

**INTERNATIONAL  
VOLUNTEER HQ  
SOUTH AFRICA PREREGISTRATION  
INFORMATION BOOKLET**



# **INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER HQ**

## **VOLUNTEER IN SOUTH AFRICA PREREGISTRATION BOOKLET**

This Preregistration Booklet provides some more information to help you decide whether you would like to volunteer in South Africa with IVHQ. It is impossible to describe what it is like to experience volunteer travel in South Africa – the harsh contrasts, the beautiful friendly people, working with other likeminded volunteers from all over the world and the amazing landscapes and scenery. However, this booklet provides you with general information on what to expect in South Africa. When you sign up to volunteer with IVHQ, we will send you out a full IVHQ South Africa Volunteer Booklet to help you prepare for your impending volunteer stint with us. Just remember if there is anything you want to know that is not answered in this booklet or on our website, feel free to contact us at anytime.

Get ready for one of the most amazing experiences of your life.

Enkosi

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## **THERE ARE A LOT OF VOLUNTEER ORGANISATIONS OUT THERE..... WHAT MAKES INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER HQ SO SPECIAL?**

IVHQ offers a number of services you simply will not receive with any other organisation.

### **SERVICE**

How many times have you emailed a travel agent or volunteer organisation only to have them take weeks to get back to you? It can be an extremely nervous and anxious time preparing to go volunteering abroad and when you want an answer to a question you may have, you want it now! Not next week or the week after. At International Volunteer HQ we pride ourselves on our quick, accurate and efficient response time to emails and enquiries. If you email us with an enquiry you can expect to hear back within 24 hours (one working day). We challenge you to find a volunteer organisation with more efficient response time and better volunteer service than IVHQ!

### **AFFORDABILITY**

One of the main motivations behind the formation of IVHQ was to provide volunteers with high quality, safe and yet extremely affordable volunteering opportunities in developing countries. Many people associate low cost with low quality - not us. A lot of people believe our programs are the best there are. Don't believe us? Read our TESTIMONIALS. We want to provide you with the best volunteer experience possible at the cheapest price, so you have money to spend on other things while you are abroad. Why spend thousands on volunteering abroad when the best programs and prices are with IVHQ? Check out our great prices today.

[www.volunteerhq.org/programme-cost.html](http://www.volunteerhq.org/programme-cost.html)

### **FLEXIBILITY**

Every volunteer is different and everybody has different expectations from their volunteer placement. Therefore IVHQ has partnered with local organizations who are flexible and can help tailor volunteering placements for each specific volunteer. Some volunteers may want to work huge hours at their project while others may only want to spend a few hours each day working. Some volunteers may want to work in rural areas, others the city and some may even want a combination of the two. Our partner organization will work with you and do their utmost to ensure your volunteer experience is what you want, not simply what you are given.

### **QUALITY**

While we are prepared to sacrifice charging high fees, we will not sacrifice quality. We are not prepared to send volunteers to a placement that is unsafe or of low quality, and to this end all of the volunteer placements and home stays we offer, have been inspected and experienced by IVHQ. One of the reasons IVHQ does not offer as many programs as other organizations is that it takes a long time to find local organizations in host countries that are affordable and yet provide high quality volunteering placements. While IVHQ is in the process of opening a number of new programs, we will not surrender quality or affordability in order to increase our volunteer placement options. OUR TESTIMONIALS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES - READ THEM AT OUR WEBSITE TODAY!

[www.volunteerhq.org/testimonials.html](http://www.volunteerhq.org/testimonials.html)

## **SUPPORT**

From the moment you pay your registration fee at IVHQ you will have support 24/7 until the day you finish your volunteer project. You will receive an informative online booklet detailing everything you need to know about your imminent volunteer placement specific to your country while you will also be assigned an IVHQ staff member as your program coordinator. This program coordinator is there to answer any questions you may have before you go whilst also putting you in contact with our local staff in South Africa. During your volunteer placement you will always have support close at hand through our local team of experienced staff in South Africa, while IVHQ will be in regular contact to ensure your volunteer experience is everything you expect it to be.

## **SAFETY**

Travelling to a different country and experiencing a different culture can be a scary experience at the best of times, but when you are immersing yourself right into the culture through volunteering and living amongst the local community, this apprehension can often be compounded. While safety can never be totally guaranteed wherever we are in the world, IVHQ and its partner organizations do all they can to ensure your volunteering project is as safe as humanly possible. You are placed in trustworthy institutions and reliable accommodation situations all of which have been inspected and experienced by IVHQ staff or directors.

## **FRIENDSHIP**

Volunteers on IVHQ's programs often form lifelong friendships with their host families and the people they assist on the volunteer programs. However they also form strong bonds with the other volunteers they meet, work and live with on their placements. Despite many volunteers coming from extremely dissimilar backgrounds, the experiences that these volunteers share forge strong ties that can last a life time in spite of their vastly different home cultures.

## **NEED**

There is nothing worse than investing your time and money into volunteer travel, then flying half way around the world simply to find that your presence is not really required. IVHQ actively seeks partner organizations that have a legitimate need for volunteers. Whether your stay is a short or a long one, our partner organizations will do their utmost to ensure you DO make a difference.

## **LOYALTY**

Loyalty is a crucial element to the foundations that IVHQ has been built on. Making the decision to invest your time and money to volunteer abroad is a difficult one and to this end we try to make it as easy for you as possible. We make the registration fee refundable so if you change your mind closer to the time (no closer than 2 months to your start date) you will receive your money back. Furthermore, if you decide to volunteer with IVHQ again within a 24 month period after your first volunteer experience we will waive the registration fee the second time. This means you can combine two volunteering experiences within a 24 month period and only pay the registration fee once!

## EXPERIENCE

Placing over 3000 volunteers abroad annually, the staff at IVHQ have been there and done that. We are former volunteers who know what it is like to arrive in a foreign country, knowing no-one and about to give up our time to help people we have never met before. We have experienced firsthand the programs we offer. We have lived in the accommodation and eaten the food you will. We have experienced the same trepidations and fears before travelling and we will be here to help you. Every year we spend approximately 3 months ourselves travelling our programs and experiencing what our volunteers are (chances are we will meet you!!). There is no higher form of quality control than experiencing the programs first hand and fixing any problems that you encounter. By living and volunteering alongside our volunteers we ensure our programs remain the very best!

## ENJOYMENT

There is much more to a top quality volunteer travel experience than simply volunteering day in, day out. Volunteering with IVHQ you get additional bonuses such as photo and video competitions where you can win money back for simply giving us feedback on your program or posting photos on Facebook. Furthermore, most volunteers are first time travellers to their host country and often wish to look around and explore. To accommodate this our in-country partner organizations have partner tourism companies or contacts that allow you to 'escape' from the rigors of day to day volunteer work, to spend a weekend or extended break, experiencing more of the country you are working in. Often the prices for these tours and trips are much better than you'll find anywhere else in that country as the trips are discounted for volunteers. Check out the experiences of past volunteers by visiting our Facebook page and looking at the multitude of videos and photos - <http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=18532434512&topic=9818#/group.php?gid=18532434512>

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The IVHQ South Africa program places volunteers in a variety of projects including teaching, orphanage/childcare work, surf/swimming outreach program, arts project and sports development in urban and suburban South Africa. Before arriving in South Africa volunteers should understand that resources are extremely limited in the institutions they will be working. Therefore, any supplies volunteers can bring, appropriate to their particular program are always very appreciated by the local people and staff. We provide some ideas of good supplies to bring relevant to your particular program in the WHAT TO BRING section of the information booklet you receive when you register into the program.

### **Location of Volunteer Placements**

IVHQ has volunteer placements in mainly urban settings, and some placements in rural South African Townships and villages. These projects are based in Muizenberg and Capricorn Township in suburban Cape Town.

### **Start and Duration of Programs**

Volunteers can begin our South Africa placements on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month. Volunteers can choose to volunteer from durations of one week to six months.

### **Requirements**

Volunteers must be over 18 years of age at the beginning of the program and have at least a high school education. Volunteers wishing to participate on the surf outreach program **MUST** know how to swim.

## **Placement Descriptions**

### **Teaching**

Volunteers on the teaching project will be placed at one of our local township public schools. The school you will be volunteering at has 550+ students and you will instantly feel as though you are part of the family. The class sizes are also fairly small and manageable, normally ranging from 25 to 40 pupils. Volunteers will be working alongside teachers at the school as well as working with other volunteers. Typical subjects taught at the school include English, Mathematics, Life Skills, Social Studies, Art and Physical studies. The school runs throughout the year and a typical school year has a holidays for the full month of June and December, and short 10 day holidays in April and September. During these school holidays, teaching volunteers can participate on another volunteer program such as orphanage or surfing, take a break, travel and get to explore the beauty and adventure of our South Africa land. NB: Volunteers do not need to be qualified or an experienced teacher.

### **Childcare/Orphanage Project**

Most African countries have large numbers of people living with HIV/AIDS. This results in a lot of children being left behind due to parents dying from HIV/AIDS and being left with no one to look or care for them. Sometimes children are simply abandoned because their parents have no means to provide for them. The child/orphan care program work consists of caring for children at these centres, providing education and designing activities for the children and helping with general duties of the centre, such as teaching, feeding, cooking, and caring for children and babies.

## **Sports Development Project**

Like most African countries, South Africa has a great number of children living in poverty. Although some of the children attend school during the day, after school they have no one or have no activity to do to occupy their time which can often lead them into trouble. You will see some of these children begging for money on the streets, stealing, drinking and engaging in bad substance abuse after school. Sometimes they drop out of school because there is no motivation and they do not see the need to go to school. This project aims at keeping these children busy during school hours as well as after school through sporting activities such as football, skate boarding, swimming and surfing. As a volunteer you are expected to be a positive role model to the children. Volunteers will be teaching children at the local township football as an extra mural activity at school, skate boarding, swimming and surf lessons after school hours. The project runs throughout the year and during school holidays, volunteers will still continue with skate boarding, swimming and surf lessons.

## **Surfing/Swimming Outreach Project**

Surfing is one of the most exciting and fun water sports anyone can get involved in. The surfing project mainly aims at getting children off the streets and giving them something fun and rewarding to do to occupy their time. Most of these children see surfing as something out of reach as they can barely afford food to eat, let alone a surf board and a wet suit. In this program children are fed and taught how to surf. The main aim is not to make them become the best surfers in the world but to give them stability, get them focused on going to school through positive support and to get them off the streets. The children are fed and taught how to surf every day. The project runs from Monday to Friday, where volunteers will be coaching the children on how to surf every afternoon (whilst also being taught themselves if they do not know how). Children are also taught how to swim by volunteers at the local salt water swimming pool. The project is loads of fun and your efforts and hard work will be met with great appreciation by the children. NB: You do not need to know how to surf for this program, as volunteers will be taught how to surf by our capable surf instructors. Volunteers that know how to surf are also strongly encouraged on this program. However you **MUST** know how to swim.

## **Arts Project**

The Art project aims at teaching children from an early age how to use their time and hands productively. We believe that Art is an important subject, not only in its own right but in the rest of education as well through encouraging creativity. Through art, a lot of children will be given the chances to learn new skills, which they can use to generate income and help their families. The Art project involves teaching less privileged children at a township primary school how to tap into their creative side because creativity is the basis of many of the art projects. Therefore, this project will help equip the children in using any resources they have skilfully. This will also enable the children to think for themselves in more productive and creative ways. Many less privileged children usually resort to bad habits when they have nothing to do, this project will help give them skills to use to occupy their time in a meaningful and safe way. As a volunteer you will be assisting with Art lessons, drawings crafts and playing games. Your role will also be to motivate and be a positive influence to the children as they will be looking up to you.

## **Accommodation and Meals**

Volunteers will be housed at a modern and homely volunteer house with other volunteers. The house is safe and secure, sleeps 20-26 people and has five bedrooms (shared rooms with bunk beds). The house has three bathrooms with Western-style toilets and hot water. It also has a living area where volunteers will have their meals, watch TV or play games. There is a nice wooden deck

with a BBQ area and beautiful Mountain Views. Clean Bedding is also provided for you at the Volunteer house.

South Africa is comprised of a wide range of tribes, ethnicities and cultures and as such the food is usually very diverse. The house has a cook who will prepare all your meals for volunteers and a cleaner who will ensure that the house is always clean. Meals will be provided for you (From Monday- Friday) at the following times:

Breakfast: 7.00-8.00am, Lunch 1.00-2pm, Dinner 7.00-8.00pm.

The meals generally consist of:

Breakfasts: Cereal, Toast and Fruit

Lunch: Sandwiches or a hot meal

Dinner: Local dishes such as: Pasta, macaroni and cheese, boerewors (known as sausages) and smash (mielie meal), Rice and veggie dishes, Burgers and salad and barbeque dinners.

If you have special eating needs, please let us know ahead of time so that we can make arrangements for you. However, we need to stress the point that you should not expect to eat as you normally do at home. We will do our best to see that you are well taken care of, but also as a volunteer, there is a need to be flexible. **NB It is very important to note that meals are not provided on weekends (Saturday and Sunday). During this time, volunteers eat out or can cook meals at the volunteer house themselves (they must buy their own food from the supermarket if they wish to do this).**

## **IVHQ PLACEMENT EXAMPLES**

The following are provided as potential examples of your placement in South Africa. They are all placements our volunteers are involved in currently, however by no means can we guarantee a placement on any of the specific placements below. Due to the size of our programs, our volunteers work at a lot of institutions and placements and therefore, you may be working at a placement not shown below. Specific placements are decided by in country staff and they will be able to tell you more information closer to your start date on this.

### **IVHQ Teaching Placement: Capricorn Primary School**

Located in Capricorn Township area, about 20 minutes' walk from the IVHQ volunteer house, this school has 550+ children ranging from ages 5-13 years old. Capricorn Primary school selects children from any walk of life, some of the children live with their family members, some are orphans and all come from poor backgrounds. Many of the families have a low income and can hardly afford school fees for the children. Volunteers teach in the classrooms - and fit in wherever they enjoy to help out whether it be taking their own classes or assisting teachers or volunteers with their classes. The children are in great need of attention and support, so we find that volunteers really add to making the children's lives a lot happier with having volunteers present. NB This is only an example placement which is one of many offered by IVHQ in South Africa and not necessarily the one you will be working at.

### **IVHQ Orphanage/Childcare Placement: Sunrise Childcare Centre**

Located in Capricorn Township about twenty minutes walk from the IVHQ Volunteer House, this child care centre has over 300 children from ages 2-5 years old. Sunrise Centre looks after children from poor backgrounds where most parents cannot afford to buy food at home or pay school fees, this project runs to provides support to young children in need and assist the classroom teachers with teaching children to talk, paint, draw and make colorful murals. Generally you will be helping out within the classrooms and help with the feeding of the children and providing the children with love and support which some of them lack from their homes. You will be adding to the Childs emotional, intellectual, physical and social needs by being present and offering a helping hand to the small children in need. NB This is only an example placement which is one of many offered by IVHQ in South Africa and not necessarily the one you will be working at.

### **IVHQ Sports Development Placement: Capricorn Pre-Primary school and IVHQ Surf Outreach School**

Located in Capricorn Township and Muizenberg beach area about 20 minutes walk from the IVHQ volunteer house, this school has 550 children ranging from 5-13 years old. Capricorn Primary school selects children from any walk of life, some of the children live with their family members, some are orphans and all come from poor backgrounds. Many of the families have a low income and can hardly afford school fees never mind giving their child an opportunity to learn to surf or play soccer. Although the school does its utmost to provide a decent education for the children, there is a distinct lack of sports activities and extra mural for the children. As a volunteer you will be encouraging the children to play sports and teach children football skills, surfing skills and skate boarding skills. As a volunteer you will be arranging football training and matches for the children at

the school three days a week and then assisting at a surf school teaching the children to surf and swim two times a week (whilst getting unlimited surf lessons and being taught to surf before teaching the children). If you enjoy skate boarding then you can encourage the children to learn to skate and do tricks on the skate board too. This project is fun and enjoyable to do if you love sports and being outdoors. NB This is only an example placement which is one of many offered by IVHQ in South Africa and not necessarily the one you will be working at.

### **IVHQ Surf/Swimming Placement: IVHQ Muizenberg Beach Surf Placement**

Located on Muizenberg beach ten minutes walk from the IVHQ house, this project teaches 80-100 children aged 7-12 years old to surf a week, this is an after school project that welcomes children from all walks of life to join in. Some of these children are homeless and do not have a home to go to, others have homes and attend school at Capricorn Township. With this project we encourage the children to go to school (especially the homeless children) and then they get to learn to surf after school. At the surf school you will get taught to surf before teaching and shown how to teach the children in the mornings and then in the afternoons you will assist teaching 12+ children to surf alongside many other volunteers. This project runs from 10am-12am and then from 2pm-5.30pm daily. The children all come from poor backgrounds where surfing is far out of their reach, so we designed this project to accommodate the poor children that never have the opportunity to surf or swim. You will be assisting in collecting the children from the township and teaching them children to surf, swim and do warm up activities prior to the surf lessons. NB This is only an example placement which is one of many offered by IVHQ in South Africa and not necessarily the one you will be working at.

### **IVHQ Art Placement: Capricorn Art Project**

Located in Capricorn, Muizenberg near Cape Town about twenty minutes walk from the IVHQ volunteer house. The Art project will be at a school which teaches children between the ages of 5-13 years of age. Children coming to the school are less privileged children living in the surrounding area from low income families. Volunteers will be helping an arts teacher with art lessons, drawing, crafts and playing games. Volunteers can also get involved in other activities at the school or assist in teaching other subjects offered at the school. NB This is only an example placement which is one of many offered by IVHQ in South Africa and not necessarily the one you will be working at.

## GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Programs begin on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month but it is advised that volunteers arrive on the weekend before orientation to acclimatize to South Africa before orientation on the Monday. Accommodation is provided from the night before your program starts (for example if your program starts on the 15th of June your accommodation is paid for from the 14th), however if you arrive earlier our staff will organize accommodation for you – normally the volunteer house so you get to meet volunteers immediately and do not have to shift a second time. This accommodation will cost extra but it is not expensive (expect to pay about US\$15 per night - not including meals directly to the local staff when you arrive in country). Once you have booked your flights to South Africa ensure you email your flight details to IVHQ to ensure you are picked up at the airport.

### Orientation

Orientation will begin on the first morning of your volunteer placement. Orientation will be conducted by the local IVHQ staff and cover everything you need to know for your volunteering placement in South Africa – Introduction to South Africa, South African Customs, Language Training (Xhosa and Afrikaans), Rules and Expectations, Safety, Travel Opportunities in South Africa, Introduction to your project and placement. The orientation will also give you a chance to meet other volunteers and swap contact details for weekend travel and socializing.

### Volunteer Week

Day 1: On the first day, volunteers will be taken to the project and introduced to the staff that volunteers will be working with.

A typical volunteer week will be as follows:

- Breakfast with other volunteers will be at 7:00-8am
- Volunteers will leave the house at 8am to walk to the project unless you are doing the Sports Development Project and Surfing Project, which start later in the day (sometimes twice per day depending on volunteer numbers and whether it is school holidays or not).
- Volunteers will get to the project at about 8.20am where they will meet with the staff to plan for the day.
- Work at the projects ends at 12.30pm-5pm. (except for the sports projects in the afternoons which start at 2pm and end at 5.30pm) Volunteers are free to do their shopping, visit places or just relax at the volunteer house in their free time.
- Lunch will be from 1-2pm at the volunteer house with other volunteers
- Dinner with other volunteers will be from 7-8pm every day
- One night per week is social night where all the volunteers that wish will go out for a meal or drinks with local staff members

Weekends are free and volunteers will have time to relax or explore other parts of Cape Town and South Africa. Long weekends can be taken if volunteers need to go on safaris, or travel to places further away in South Africa such as the Garden Route. Sunday is a rest and church day in South Africa. If volunteers wish they can accompany the program staff and township children to their local church. Even if volunteers do not prescribe to the religion of the host family, it is recommended that volunteers attend at least one church service with their host family as an African church service is unlike anything you will ever experience.

## SOUTH AFRICA VOLUNTEER FEES

One of the biggest advantages of volunteering is our great fees! We pride ourselves on our incredibly good prices. IVHQ – Making Volunteer Travel Affordable!

Volunteer Period	Registration Fee US\$	Program Fee US\$	Total Cost US\$
1 Week	220	250	470
2 Weeks	220	350	570
3 Weeks	220	440	660
1 Month	220	520	740
6 weeks	220	720	940
2 months	220	940	1160
10 Weeks	220	1130	1350
3 Months	220	1280	1500
4 Months	220	1670	1890
5 Months	220	1980	2200
6 Months	220	2360	2580

To convert these prices to your local currency [click here](#).

### What do my fees pay for?

Registration Fee (Refundable if you choose not to go) – 24/7 support from IVHQ staff, program marketing costs, information pack, administration costs, travel costs to inspect programs and communication costs with volunteers.

Program Fee – Airport pick up, orientation, program supervision, accommodation and meals during volunteer placement period (meals are not provided during the weekend), In-country 24/7 support and In-country administration costs.

### What additional costs will I have?

Visa, flights, travel insurance (recommended), transfer back to the airport at conclusion of program, vaccinations, souvenirs, spending money (volunteers in South Africa generally find US\$30 to be sufficient for basic weekly expenses).

## QUESTIONS VOLUNTEERS WANT ANSWERED THAT ARE NOT ON OUR WEBSITE (AND SOME THAT ARE).

### Do I need a visa to go to South Africa?

With only a few exceptions, visas are not required for tourism/voluntourism in South Africa. Passports should be valid for at least six months and volunteers will be permitted a 90 day stay, stamped onto your passport (please ensure you have at least 2 full pages in your passport before arriving in South Africa or they may not let you enter). If you are planning on volunteering on one of our longer programs (for example, longer than 3 months), then extensions can be obtained in the Department of Home Affairs in Cape Town. Our local staff in South Africa will help you and guide you when you need to do this. This extension costs approximately US\$60.

### What is the currency in South Africa?

The South African currency is the South African Rand (ZAR). US\$1 is the equivalent of approximately 7.5 South African Rand. There are exchange bureaus where you can change your money. While it is safer to carry traveller's checks (which can be changed at local banks) than cash you can also carry a debit or a credit card for ATM transactions. ATMs accepting international DEBIT and CREDIT cards are widely available throughout South Africa. Our recommendation is to take a small amount of cash (such as US\$200) for "emergencies" but ideally take a debit or credit card (such as MasterCard or Visa) and withdraw money from ATMs as needed. This is the easiest and most cost effective way of withdrawing money and much safer than carrying a large amount of cash with you to South Africa. Traveller's checks (cheques) are also fine but the exchange rates are very bad comparative to withdrawing money or exchanging cash and volunteers have found them difficult to change in some instances.

### I want to get cheap flights! Can you help me?

Although IVHQ does its utmost to ensure you get affordable volunteer fees, quite often the most expensive part of the journey can come in flights getting to and from the country you will be volunteering in. In order to get affordable flights we recommend taking a number of steps:

- If possible try and book in advance. Often airlines will offer cheaper seats on the first few seats sold to encourage sales.
- Use airlines that are based in the country that you are going to. Quite often (but not always) the national carrier of the country you are flying to will provide the most affordable flights. To see a list of low cost airlines visit [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_low-cost\\_airlines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_low-cost_airlines)
- Get quotes from a variety of sources such as local travel agents, online search engines and direct from the airlines themselves.
- If you are travelling to a number of countries, look into getting an "Around the World" ticket. Visit the websites below for more information or enquire at a local travel agent such as STA travel.

<http://www.aroundtheworldtickets.com>

<http://www.roundtheworldflights.com>

- Get quotes from two or three local travel agents. If you are under 26 it is always worth getting a quote from STA travel as they can often get discounts on flights for younger travellers.
- Have a good look online to try and get a good estimate of what you should be paying. You will find that the prices you can get online are often hard to beat. Some great flight search engines include.

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

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

[www.travelzoo.com](http://www.travelzoo.com) (For US residents)

[www.travelzoo.com/international](http://www.travelzoo.com/international) (For non US travellers)

South Africa has a huge amount of Airlines flying in and out of the country, so there is no shortage to choose from. Airlines include; British Airways from London, South Africa Airways, Emirates Airlines from Dubai, Air India from Bombay, Brussels Airlines, Brussels Airlines from Brussels, Ethiopian Airlines, KLM (Royal Dutch Airlines) from Amsterdam, Corsair from Paris, SAS Scandinavian Airlines, SN Brussels Airlines and Swiss Airlines from Zurich. Comprehensive travel agents in your home country will check all these options to find you the best deals.

### **I have never been to South Africa before and am worried! How safe is it?**

Travelling abroad is always an exciting yet nervous time. However, when you are immersing yourself right into the culture through volunteering and living amongst the local community, this apprehension can often be compounded. If you have not done much travelling before it is really hard to know what to expect and many volunteers (and their loved ones) are concerned for their safety and security. Although it would be foolish of us to try and “guarantee” anybody’s safety, we do everything in our power to ensure your volunteering trip is as safe and secure as possible.

As alluded to earlier in this information booklet, an organization such as ours gets requests everyday from organizations around the world requesting partnerships, yet one of the strengths of IVHQ is our selection process. It is a sad fact that there are many volunteer programs with sub-standard accommodation and services even though they charge a small fortune to volunteers to allow them to ‘help’. Every program that IVHQ offers has been personally inspected and selected by the directors from International Volunteer HQ. We have lived in the home stays, experienced the orientations, worked on the projects and built strong trusting relationships with our staff in each of our project countries. If we did not believe the placements were safe enough to send our own children on, we would not offer them.

In the unlikely event that something was to happen, volunteers have various layers of support that they can go through (and people who will help them in the case of an accident).

1. In Country Project Coordinator.
2. Project Staff
3. Host families
4. International Volunteer HQ Program Coordinator. Although we are located in New Zealand, we are here to help you.

Projects are monitored on an ongoing basis to gauge volunteer’s experiences and we are continually improving our placements and projects through this feedback. Security and safety is constantly being reviewed and we have never had any major incidences involving any of our volunteers. During orientation project staff will provide guidance in this area and if you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask. Listed below are some general safety tips.

- Don’t wear much jewellery on the streets – especially gold neck chains.
- Handbags are always a temptation. However if you must carry one, keep it in front of you.
- Be alert.
- Be cautious of street kids, beggars or crowds. Incidents of theft often occur when there are crowds and confusion to distract you.
- Always try to know where you are going before you attempt long journeys. Be especially careful at night.
- Try to keep in groups at night and never walk alone along dark, empty streets.
- The recognized tourist areas can be considered potentially high risk areas for pickpockets and thieves.

- Leave your valuables behind before a night out in the town, or going to the beach.
- For traffic safety, always keep looking to the left and right and walk slowly when crossing the road!

### **Is it easy to keep in touch with friends and family at home?**

Many parts of the country have good communications infrastructure. Internet is provided at the volunteer house at an extra cost. You will be able to easily send and receive emails at the volunteer house and call internationally. You can also use a mobile phone. If you bring a mobile phone that is SIM card compatible you can get a SIM card and a South African mobile number for approximately US\$10 which is great for keeping in touch with other volunteers and also home. Both International and local/long distance calls can be made. NB: The country code of South Africa is +27. You will be guided on this during orientation.

### **Do I require vaccinations to travel to South Africa?**

Yes, we provide you with more information regarding this when you register with us, but below we have the list of recommended vaccinations.

#### Immunizations – Legally Required

Yellow Fever

#### Immunizations – Recommended

Polio

Hepatitis A

Diphtheria/Tetanus

Typhoid

Malaria

Hepatitis B

Tuberculosis (when epidemic)

Cholera (when epidemic)

## VOLUNTEER PHOTOS

They say that a picture speaks a thousand words which is why we post (and get our volunteers to post) pictures for you to see

- Where you will be going
- What you will be doing
- Program coordinator's and their staff
- Volunteer's in the field
- Volunteer's travelling.



International Volunteer HQ has a range of photos taken from the volunteering placements at

<http://www.volunteerhq.org/gallery.html>

Furthermore we encourage volunteers to post their photos on our Facebook group page. There are thousands of photos and videos on our group page

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=18532434512>

## WHERE DO I GO TO FROM HERE IF I WANT TO VOLUNTEER WITH INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER HQ?

To get placed on an IVHQ project and receive all the information that goes with it we recommend you do the following as soon as possible:

1. Browse our great range of amazing volunteer placements at [www.volunteerhq.org](http://www.volunteerhq.org)
2. Select a program that you wish to volunteer on and apply online using our online application form [www.volunteerhq.org/apply.html](http://www.volunteerhq.org/apply.html). (This lets us get some more info from you)
3. Within 48 hours, you will receive an email from IVHQ, letting you know whether there is space on the project you wish to volunteer.
4. If you are successful, you can then pay the registration fee (refundable if you choose not to go) of US\$220. This payment confirms your place on the project and means you won't miss out or have to be shifted to a different project! Your spot on a placement cannot be confirmed until you pay the registration fee. It is also necessary for IVHQ, so we know that volunteers are serious about partaking in the program they have applied for. Once you have paid this registration fee, you will receive a BUMPER sized info booklet detailing everything you need to know for your upcoming placement.

IVHQ is the most affordable international volunteering organisation you will find, however some people associate low price with low quality - not us. A lot of people believe our programs are the best there are - better even than the programs that people pay thousands for! Don't believe us? Read what our past volunteers say about our amazing programs <http://www.volunteerhq.org/testimonials.html>

If you would like to see our volunteers in the field, check out our galleries at <http://www.volunteerhq.org/gallery.html>

If there is anything else we can help you with, do not hesitate to get in contact with us. If you require more information on a specific program check out the website [www.volunteerhq.org](http://www.volunteerhq.org) or email the team and request a preregistration booklet on the specific country you are interested in. If you want us to phone you, simply email us your country, phone number (calling code inclusive), and appropriate time to call and we will get in touch as soon as possible. We look forward to hearing from you.

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PS Join the IVHQ Facebook group - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=18532434512> This group allows you to network with other future, current and past volunteers. Remember you will need a Facebook account to join this group. If you don't have one you can get one easily and best of all - FREE!