



**STRAIGHT STREET**  
INTERNATIONAL

Mission Team Handbook

# Straight Street International

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Find us on 

# About Straight Street International

Straight Street International began with a partnership with Eric Weber and Drew Stockton. Eric and Melissa Weber moved to Nicaragua in 2009 after leading many teams to Nicaragua and other countries throughout Central America. Quickly their ministry began to flourish and grow throughout the regions of Nicaragua. Drew, Laura, and Ethan Stockton joined the Weber's in 2018 to continue on the ministry and expand into new areas of growth.

It is our core belief that effective ministry will grow, strengthen, and support the efforts of local churches. While Straight Street does not utilize traditional church planting methods, we put a tremendous amount of effort into helping make churches more effective in reaching the lost, discipling Christians, and indigenous church planting.

We assist the local church through evangelism programs, leadership and theological training, women's ministry, church conferences, feeding programs, education, sustainability programs, sports, medical teams, and through the various gifts and talents that God gives to the people that serve through Straight Street International. We do not function independently from the local church and their communities but strive to connect the two in a deeper more effective way. We focus on building effective relationship that will grow the church in unity and strength.

## Funding

We support ourselves and the ministry from individual, church, and various fundraising activities. All donations are tax deductible.

Donations can be made to:

Straight Street International  
1233 Park Street  
Sweetwater, TN 37874

Or given online at:

[www.straightsteetinternational.com](http://www.straightsteetinternational.com)

## About Nicaragua



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Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America and it offers great opportunities for every type of traveler. Nicaragua is a country rich in history, culture, and natural resources. It borders Honduras to the North and Costa Rica to the south and it houses two big lakes: Lake Managua and Lake Nicaragua. Lake Nicaragua is the largest lake in Central America and has the only fresh-water sharks (Bullsharks) in the world.

Nicaragua is known as a country of political instability, wars, and revolution. The dictatorship of the Somoza Family in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the revolution of the Sandinistas and the war against the contras, which were funded by the US, helped establish this image. Fortunately, those days are over. Although the bad reputation prevails, Nicaragua nowadays profiles itself as the 2<sup>nd</sup> safest country in the Western Hemisphere. Poverty is still striking and the country doesn't have a tourism sector that is as well developed as in the neighboring countries. Nicaragua's unexploited side, on the other hand, allows tourists to relax on quiet beaches and approach wildlife without tumbling over other tourists.

Managua, Nicaragua's capital city, is equipped with modern facilities. Cinemas, shopping malls, and high-class hotels can be found in the capital. In colonial cities like Leon and Granada you can still find ancient, colorful houses, charming little streets, and lively plazas. Two small islands in the Atlantic Ocean- the Corn Islands- offer everything for a pleasant Caribbean vacation: while beaches, tropical blue waters, and magnificent coral reefs. Every traveler can find his place in Nicaragua.

## Preparing for your Trip

### Responding to Poverty

The people have encountered many types of natural disasters, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, landslides, and volcanic activity. These, along with the past wars, have impacted the land, people and economics which have resulted in poverty. Some houses are made out of tin, cardboard, plastic and any available building material that can be used. Many houses do not have electricity or running water. Proper waste disposal (sewer, water, trash) is not available or by crude means.

The goal is to stay alive and find food for the day. They depend on daily wages; if the family provider is sick or cannot find work, then the family does not eat and many children cannot afford to attend school. People are locked in and cannot control the direction of their lives. Poverty is very common. Gradually conditions may improve but it could take years.

Word to the Wise: Focus on the long-term effect – both for them and for you. Focus on giving them hope in a hopeless situation – through Jesus. Eternal life in Heaven – “where there will be no more tears and no more suffering.” If you feel God is burdening your heart to help a person or family, consult with the missionary on how to help. Work through the missionary to provide help or assistance.

### Tips for Visiting a Foreign Country

- Be flexible.
- Be courteous and respectful of your hosts.
- Expect to see a “different” way of life, culture, custom etc.
- Expect to see people with “Real needs”, not necessarily just “wants”, that we tend to grow accustomed to.
- Meals are prepared especially for the teams and are prepared in the missionaries’ home or by a local church. This can depend on the locations you will be ministering in. These meals will usually contain available fruit, vegetables and meats....and of course rice and beans.
- Realize that God can help you through any situation or circumstance, if you will rely on Him.

## Giving

- If you are faced with a special need, consult with missionary or team leader. There may be a more effective way to help someone through a local church.
- It is recommended not to hand out candy or money to children on the street. There are appropriate times to give out candy. (At fiestas, children's ministry events, door to door evangelism, etc.)
- Don't brush beggars aside. Acknowledge their presence and say "not today". (You might be able to buy food instead of giving them money for food.)
- Do not make promises to local people. Team members sometimes tend to forget their promises too easily once they return home.
- If clothing, school supplies or other items are taken or going to be left as contributions, do so through the local missionaries and / or local pastors. Consult the missionary on any giving issues. Your team leader should be able to inform you prior to the trip what are acceptable gifts / contributions.

### Preparing Personally

There are many things that you can do to prepare personally and spiritually for your trip. These may be some helpful things to think about as you prepare for your trip!

- Read and Study your Bible daily.
- Listen to what God is saying to you and apply the Bible to everyday situations.
- Obey God in the little things.
- Pray on a regular basis. (Pray with a friend.)
- Practice being a servant in familiar surroundings

We are so glad that you have chosen to be a part of what God is doing in Nicaragua through Straight Street! Because of your investment, kingdom things are happening. We know that many of you may come with questions that you would like to have answered, so this is our best effort at putting those anxieties at ease.

Page | - 6 - Here are some options as you consider how God may be asking you to get involved:

### **Team Options**

- Construction Ministries
- Evangelism (visiting families and distributing food boxes while sharing the Gospel)
- Pastor/Women's/Youth Conferences
- Feeding Programs
- Sports Evangelism
- Leadership Training
- Children's Ministry
- Schools with a Purpose

This is where you get to design your week. Each week is different. Each team has their own unique group of skill sets. Discuss with your team and team leader what you feel like would be the best option for your team, and we can make that happen! Our ultimate goal is to share the Gospel and make Jesus famous. As long as that remains the ultimate goal, options are almost limitless!

We are a family friendly ministry, offering enough creature comforts that can make bringing your children along to serve with you a lot easier, If you would like to bring your family and you have younger children please have your team leader contact us or contact us directly to discuss a discounted rate for your family.

## Planning your trip

There are some logistical things to make sure you have in place as well. These are a few of the most common that we have encountered.

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### Passports

A valid passport is required to leave the United States and it must be valid for a minimum of 6 months within your departure date. You are responsible for getting your own passport. Passport forms can be found at your local post office or on line at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). Apply as early as possible. The cost of the passport is not included in your total trip cost. Leave a copy of your passport with family or friend or take a picture on a phone to have with you in case you were to lose your passport.

### Shots

We want you healthy while on your trip so you can maximize your energies for accomplishing your ministry. Consult your physician or the CDC to make certain your immunizations are up to date. Tell your doctor you will be visiting Nicaragua and ask which shots are recommended. None are required but a tetanus and Hepatitis A are recommended.

### Flight plans

You or your team leader is responsible for making flight reservations to Nicaragua. Your name needs to appear on your airline ticket exactly as it appears on your passport. All flights fly into Managua, Nicaragua.

### Trip Cost

The total cost for your trip is \$500 plus airfare. This cost includes the cost of everything your team will need to conduct the missions work in Nicaragua including lodging, transportation within Nicaragua, translators, and all your meals. There may be extra costs associated with any special work that you may participate in during the week such as food boxes, extra food for feeding programs, etc... Any special offerings, souvenirs, etc. will be at an extra cost. We typically suggest about \$125 spending money is plenty. Bring nothing larger than \$20 bills. They must be clean of any writing or ink spots and it cannot be torn. Most vendors will accept American money; you will not need to exchange your money. At the end of the week, a love offering is taken up for the staff that serve the team and the translators.

## Travel Tips

When on the flight into Managua, you will be given two custom forms. One form is per individual. One form is per family. Complete the forms and be prepared to give those forms, a clean \$10 bill, and your passport to the immigration agent upon arrival in Nicaragua. **Please mark that you are staying at Hotel Granada on Calle Calzada and your business is that you are here as a “tourist.”** You will then pick up your baggage and **you must show your baggage tag to exit** to customs where your luggage will be X-rayed. Afterwards you will be picked up by staff from Straight Street International and taken to the place you will be ministering.

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Packing can seem overwhelming but hopefully we can help it become easily managed. Most airlines charge now for checked luggage. Your checked bag should not exceed 50lbs. You can also take a carry-on and a personal item that must meet the size requirements. There is a fee for luggage over the weight limit or additional checked luggage. For more information about approved dimensions and regulations, go to your airline’s website. You must be able to handle your luggage yourself. If you can’t carry it by yourself, you probably shouldn’t bring it.

## Clothing

As you are packing your clothes, keep in mind who you are representing and why you are going. With this in mind, most of the time you are to dress in “nice casual”. What does this mean? ...

Women: Skirts & dresses must reach the top of the knee or longer. Skirts/ dresses are worn for every ministry activity that we participate in. Shorts are allowed around the house or on a sightseeing day. Please be modest when considering tops (no low-cut necklines or midriffs showing). Please bring one nicer outfit for special conferences or bible studies.

Men: For normal work days wear pants or shorts to knee or longer with shirt or t-shirt. No tank top shirts or cut out sleeves. For church service you will want to wear pants and a collared shirt.

This is all in respect to their culture. We do not want to offend anyone while sharing the Gospel.

## Ministry Supplies

By this point your team has determined what type of high impact ministry you will be doing in Nicaragua. Certain supplies will be ministry specific, so ask your team leader what items are suggested.

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## Carry-on

Your most important piece of luggage is your carry-on. Be sure to include your essentials to tide you over in case your checked luggage gets delayed. Pack one to two sets of clothing, toiletries, prescriptions and other medications, and expensive items such as a camera. A personal item can be your backpack/ personal item. your documents (passport, airline tickets) bible, money, reading material, etc. The only liquids allowed in a carry-on must be under 3.2ozs. or less and all fit in 1- quart size freezer bag. Any other liquids MUST be checked.

## Final Words

- Utilities are very expensive in Nicaragua. You will be blessed with air conditioning in your bedrooms; however, to conserve energy we ask you to turn them on no earlier than 8:00 pm and then off as soon as the first person arises in the morning. There are also fans in every room as well as in the “hang out” areas of the home.
- Because this is a developing country and the sewer systems are different and you cannot flush toilet paper, it must be disposed of in the waste receptacle. Don’t worry though as they will be changed multiple times a day.
- Your shower water may be hot to lukewarm depending on the setup.
- There is wi-fi in the house but can be spotty at times. We ask that you respect others and use this for communication purposes and then log off the network to make sure others have an opportunity to communicate with loved ones. Also, you deserve a week away from the business of life that social media brings to our lives.
- Please do not give anyone money, especially near the Mission’s guest house as it creates problems for both teams and the missionary’s. If you would like to give someone something please speak with a staff member or the missionary’s.
- You should not wear matching t-shirts in the airport in order to avoid questions about your purpose and the work that you will be doing.
- Do not wear flat-billed hats on the street as they will be stolen.
- Lastly, never leave the group by itself or go anywhere by yourself. Stick with your team and the staff person who is with you.

# Packing List

## Clothing

Shoes/ Hard sole Sandal  
Socks  
Undergarments  
Sunglasses

## Men

Shirts/shorts  
Long Pants/ Collared shirt for church

## Women

Skirt/Dress for ministry  
A nicer outfit for special bible studies

## Toiletries

Sunscreen  
Medications  
Baby wipes  
Hand Sanitizer  
Bug Repellent

This list is only a sample list. Not all things will be needed and there may be things you need that are not on this list. Adjust it to fit you and your team's needs.

## Money

\$125 in cash- Most should be in small bills of \$10, 5's, and 1's. A good breakdown would be 1-20's, 4-10's, 8-5's, 15-1's. You will receive change in the local currency of Cordoba's- so the smaller the bill the better it is on getting return money. They accept the American dollar so you do not have to exchange.

### Money Breakdown

\$10 Visa  
\$25 for Free Day (Approximately)  
\$20 for Love Offering for translators/housekeepers (Voluntary)  
\$20 for Fast Food (For traveling)  
\$75 spent (leaves \$50 for souvenirs, ice cream, church/love offerings)

## Snacks

Candy  
Crackers/ Bars  
Water Flavoring

## Miscellaneous

Flashlight  
Reusable water bottle  
Backpack  
Bible/Journal

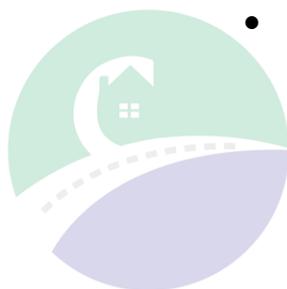
# Common Spanish Words

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Senor	Lord	Agua	Water
Dios	God	Reye	King
Jesus Christo	Jesus Christ	Dios te Bengida	God Bless You
Que Pasa?	What's Up?	Soy Christiano	I am a Christian
Gracias	Thank You	Jesus te ama	Jesus loves you
Hola	Hello		
Hasta Luego	See you later	Buenos Dias	Good morning
Si	Yes	Buenas tardes	Good afternoon
No	No	Buenas noches	Good night
Amigo	Male Friend		
Amiga	Female Friend	Iglesia	church
		bien	Well
Me Llamo	My name is	Como esta?	How are you?
Come te llamas?	What is your name?		
		Discuple	Excuse Me
Que?	What?		
De nada	Your welcome	Mucho gusto	Nice to meet you
Adios	bye	benga aqui	Come here!
Lo Siento	I'm sorry	ayudame	emergency, help!
No se	I don't know	por favor	please
No entiendo	I don't understand		

## Suggested Items to Bring to Nicaragua

- Spanish Bibles/ Tracts/ Books
- Candy- No Chocolate
- Stuffed Animals/ Dolls
- Toys
- Cars
- Sports Balls
- Small Lotions/Soaps
- Toothbrush/paste
- Crayons/ Coloring Books
- New T'shirts
- Games
- Mirrors
- Makeup
- Perfume
- New Children's Clothes
- Jewelry
- Hairbrush/Comb
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Flip Flops
- School Supplies
- Backpack
- Special Women's Ministry Supplies
- Hand Sanitizer
- Used clothing in excellent used condition



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