

Information packet for the 2009 Thailand mission trip

Packet Includes:

Passport information
Immunizations
Trip details
Clinics



Passports:

If you currently have a passport, please check the expiration date. If the expiration date is within 6 months after the dates you will be traveling out of the country, you will need to RENEW your passport.

If you do not have a passport and are

1. applying for your first one
2. are under the age of 16
3. your previous passport was issued when you were under age 16
4. your previous passport was lost, stolen, or damaged
5. your previous passport was issued more than 15 years ago
6. your name has changed since your passport was issued and you are unable to legally document your name change

You must apply for your passport in person. Please see the following web site for details and locations:

http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_830.html

Most of the locations are post offices but there are other places that you can apply; just see the website.

Please note that there are special requirements for minors that are 17 years old and under (noted on the website above).

Cost for passport:

Age 16 and older first time passport: \$100

Age 16 and older renewal: \$75

Under 16: \$85

Passport photos:

You must provide 2 passport photos for your passport that are the standard 2 x 2 size. You can usually get these taken where you apply in person (I know that my post office does) but they cost \$15. You can go to AAA and get them done for \$10+tax or \$8+tax if you are a member.

Time to get a passport:

The current time to process your application for a passport is 4-6 weeks.

Renewing passports:

If you are renewing your passport and the following are true:

the passport is undamaged and can be submitted with your application

was issued when you were age 16 or older

was issued within the last 15 years

was issued in your current name or you can legally document your name change

You DO NOT have to apply in person. You can mail in your application. If the above statements do not apply to you, you will have to apply in person.

Please go to this website http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/renew/renew_833.html for how to renew your passport by mail.

Vaccinations:

According to the CDC website (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/thailand.aspx>), the following vaccinations are recommended for travel to Thailand:

Up-to-date on routine vaccinations

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis B

Japanese Encephalitis

Typhoid

Malaria drug

Hep A & B are a series of 2 & 3 shots that take a total of 6 MONTHS to complete so it is important to get going on these shots right away. (Please note that I was informed that the last shot in each series is so that you will have lifetime immunity but if it is not taken you will be 95% protected so that would leave 1 shot for Hep A and 2 shots for Hep B required before travel.)

Typhoid is given approximately 2 weeks before travel.

Japanese Encephalitis is 3 shots that need to be started approximately 40 days before you leave.

Malaria: there seem to be different anti-malaria drugs but the suggestion is to see your doctor 4-6 weeks before your trip to determine what needs to be done before, during, and after your trip.

Due to the cost of the shots, it would be suggested to obtain at least the following:

Hep A (can be transmitted through food etc.) \$160 for 2 shots

Typhoid \$75

Malaria \$0 (Prescription for common drug that is covered under the Kroger Free program) You would need to start obtaining the medicine early to acquire enough of the refills to last you through the trip. My understanding is that you start taking the medication before the trip and continue during and after the trip for several weeks.

The following add quite an expense and below are the reasons for not getting them:

Hep B \$450 when combined with Hep A so an additional \$375 over Hep A above (only transmitted through blood and sexual intercourse)

Japanese Encephalitis \$420 to \$600 depending on the type (is recommended if you are going to be in the country for 2-3 weeks or more. Becky Mann said that there have been many groups travel without it and no one has come down with it.)

The costs listed above are the lowest prices I have found at travel clinics (specifically Passport Health on Old Henderson) without insurance coverage (most travel vaccinations are not covered by insurance). However, I would recommend that you contact your insurance company and find out if they will cover anything, especially the Hep A and Hep B series. If they do you can get them at your doctor's office. PLEASE NOTE for the youth, to check with their doctor regarding the Hep A and B because they may need a booster which would be covered under insurance.

Also, I have found that the Franklin County Health Department offers Hep A and B shots at their clinics (see http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/board_of_health/immunizations.htm for details) for much less: Hep A \$31 each and Hep B is \$38 each.

There is an additional counsel fee at the travel clinics so that they can discuss the vaccinations, side effects, and the diseases themselves. That fee is \$26 at Passport travel if you mention you are going with a group.

Orientation:

Having everyone prepared prior to leaving the country is critical to the success of the mission. We will have several meetings before the trip to be team-building experiences and to get to know your traveling companions. In these meetings we can also discuss expectations, logistical issues, and cultural issues.

Itinerary:

This depends on the airline we use. For example, Thai Air/United will have a stopover in Bangkok before flying into Chiang Mai, the arrival destination. If we select China Air or Korean Air, we will fly to Taipei or Seoul and catch a connecting flight directly to Chiang Mai. The team normally rests in Chiang Mai one day and will go up to the village the

following day. Plan to be in the village 5-6 full days, travel back to Chiang Mai, then do one day of sightseeing around Chiang Mai for one day, then return to the US. The village has not yet been selected, but we will know for sure in January. In the village we will be building a water system—digging, trenching, mixing cements, and squat toilets. Both guys and gals will be doing the same things alongside the villagers. The VBS is in the village and we will receive a list of how many children are in the village (ages and gender) to prepare the VBS materials. The typical work day is 6am to 4pm.

Transportation:

The Mann's will meet the group at the airport and escort us to the guesthouse where all work teams from the US stay. The cost is roughly \$20/night and a full breakfast is included. This expense is included in the Mountview estimate of \$2800. The Mann's staff will be driving us to and from the villages as well as around Chiang Mai so we will not have any transportation on our own.

Cash:

Mountview has set the price of the trip at approximately \$2800 per person. This includes airfare, room, food, and transportation from the time we leave Columbus to the time we arrive home. This does not include any "extra" meals outside the standards (like stopping at pizza hut or eating out local cuisine) or shopping money. Personal spending money is up to each individual. We recommend that all cash be carried in a money belt or pouch that fits under clothing so it won't be stolen by pickpockets. Also, cash should be split between being on your person and somewhere else; in case it is stolen you are not without cash. We can exchange USD for Thai Baht when we arrive at the hotel; there are banks/exchange counters everywhere near the hotel. ATMs and banks are available. Cash is better than traveler's checks. Good condition \$100 bills will give you the best exchange rate in Chiang Mai. The current exchange rate is \$1 = 32 Thai Baht.

Time Zone:

Thailand is 14 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time, but they do not have Daylight Savings Time.

Political Climate/Safety:

All travelers are expected to use common sense. Flashing money, jewelry, being loud or anything to draw attention to you is discouraged. It will be obvious we are Americans, but we don't want to become targets of pickpockets or having bags stolen. If Americans are special targets of threats or violence, maintaining a low profile is of critical importance. Travelers might consider avoiding congregating in places associated with Americans, such as McDonalds and should dress and act as inconspicuously as possible in public. We recommend that at all times we travel in groups of 3+ so nobody is ever alone. Thailand is always under some sort of political unrest, but according to the Mann's, Chiang Mai is very safe to travel at all time. Remain updated at the US Secretary of State's website for travel warnings: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

Mountview will require all participants to sign an agreement & release form which, among other provisions, grants Mountview and the leaders the authority to authorize routine or emergency medical treatment. The leadership will have a duty to secure reasonable care and the responsibility to act in the best interest of the participants.

Should a travel warning be issued while the trip is under way, Mountview and the leaders will determine, following appropriate consultation with on-site staff, whether conditions warrant suspension of the trip and/or departure of the participants from the host country. Aside from travel warnings or specific directive by the U.S. State Department and Embassy, the decision to suspend or cancel the trip will also be solely up to leadership based on the following:

1. War against the country where we are a neighbor
2. Significant terrorist activity
3. Inability of the local staff to organize and carry out the mission trip
4. Serious disruptions
5. Widespread civil unrest, violence and/or rioting
6. Anti-American attacks
7. Other dangers to participants
8. Natural disasters

Disciplinary Problems:

We believe that this trip is a mission to reflect Christ in all areas of our lives and we expect that participants maintain a high standard of behavior. In the event of an incident abroad that involves behavioral misconduct or difficulty with local authorities, the leadership will discuss cases where dismissal is a consideration with the staff and Mountview. Upon a decision of dismissal, the participant will be brought to the airport and sent home. In the case of a minor, discussions with the family about logistics will take place. All travel related costs due to dismissal will be reimbursed to Mountview by the person being dismissed.

Personal Preparation:

We advise all participants to please note the following general recommendations for personal preparation prior to traveling:

1. Schedule a medical exam and dental checkup.
2. If you are currently taking medications, talk to your physician or nurse practitioner about arrangements for continuing the medications abroad.
3. Make two photocopies of the passport page that has your name on it. Leave one copy with someone at home, take one with you, and potentially email yourself a copy to an address you can access overseas (like Hotmail, Yahoo, Gmail, etc.).
4. Be prepared in the case of loss or theft of financial resources. Keep important information such as credit card accounts and company phone numbers separate from original documents.
5. While most people have health insurance in the states, it is best to purchase supplemental insurance. This is low cost at about \$40 and covers medical and dental expenses, medical extraction and transportation, and travel insurance. We will inform you of the provider you should use so everyone ends up with the same company for organizational ease.

Medical Availability:

In Chiang Mai, most everything found in a CVS is available in the local pharmacies including over-the-counter antibiotics. It is good to bring your own medicine in case you might need it in the village (Tylenol, cold medicines, upset stomach, diarrhea, personal medication/prescriptions, etc.). The Mann's will provide a detailed medicine list along with a packing list as the trip approaches. The nearest medical clinic will be a few hours away from the village. In Chiang Mai, there are very good hospitals.

Sleeping arrangements:

The participants will be sharing the huts with ITDP staff and villagers. Bring a sleeping bag, and also an inflatable mat if your back cannot handle the hard bamboo/wood floor.

Packing:

Anything we don't need to take to the village will be kept at the ITDP office until we return. It is best to travel with backpacks and duffle bags because they pack well and are soft. You should bring walking/work boots for work, flip flops for shower/bathing in Chiang Mai. More information will be provided at a later date. There is no electricity in the village for us to use, so bring good flashlights with LOTS of extra batteries. In Chiang Mai there will be electricity, but you will need a 220v adapter because none of your stuff will plug into the wall outlets without an adapter. Also, remember when packing, that it will be rainy/monsoon season from June to October. Do expect lots of rain.

Participation:

There are no age restrictions. ITDP once had a 72 year old gentleman celebrate his birthday in the village. Those who cannot do heavy work can help with medical and VBS.

Communication:

We will be able to find email access in Chiang Mai, but not in the village.

Food:

The food will mainly be rice, stir-fried vegetables, meat (chicken, pork, and beef occasionally), and eggs. We ask that you let us know any specific diets (no meat, food allergies, etc.) so that meals can be prepared accordingly. Bring snacks (trail mixes, granola bars, dried beef jerky, nuts and dried fruits, power bars, etc.).

Customs:

Thailand is a Buddhist country. One must show respect to the Buddha statue as well as the monks. The Royal family is well-loved and respected. Remember that Americans' rights are not extended to Thailand (like the freedom of speech). For instance, saying something derogatory about the Royal family is punishable by 3-15 years in prison. Socially, you do not touch people's heads or sit with your legs crossed so as not to point your toes at anyone who is facing you. We will have an orientation for the group at the office prior to leaving for the village to go through all the Dos and Don'ts.

Vaccination Clinics

Clinics	
1	Dublin Family Practice 6760 Avery Muirfield Drive # A Dublin Ohio 791-9952
2	OSU Thomas E. Rardin Family Practice Center 2231 North High Street Columbus Ohio 293-2700
3	Travel and Immigration Clinic(Near Mount Carmel West) 745 West State Street Suite 610 Columbus Ohio 224-9052
4	Travel Health Service 7219 Sawmill Road Suite 105C Dublin Ohio 889-6911
5	Passport Health 1550 Old Henderson Road Suite N133 Columbus Ohio 326-0902
6	Franklin County Health Department (http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/board_of_health/immunizations.htm for locations)

Clinics	1	2	3	4	5
Hep A	\$105 per/ 2 shots	\$136/shot 2 shots required	\$120/ shot 2 needed but could get by with 1	\$95/shot 2 shots for lifetime – 1 needed for travel	\$80/shot 2 shots required with 6 months apart
Hep B	Combined w/ Hep	\$136/shot 3 shots required	\$75/shot 2 shots needed	Combined A&B shot \$150/shot 3 shots required	Combined A&B shot \$150/shot 3 shots required
Typhoid	\$65 for oral	\$106 1 shot needed	\$90.00	\$95.00	\$75.00
Jap. Encephillitus	\$3 shots with total	\$202/shot 2 shots needed must be 28 days apart	Special order between \$500-600 total	\$300/shot 2 shots required (This is newer version with far less side effects)	Not recommended unless spending 2-3 weeks or more in country \$140/shot 3 required(side effects can be nasty)
Malaria	Perscription	perscription	perscription	Perscription	Perscription Could be free from Krogers but would have to work at getting refills before you left or up to \$40 with weekly pill
Administrative	\$40 council	\$66 for council \$30 administrative for 1 st shot \$23 administrative for each add. shot type		\$45.00	\$26 council if working with a group