

Sponsor Visit Guidelines

Congratulations! You're about to have the experience of a lifetime as you visit your sponsored child!

These guidelines are to help make your visit a great one – both for you, your sponsored child and his or her family. While some of the guidelines might seem obvious, we want to make sure you're as prepared as possible for a journey into another culture with its own unique norms and traditions.

Most importantly, we want you to be informed to ensure that you and our sponsored children are protected.

Protecting the kids

The safety of our sponsored kids is our top priority. So we've developed child-protection policies that cover the kids' interactions with both CI's staff and with you, their sponsors.

Here's how these policies apply to your visit:

- A staff member and a member of the child's family must be with you at all times during your visit.
- Visits should always be coordinated with CI staff, even if you and your sponsored child live in the same country.
- To maintain privacy and security, don't share your personal contact information with your sponsored child or family.
- To minimize disruption to your sponsored child and his or her family, visits are limited to one really great day.
- To ensure that local staff can accompany and assist you, visits must occur during the working hours of our agency in the community you visit.
- If you share any photos, particularly on social media, make sure to disable *geotagging* on your phone or camera so you don't publish the exact location of your sponsored child.
- Be mindful of other location-revealing clues in information you share, such as signage in your child's neighborhood or the community center.
- Never post identifying information such as your child's full name or ID number.

No matter how much travel experience you have, our local staff has specific expertise about the community you will be visiting. Follow the staffer's lead. (And, please, don't ask him or her to make exceptions to any policy for you.) Our experts know best and make decisions with both your safety and the safety of your sponsored child and family in mind. Thanks in advance for your understanding!

Protecting you

- **Being culturally aware**

Social distancing will be required during the visit to ensure everyone remains safe and healthy.

The local staff will advise you if wearing a mask will be necessary during your visit.

In addition, avoid discussing religious and political views out of respect for those of your sponsored child and his or her family.

What is seen as appropriate can vary drastically across cultures. The local staff accompanying you can explain local norms and expectations to help ensure you're aware and respectful of what's appropriate.

- **Dressing for success**

While standards of dress vary around the world, there's one rule that tends to work everywhere: Keep it simple and modest.

Conservative clothing such as jeans, khakis, T-shirts and polo shirts are great for both comfort and appropriateness.

The opposite is true with shorts, shirts with low necklines, halter-tops, miniskirts and excessively tight clothing.

Such clothing is especially inappropriate in Zambia, India and the Philippines, where local customs require pants or skirts that fall below the knee. Shorts are definitely a no-go.

Alcohol, drugs and smoking

Visitors may not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs when visiting a sponsored child. If you smoke, please do so when you're not in the presence of sponsored children. (Thanks!)

Bringing guests

Bringing a friend or loved one with you? Great! We're glad you want to share the joy of sponsorship with a travel companion. Just make sure the individual is familiar with these guidelines and is as committed to following them as you are.

Oh, and no matter how much you love that travel companion, keep in mind that public displays of affection are not culturally acceptable in most of the countries we serve.

Giving gifts

Want to bring a gift along for your sponsored child?

We've got some important restrictions we need to follow. That means the following gifts — while generous — are automatic no-nos:

- Cash, in any amount, which can cause a number of problems for the family within the

- community (jealousy, risk of theft and more).
- Clothing items that are not age-appropriate or contain questionable designs or labels. (Staff can help you determine whether clothing is suitable.). All clothing items must be new.
 - Music containing profanity or other offensive language.
 - No new or used digital devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets, e-readers, etc.).

As an alternative to giving your child or family cash during the visit, you can give an Extra Gift donation by visiting children.org or calling our Care Team at 800-888-3089.

COVID/Health Recommendations

Children International continues to follow the recommendations of the World Health Organization and the CDC.

And our agencies follow their local government guidelines and restrictions regarding health recommendations and requirements, as well as their own agency-established guidelines.

Depending on local guidelines, you may be asked to show proof of vaccination, so be sure to have this information with you.

To read more about the country you will be traveling to and local covid-19 information, please visit:

www.travel.state.gov

www.usembassy.gov

Depending on the infection rate and health status of sponsored families and sponsors, agencies reserve the right to cancel a visit at any time.

Cancelling your trip

If you discover the need to cancel your trip, please call our Care Team as soon as possible at 800-888-3089. If you are already in the country where your child lives, please contact the agency directly.

With these guidelines in mind, you're ready to have an amazing visit. We know it will strengthen the bond between you and your sponsored child. Enjoy!

***Thanks for reading these guidelines. Please keep this copy for yourself.
You will be asked to read and sign a similar version when you arrive for your visit.***



Helpful Tips For Your Trip

We're excited you're planning a trip to visit your sponsored child! These guidelines and procedures will help you make the most of this amazing experience.

Our staff members in the country you are visiting are experts in making sure you have a safe and enjoyable trip. You can rely on them to be by your side throughout the day!

Staying safe

International travel is incredibly exciting, but when visiting areas suffering from extreme poverty and the problems that come with it, that excitement comes with the need for added vigilance and precautions. Our field staff know the communities you'll be visiting best and will inform you of any extra steps needed to stay safe. Trust their recommendations and don't hesitate to ask if you're not clear on what to do.

While our staff will help you navigate issues in the local community, we've got some tips to help you minimize the chances of being a target of theft during your visit:

- Avoid wearing conspicuous clothing or jewelry.
- Do not carry excessive amounts of money.
- Do not leave unattended luggage in public areas.
- Do not accept packages from strangers.
- Taxis should be arranged by the hotel staff instead of hailing one on the street.
- Wear masks and social distance as needed.

Specific country considerations

Be sure to consult the State Department (travel.state.gov) for more information on specific travel concerns in the country you'll be visiting.

Also visit the US Embassy (usembassy.gov) for Covid-19 Information, including airline travel and Covid-19 vaccination entry requirements.

In addition, follow these additional guidelines to avoid trouble during your visit (especially in areas experiencing any type of unrest):

Many of the countries CI serves suffer from elevated levels of crime and violence:

- Avoid areas where political, religious or other demonstrations, processions or large public gatherings are in progress. These activities can pop up with little notice. While most are peaceful, they have the potential of quickly becoming violent, and criminals often target crowded areas.
- Resist the temptation to be on the streets alone at night. Though the nighttime sights and destinations may be tempting, the risk of becoming a crime victim is increased on darkened streets.

Trust CI staff

We'll say it one more time, because it's important: Follow the lead of the CI staff accompanying you and trust their judgement. They're with you to keep you safe and ensure your visit is a success. And if you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to let them know.

If you need more information as you prepare for your visit, check out [children.org/make-a-difference/sponsor-visit-planning/before-you-go](https://www.children.org/make-a-difference/sponsor-visit-planning/before-you-go). You can also call the Care Team at (800) 888-3089 with your questions.

We wish you a safe and rewarding trip to meet your sponsored child and learn about his or her life and community. Have an amazing journey!



Sponsor Visit Checklist

3 weeks before your trip: Confirm details with the CI office in the country you'll be visiting.

Please contact our field office directly to confirm your visit. If you do not receive a reply from them within 7 days, please contact our Care Team at 1-800-888-3089.

Note: *This step is really important! They can't finalize arrangements with the family until you contact their office.*

If they do not hear from you to confirm the visit, it will be assumed your plans have changed and all arrangements will be cancelled.

Get vaccinations. Consult your doctor or local health department about necessary vaccinations where you'll be visiting.

Check international travel alerts.

Visit the following websites (or call) for additional information about your destination:

- The U. S. Department of State: travel.state.gov/travel or (888) 407-4747
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov/travel
- The World Health Organization: who.int/countries/en
- The U. S. Department of State's "Tips for Traveling Abroad": travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html
- The US Embassy usembassy.gov: Find and Select the Country, "U.S. Citizen Services", Alerts and Messages: "COVID-19 Information"

If using a credit card for visit day expenses, contact your card company to let them know you are traveling internationally.

Review "Sponsor visit guidelines" again, as well as "Assumption of risk" form. (You'll be asked to sign both forms at the beginning of your visit.)

Review "Helpful tips for your trip" one more time.

Contact the CI Care Team with any questions: (800) 888-3089 or children@children.org