

Sagemont Church Policy

Mission Trips

Date Approved: January 8, 2026

Reference No.: 6-0001

PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for any person(s) participating in a mission Trip administered and/or sponsored by the Missions Department.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Mission Trips administered and/or sponsored by the Sagemont Church Missions Department.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Missions Committee: Responsible for reviewing and approving exceptions to the age criteria.

Missions Department: Responsible for the organization and administration of mission Trips. Responsible for purchasing travel insurance, administering refunds, and reviewing Trip leader cost reconciliations.

Executive Director of Missional Strategies: Responsible for reviewing and approving exceptions to this policy.

Trip Leaders: Responsible for reconciling all Trip costs and turning in receipts to the Missions Department.

CHURCH POLICY

The Missions Department is responsible for organizing and administering all Mission Trips (Trips) sponsored by the Church. Administration includes enforcement of all rules and regulations set forth in this policy. The Church applies the following framework to all Trips:

- Each Trip will help the local ministry take ownership of the Core Missionary Task.
- The mission of each Trip is to ensure that participants enlist, encourage, equip, and entrust leaders to take ownership of their responsibility to the Core Missionary Task and the Great Commission.
- The purpose of each Trip is to work the Missions Department out of a job so that the local ministry can take ownership and the Missions Department can move to different places and exit to a partnership with the local ministry.

Mission Trip Intent

The intent for each Trip that the Church sponsors or administers will be strategically planned using the following guidelines:

- Work alongside local missionaries and churches. This will include, but is not limited to, partnering with IMB missionaries and/or local missionaries/pastors that have an established relationship with the Church.
 - This criterion ensures that Trips are held accountable, and that Trip participants, as guests in the country, are working alongside the local missionary/church strategy to help in the missionary effort.
- Strategically come alongside the local missionary/church's work to serve their needs and strategies.
- Work according to the Core Missionary Task: Entry, Evangelism, Discipleship, Church Formation, Leadership Development, and Exit to Partnership.

- Seek to establish local ownership of the Core Missionary Task.
- Seek to provide a Trip that is reproducible and cost effective to local ministries.

Any Trip that the Missions Department determines has not met the intent guidelines listed above will not qualify for sponsorship or administration by the Church. Unqualified Trips may not use Church branding, request Church funds, or insinuate to local missionaries or churches that the Church is affiliated with the Trip. The Executive Director of Missional Strategies will have full discretion and final authority to determine whether a Trip satisfies the intent guidelines.

Age Criteria

International Family Mission Trips: 6 years old & up

- All participants must be aged 6 years old or older.
 - At the discretion of the Missions Committee, there is an exception for non-overseas international Trips (e.g., Hidalgo, Mexico),
- Minors aged 6-17 years old MUST be accompanied by a legal guardian.

International Non-Family Mission Trips: 13 years old & up

- All participants must be aged 13 years or older.
 - Exceptions must be approved by the Missions Committee.
- Minors aged 13-17 years old MUST be accompanied by a legal guardian.
- All participants MUST be able to clearly communicate their testimony/salvation experience.

Other Participant Criteria

As the mission of the Church is to help people take their next step in following Jesus, and because the Church encourages people to carry out God's command to go, share the gospel, and make disciples, any person can register for any Trip administered and/or sponsored by the Missions Department.

- Church members have priority over non-members for participating in Trips.
- In the event that a Church member has participated in a Trip, they will only be allowed to participate in another Trip in the same fiscal year if there is availability. In other words, priority will be given to Church members who have not yet participated in a Trip during the fiscal year.

Flights, Associated In-Country Travel, and Accommodations

All travel and accommodations must be booked through the Missions Department, unless the Trip is being organized by a partnering organization that helps with booking travel (e.g. flights, train, bus, taxi, etc.). Trip participants are not allowed to travel separately from the group or arrange for separate accommodations for the duration of the Trip. The Missions Department will assess all arrival and departure times and, within reason, select the most cost-effective flights and alternative transportation. This process will be done in consultation with a travel agent, if necessary.

The Missions Department is not responsible for seat upgrades on Trip flights.

Registration and Cost Administration Criteria

Mission Trip Payment

To secure a spot on a Trip, participants are required to complete the following:

- Pay a NON-REFUNDABLE deposit of \$250 per person.
 - Payment MUST be made by cash or check.
 - Payment should be placed in a sealed envelope with the giver's name, address, phone number, email address, and "[Mission Trip name] [month, year] – towards [participant's name]."
 - This ensures that any Trip deposits are appropriately accounted for.
 - Place the deposit envelope in any of the OFFERING BOXES around the church.
- Complete and return the individual Release Form and Commitment Form to the reception office near the Church lobby.

The remaining balance for the Trip will be collected as follows:

- Payment MUST be made by cash, check, or online via TouchPoint.
- Cash/check payment should be placed in a sealed envelope with the giver's name, address, phone number, email address, and "[Mission Trip name] [month, year] – towards [participant's name]."
- Place the deposit envelope in any of the OFFERING BOXES around the church.
- Donations made on behalf of a participant should follow the same process.

Donations made by non-trip participants are only tax-deductible if they are made to the Missions Department or to reduce the total cost of a specific trip. Donations made on behalf of a trip participant are not tax deductible since they are not able to be spent at the discretion of the Missions Department.

All Trip participants must acknowledge their understanding that payment for the full cost of the Trip MUST be made prior to Trip departure date. If a participant has not made full payment for a mission, they will be barred from signing up for another Trip until the remaining balance is paid. This requirement may not be waived for any reason by the Executive Director of Missional Strategies.

Financial Support

To receive financial support from the Church, participants must meet the following requirements:

- Be a faithful member of the Church in good standing.
- Participate in ALL required Trip preparation and/or training prior to the Trip departure date.

The Trip leader, with the approval of the Missions Department, may waive these requirements based upon a Trip-specific need or discipline needed to ensure the success of the Trip in question.

Trip Insurance

The Missions Department purchases travel insurance for all participants for each Trip including COVID coverage. Documents will be provided detailing coverages for illness, loss of property, cancellation of Trip, etc.

Should a Trip participant contract COVID while in a foreign country, the Trip and COVID insurance will cover quarantine costs for necessary lodging and food expenses of up to \$200/day for 15 days (\$3,000 max). Any costs in excess of that amount are the responsibility of the participant.

Reimbursements

Unless specified or agreed upon prior to the Trip, airport parking is the responsibility of individual Trip participants and will not be reimbursed by the Church.

If supplies are necessary for the Trip, a supplies list, cost, and cash advance will be agreed upon between the Missions Department and the Trip Leader. Trip Leaders will be responsible for staying within the agreed budget. Overages will be discussed with the Missions Department during the cost reconciliation process at the end of the Trip and will require justification by the Trip Leader. The Executive Director of Missional Strategies will make a final determination regarding whether overages will be reimbursed by the Church or be the responsibility of the Trip Leader.

Refund Policy

In the event that a participant is no longer able to participate in the Trip, the participant MUST immediately notify the Missions Department. The Missions Department will make a good faith effort to recover the costs already expended for the Trip (e.g., airfare, lodging, etc.). Any costs that are no longer recoverable will not be refunded to the participant in addition to the non-refundable deposit.

The Missions Department is protected from cost overruns in the following ways:

- Participants no longer able to participate will lose their \$250 non-refundable deposit.
- Additional funds from Ralph Edwards may be utilized.
- Other budgeted expenses may be reduced to compensate for overruns.
- Designated funds may be used to compensate for overruns.

- Insurance protection is purchased for every Trip participant.

Cost Reconciliation

Within two weeks from the end of the Trip, the Trip leader will close out, justify, and reconcile all costs associated with the Trip. All receipts and statements should be returned to the Missions Department.

Exception Resolution

Exceptions to this policy require approval from the Executive Director of Missional Strategies.

DEFINITIONS

Church means Sagemont Church, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, its officers, and authorized agents.

Mission Trip means a Trip sponsored and administered by the Church with the primary purpose of sharing the gospel and ministering to the local people of the Trip location.

Trip Leader means the person participating in the Trip who is in charge of the group and responsible for Trip related costs while at the Trip location.

Core Missionary Task means establishing a presence and relationships in a community (Entry), sharing the gospel clearly and contextually (Evangelism), teaching new believers to follow Jesus (Discipleship), gathering believers into biblically functioning churches (Church Formation), training local leaders to shepherd and multiply (Leadership Development), transitioning leadership to local believers and partnering as needed (Exit to Partnership).

U.S. GAAP COMPLIANCE

Is U.S. GAAP applicable to this business practice?

☐ No

☐ Yes

☒ N/A

REFERENCE

- IRS Publication 526 – *Charitable Contributions*
- 2024 Church & Clergy Tax Guide – *Short-Term Mission Trips*

Forms, Tools & Manuals

APPROVED BY: Executive Director of Missional Strategies & Senior Executive Director of Outreach and Operations