International trips are often longer, more expensive, and challenging to get to, but they are worth it. Many may want to stay in the US, but far fewer are willing to go to the nations outside of the borders of the U.S. Many cultures have animals at the center of their agriculture, farming, and overall way of life. They often have no means to see or pay for a veterinary professional. We go to them. Also, we visit our CVM long-term fieldworkers to encourage them and help build their ministry by strengthening their ability to reach out to their community. When situations are challenging and others cannot get in, we do what we must to share the Gospel. We send in the vets.

**Q: What are some misconceptions people might have about short-term trips?**

- 1) Western missionaries are no longer needed.
- 2) We experience a calling alone.
- 3) Everything reported must be positive.
- 4) Missionaries are excited to come “home.”
- 5) You need prior cross-cultural experience.
- 6) Missionaries love every minute of every day because...Jesus.
- 7) Long-term missionaries’ life is the same as a longer short-term mission trip.
- 8) Learning a new language is easy.
- 9) All missionaries took a vow of poverty.
- 10) Revival happens 24/7.
- 11) You will be the same when you return as when you left.
- 12) The biggest conflicts come from nationals. Actually, teammates often cause the most conflict.
- 13) “Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the world” means I can stay at my home. The disciples were actually Galilean, so Jerusalem was not even their hometown.

**Q: What should prospective team members know before they go?**

- 1) BE FLEXIBLE. It is not about your plan, but His. You are there to bless the host and encourage and strengthen their ministry, not to be on vacation or make yourself feel good.
- 2) Be willing to learn from your teammates, host, trip leader, and people you are going to serve.
- 3) Learn at least a few keywords or phrases of the language through Duolingo or other sites.

**Q: Why go on a mission trip with CVM?**

It is an opportunity to openly serve in the name of Christ.

- Our trips always support a local Christian ministry or church.
- Participants are challenged to share their faith through word and deed.
- Participants experience sharing their faith in a cross-cultural context.

We believe in sustainable community development.

- Our trips are not just about animals. They are primarily about helping people help themselves.

- Rather than contribute to unhealthy dependence, we seek to train communities to be increasingly self-sufficient and interdependent.
- Participants gain an understanding of what sustainable development is and can contribute to positive outcomes within a community.

We encourage taking advantage of mentoring from national vets and long-term vet missionaries.

- There's the opportunity to learn from and expand perspective of different cultures, especially as related to veterinary practices.

We desire to help our volunteers grow in personal faith and reliance on the Lord.

- Spiritual preparation and devotional assistance are offered.
- Guidance is provided for raising prayer and financial support.

### **Q: If I am in veterinary school, how do I plan a student mission trip?**

1. Organize a group from your school.
  - Elect one person from your group to be your team leader/missions coordinator.
  - Determine when and approximately how many people will be able to travel.
  - Connect with us at [shortterm@cvm.org](mailto:shortterm@cvm.org) at least 3-6 months ahead of your target departure date to relay the dates and team numbers information and other needs so we can work together to determine the best location availabilities.
  - After you/your team finalize the decision on location, generate interest! Encourage all interested members to complete a CVM Short-Term Mission volunteer application on our website: <https://cvm.org/missions/short-term/stm-application/>.
  - Raise Support! Support consists of both prayer support and fundraising. As early as possible you should be sharing your story of mission calling to those who will be supporting you with prayer. Finances: You are welcome to pay all fees out-of-pocket for your trip; however, another option to mindfully consider is raising financial support. Connect with us at [shortterm@cvm.org](mailto:shortterm@cvm.org) to learn more about short-term missions accounts.
  - Plan regular meetings for your team to ask questions, prepare, and pray about the upcoming trip!
2. Go as an individual.
  - Complete a CVM Short-Term Mission's volunteer application on our website: <https://cvm.org/missions/short-term/stm-application/>
  - Connect with us at [shortterm@cvm.org](mailto:shortterm@cvm.org) to let us know of your trip interest(s).

We look forward to walking alongside you to make a long-term impact through your short-term mission!

Do you have more questions? Connect with us at [shortterm@cvm.org](mailto:shortterm@cvm.org).