

PANAMA

TRAVELER INFORMATION



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PANAMA // General Info

The Republic of Panama with an area of approximately 29,700 sq. Miles (76,900 sq. km.), located between Costa Rica and Colombia, forms the narrowest and lowest portion of the Isthmus that links North and South America. The population of Panama is approximately 3.3 million, about 52 percent of which is urban. Spanish is the Official language of the country, but many of the people in Panama City and Colón speak English. The predominant religion is Roman Catholicism.

Take time to understand the culture you're about to enter, and remember the people here might do things differently than you are accustomed to doing. As a missionary in another country, your first responsibility is not to represent your earthy citizenship, but it is to represent your heavenly one.

Housing



Albrook Inn - The hotel is approximately 35 minutes from the airport. Your trip cost will be based on 2-3 people per room. There is an increased charge for single occupancy rooms.

Wi-Fi Access - There is Wi-Fi access.

Insurance

Faith Ventures Insurance basic plan is included in your trip cost. You can see coverage by clicking on the link in your Managed Missions page. Contact the SCORE home office if you would like to upgrade the coverage.

No vaccinations are required to enter Panama. SCORE suggests to be up to date on normal vaccines which includes tetanus.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Passports

- Passports are required for all U.S. citizens traveling to Panama.
- Panama requires **all passports must be valid for 6 months after date of travel.**
- To apply for or renew a passport use this link for more information
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply/where-to-apply.html>

Airfare - For teams of 10 or more people, SCORE can reserve flights for a fee of \$40 per ticket.

- When booking your flight, **the designated airport is Tocumen International Airport - Panama City (Airport Code is PTY).**
(1) roundtrip Arrival/Departure airport transfer to this airport is included in your trip cost.
- Airline tickets must match the name, birthdate and gender shown on the passport exactly.
- For individuals who arrive or depart separate from the group and an additional trip to the airport is required, there will be a \$30 charge per each additional trip to the airport. This is paid in country to the SCORE missionary.
- Baggage Fees are not included in your cost. You will pay for them at the airport upon departure and return. Check your airline's website for fees and restrictions.
- Confirm with your airline 24 hours prior to your departure for any schedule changes.
- Arrive at the airport at least 3 hours prior to your flight. This gives time to get through security check and most airlines have a cut-off time for checked baggage.

While in Panama, SCORE will provide transportation.

Customs Information

During your flight into Panama, you will be handed an immigration form. On the immigration form, you need to submit your personal information, the reason for the visit, and the address of where you will stay.

This is the SCORE information you'll need to complete the form (you will need your passport information):

Place staying: Albrook Inn
Address: Las Magnolias Street
Albrook, Ancon, Panama
Contact phone #: +507 64810412
Reason for visit: Tourism

Meals -

- Meals will be eaten at ministry sites or at the missionary's home.
- **Food Allergies** - Once in Panama, let the missionaries know of food allergies. Ask questions when you eat out in restaurants. **Communication is the answer to an incident free trip.**
You will want to bring supplemental items if needed.

Cash to bring - This is up to you but \$150-\$200 is suggested for spending money, nothing larger than \$20's. Currency needs to be new bills, no damage. Most places accept US cash or credit cards.

- You will need to bring funds for your leisure activity - Your trip leader will confirm the amount.
- You may want to purchase food or drinks at the airport
- Souvenirs, snacks, etc.
- Possible ministry gift to the missionaries

What to Wear and Pack

The dress code is always the most asked question. Remember - you are dealing with cultural preferences. What may be the current trends in the United States may not be appropriate for the Panamanian culture.

The SCORE missionaries have final approval over your outfits. It's not personal; it's to protect their ministries. Not abiding by the dress codes set by the missionaries who live in country can damage their ministry and testimonies. This is important especially for female team members.

Laundry will not be available so bring enough clothing for the extent of your trip.

*Sports team uniforms will be washed daily.

Men

- **Church** - Casual. No athletic shorts but Bermudas are fine.
- **Ministry** - Shorts and t-shirts may be worn for ministry. No short or tight shorts. Long athletic pants for school ministry daily.
- **While at the hotel** - Shorts or pants and t-shirts. No short or tight shorts. Guys must wear shirts at all times except around the pool.
- **Swimming** - modest swim shorts are to be worn. No speedos.
- At no time are pants or shorts to be worn low enough to expose your underwear.
- We also ask that men do not have their fingernails painted and all visible piercings be taken out before leaving the hotel to do ministry.
- **Athletic uniforms** are to be worn for the event only. Please change when returned to the hotel or partnering facilities.

Women

- **Church** - Casual, modest skirts, dresses or pants are allowed.
- **Ministry** - Pants, capris, or bermuda shorts may be worn. Modest sleeveless tops or t-shirts may be worn.
- **While at the hotel** - Pants, modest shorts and t-shirts. Yoga pants or leggings may be worn with a long t-shirt covering the bottom section. No midriffs showing.
- **Swimming** - Modest Tankinis are acceptable as long as they do not show the midriff or are cut high to expose the bottom section. You may be asked to wear a t-shirt and shorts if the swimsuit is not acceptable. A cover up is to be worn when not at the pool.
- **Athletic uniforms** are to be worn for the event only. Please change when returned to the hotel or partnering facilities.

Additional items to pack - *Bedding, towels and washcloths are provided. Electrical adaptors are not needed.

- Personal hygiene items- soap, shampoo/conditioner, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.
- **Water bottle - a must to bring. Water is provided.**
- Rain coat
- Hand sanitizer
- Your favorite snack
- Medications
- Phone and/or camera and chargers
- Bible and Journal, pen, etc.
- Sunscreen and mosquito spray
- Closed toe shoes to wear when doing ministry, especially after a rain. Some leisure activities may require closed toe shoes as well.
- A plastic bag for dirty, muddy clothes and shoes.
- Any ministry items to use or to donate (see the team leader)

Ministry and Leisure Activities

Below are options for you to choose for ministry and leisure opportunities. Most groups like to take one day for a leisure activity. However, some groups would prefer ministry all week. The missionary will confirm the ministry and leisure activity scheduled for your group as well as the additional costs.

***Ministry hours are 7:00am-7:00pm.**

Additional fees incur if group wants additional time. \$50 per hour. Min \$50 - Max \$150

Ministry Opportunities

- **Community Ministry** - Feed a village or tribe. Play sports, conduct a sports clinic, or just have fun with different sports. There is a huge opportunity for medical groups to bless the tribes. There are many opportunities to reach the lost both in the urban areas of Panama and the rural farm communities and jungle tribes. Food distribution is always a popular ministry - **\$20 will purchase (1) bag of food** for a family and your team will help distribute it. We suggest to count on (1) bag per person in your group if this is something you would like to do.
- **Indigenous Ministry** - Panama is home to six indigenous groups. These groups had a total population that reached 5-8% of the total Panamanian population. Many of these groups continue to hold strongly onto their traditional culture and language. Most indigenous groups in Panama live in extreme poverty, trying to get by on just \$1 a day.
- **Church Ministry** - If your team is made up of talented individuals, we want to use those talents to glorify God and draw others to him. Puppet shows, drama sketches, worship music, and more, there are a number of mission outreaches your team can do including worship team training, church services, children and teen evangelistic services and street performances.
- **Children's Ministry** - We have many opportunities to reach out to both kids and teens. Vacation Bible Schools, Back Yard Bible Clubs, park ministries and more are available for your team to do. If you chose to do one of these ministries, you will need to plan it out in advance and be prepared to bring most supplies with you.

Leisure Activities

- **Sightseeing in Panama City - included** - Explore the old part of Panama City called the "Casco Viejo." The Spanish moved the colonial capital of Panama City to this location after the original location (called "Old Panama") was sacked and burned by the English Pirate Sir Henry Morgan. The architecture of the area is a mixture of French and Spanish Colonial.
- **Visit the Panama Canal Visitor Center - \$18** - One of the largest and most difficult engineering projects ever undertaken, the canal had an enormous impact on shipping between the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean.
- **Canal Jungle Tour - \$100** - This canal adventure is a day trip which includes the canal, monkey island, swimming, kayaking, lunch and drinks.
- **Taboga Island - \$35 includes lunch** - Known as the Island of Flowers, this offshore gem lies just 12 miles from Panama City. Grab a boat from the causeway, look for pods of whales en route and prepare yourself for a day of lounging about on sun-kissed sands.

Arriving in Panama

Once you arrive in Panama, have gone through customs and retrieved your luggage, a SCORE person will be there to meet you.

Flights are monitored so we are aware of delays. However, if your flight is missed or cancelled, please contact Marianella Bueno to confirm any new plans.

Contact Information -

Phone: +507 64810412

E-mail - mariaydavid@hotmail.com

SCORE International Home Office: 423-894-7111

BUENO FAMILY

Your missionaries in Panama are David and Marianella Bueno. Both were born and raised in Uruguay. They met while David was playing professional soccer. David had allowed soccer to become more important than God, but through his mother's persistence, both he and Marianella began attending church. Later they attended Word of Life institute in Argentina where they were introduced to SCORE and soon after began serving in the country of Panama. They now have 2 sons, Danny and Ezekiel.

SUGGESTED DONATION ITEMS

Many of you ask if there are items that your group could bring to help their ministry. Below is a list of items that are currently needed in Panama.

1. Crafts for the children
2. Treats for the children
3. Sandals - all sizes
4. Tooth brushes, and toothpaste
5. Any Hygiene items

Note:

Your group can decide to collect these items from your school or church prior to going on the trip, however, please be aware that you will need to carry these items in your suitcases.

Airlines do charge for extra luggage so keep this in mind.

THANK YOU!

**We look forward to serving your group as you glorify God through missions in obedience to
"The Great Commission "!**