RESPONSIBILITIES OF A TEAM LEADER

The following represents the roles and responsibilities of all Medical Teams International volunteer team leaders. As a Team Leader, you are expected to set the example for your team in carrying out these responsibilities and any additional duties as assigned. Your ability to understand, support and demonstrate confidence in leading the team in accomplishing its mission and objectives is vital. The following lists are provided to facilitate a successful, effective and enjoyable experience for volunteers and to facilitate maximum benefit for the people being served.

- **Represent MTI and support its mission**
  As a Team Leader, you are a representative of MTI to our partners and to the people we serve. Along with your fellow team members, you are responsible to adhere to MTI’s Code of Ethics and Conduct and to follow all MTI’s country program and partner standards and policies. We expect that you will maintain a positive regard for local culture and customs, and be flexible, professional, and positive in all interactions with local staff and community members.

  MTI Code of Ethics and Conduct can be found in the Volunteer Agreement. Team members are required to sign this document before departure. Local program policies will be shared with you by the Team Coordinator or by our staff or partner when you arrive in country.

- **Assist the Team Coordinator with team preparations**
  As a Team Leader, you are responsible to assist the Team Coordinator in preparing the team for their trip and assignment. While individual team members participate in the preparations, the Team Leader works with the Team Coordinator to ensure that all preparations are completed in a timely manner. These responsibilities are outlined in the Team Preparations Checklist included in the Team Leader Supplement. Please refer to this checklist often. Your team coordinator will review it with you.

  In some instances, your Team Coordinator may ask you to assist in gathering specific documents from your team members, such as copies of passports, visa applications, medical licenses, etc. A Team Document Checklist is provided in the Team Leader Supplement for your convenience.

  **Supplies**
  As a Team Leader, please be aware that you are responsible to oversee the procurement of team supplies. You may appoint one team member to be the Supply Coordinator. Your Team Coordinator will provide standard supply and equipment lists for your team and will work with your team’s supply coordinator to assist the team in being fully equipped and supplied for the team assignment. **ALL** team members should ideally be involved in procuring supplies for the team. Many hands make light work!

  **Note:** USE OF EXPIRED MEDICINES OR SUPPLIES IS NOT ACCEPTABLE IN ANY SITUATION, IN ANY COUNTRY.

- **Serve as a communication link between MTI and team members**
  As a Team Leader, you are responsible to organize and facilitate any necessary team meetings prior and during the trip and a team meeting (or photo party) afterward. Meetings can be held as often as you deem necessary, depending on the experience level of your team, preparation requirements for the work you will be doing, intricacy of
planning team supplies, etc. These meetings do not typically involve your Team Coordinator. Utilize these meetings to:

• Clarify team goals and objectives. Your Team Coordinator will communicate these to you as the Team Leader; it is your responsibility to make sure your team is informed and on board!
• Review responsibilities with regard to procuring and packing team supplies.
• Make sure everyone is on schedule with all preparations, required paperwork, and finances.
• Make sure your team knows about any specific requirements for your trip: passports (some countries require passports that are at least 6 months before expiration), visas, immunizations, etc. These requirements are listed in the country manual.
• Facilitate periodic meetings during the trip to debrief team members.
• Support a time of devotions and/or prayer for interested team members. As Team Leader, you may choose not to participate in or lead these gatherings, but should be supportive when they occur.

• Facilitate Conflict Resolution
With the unique stress of international travel and working in a different culture, your team may experience disagreements or conflict. This is normal. Typically, team members are able to resolve conflict on their own. If this is not possible, you will need to approach those involved, demonstrate respect and guard confidentiality. It is helpful to encourage team members to discuss the issue(s) only with the parties involved.

  1) Allow each party to express his/her viewpoint
  2) Understand and agree on the problem – each party needs to take responsibility
  3) Brainstorm potential solutions/alternatives
  4) Agree on a plan that works for all involved parties
  5) Affirm/Forgive/Thank
  6) If the issue persists, please consult the Team Coordinator or MTI field leadership per MTI grievance and resolution process.

• Support Appropriate Behaviors
In the unfortunate event that a volunteer exhibits behavior toward MTI and/or the country partner and beneficiaries that is contrary to the terms outlined in the MTI Volunteer Agreement, the Team Leader may need to call the volunteer aside and remind them of the standards they agreed to. In rare cases, after consultation with MTI field leadership and/or Team Coordinator, a volunteer may be sent home during assignment. Inappropriate behavior includes:

  ▪ Insubordination
  ▪ Lack of cooperation
  ▪ Persistent disrespect for local people, culture and customs
  ▪ Any disruptive or inappropriate behavior that violates MTI Code of Conduct

During a Trip

  1. Team Leader discusses issue of concern with volunteer.
  2. If issue remains unresolved, Team Leader expresses concerns to appropriate MTI field leadership and the Team Coordinator.
  3. MTI field leadership and Team Coordinator talks with the volunteer and further discusses issue of concern.
  4. If the Team Leader and MTI staff and management agree that the situation is unacceptable, MTI will remove the volunteer from the field after having the volunteer sign a Disassociation Form.
After a Trip

1. Upon occasion, a volunteer may not follow the guidelines in the Volunteer Agreement during a trip, but his/her behavior does not warrant sending the volunteer home early. In such cases the Team Leader should, if possible, alert the Team Coordinator to the situation while the team is in the field.

2. After the team returns, the Team Leader should discuss the areas of concern with the Team Coordinator. The Team Coordinator will then determine the appropriate steps to take with the volunteer.

3. Violation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and MTI standards and policies may result in a volunteer being moved from active to conditional or restricted status for any future involvement with MTI.

- Manage Finances

Typically, only Disaster Response teams will have extra responsibilities regarding trip finances. The Team Coordinator will inform you of the process and any additional responsibilities you may have. In the event that you or your team will be carrying funds to give to MTI in-country staff or pay for expenses directly to our partner/programs, as Team Leader you are responsible to account for and report on the use of those funds and ensure that all team members do so as well. Financial tracking forms will be provided.

MTI will reimburse expenses only for excess baggage of team supplies (not personal items) or purchase of medical supplies in country if pre-approved by the Team Coordinator. Any additional work related reimbursements must be discussed and approved in advance with the Team Coordinator.

- Report Team Accomplishments

As a Team Leader, you are responsible to complete a Team Report / Evaluation form and turn it in to your Team Coordinator two days after returning home. At the end of your mission, and prior to departing the country where you have been working, please gather your team for a debriefing and go over the Team Report / Evaluation Form that you will be receiving in your Team Leader Handbook.

If your team members wish to submit an individual and confidential evaluation form, they may do so online at the following url: http://www.medicalteams.org/evaluation. Individual instruction sheets for each team member will be included in your Team Leader Handbook as well.

Additionally, your Team Coordinator may debrief you by phone after the trip on overall team objectives and performance. Honest and constructive feedback is welcome for the continual improvement of our work together.