

Welcome to the Dominican Republic!

Where will we be traveling?

The Dominican Republic is a Caribbean nation that shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti to the west. It is made up of 29 provinces, and it is run as a representative democracy, with elections every 4 years. The country is the home of Merengue music, is predominantly Christian, the national language is Spanish, and the national pastime is baseball.

Santo Domingo: We will be staying in Santo Domingo, the capital, approximately 20 minutes from Las Americas Jose Francisco Pena Gomez International Airport. Santo



Domingo is located in the Distrito Nacional province, which is on the southern border of the country on the coast of the Caribbean Sea, and is home to the president's office, the Zona Colonial (a famous and beautiful colonial district), and nearly 3 million Dominicans.

Villa Verde: Most of our week will be spent in Villa Verde, located approximately 45 minutes north of Santo Domingo. It is a privilege to be accepted into this new community. They are looking forward to partnering with our teams to build an independent, sustainable medical infrastructure and lasting relationships.

Food: Food is an important part of Dominican culture, and much of what we will eat during our time is traditional Dominican fare. Rice and beans, plantains, fruit, scrambled



eggs, chicken and pork are dietary staples. Many team members have found it helpful to bring granola bars or meal bars as well as fiber supplements from home.

Water: As in most developing countries, the tap water is not potable. Please refrain from using it to drink or brush your teeth. We will provide bottled water. Do not flush toilet paper down the toilet, remember to place toilet paper in trash.

Communication: Cell phone service will be available in Santo Domingo. If you plan to use your cell phone service while abroad, we recommend contacting your cellular carrier about the global service plans offered. Some team members have found it useful to download WhatsApp, a cell phone app that allows users to text via the internet even when they don't have cell service. 911 is still the first contact in case of emergency, and 1411 is directory services.

Money: The official currency of the Dominican Republic is the Dominican Peso, denoted as RD\$. To get the conversion, you can visit [XE Currency Converter](#). Exchanging money in commercial banks, exchange houses and hotels is legal, and the exchange rate is determined by the Dominican Republic's Central Bank and market conditions. It is best to use cash and not credit cards, as there is a high risk of credit card fraud. \$100 cash should be enough for snacks, any alcoholic beverages, and souvenirs you buy during the week (see: Budget Breakdown).

Photo Ethics: Travel in other countries provides for many opportunities to take photos, but when taking photos of individuals in communities, we need to be mindful of our intentions and usage of photos. Any images that have faces of individuals that you intend to use require spoken/written approval. View a video tutorial on items to consider when taking photos abroad.

<http://www.rustyradiator.com/social-media-guide/>

Contact Information: Community Empowerment Leaders

Stephanie Crane
Stephanie_Crane@rush.edu
312-623-9433

Alfredo Hernandez
alfredo@community-empowerment.org

Jennifer Towbin
Jennifer_Towbin@rush.edu
504-352-6288

Babs Waldman
babs.waldman@gmail.com
847-687-8544

Packing List

Personal Items:

- ☐ Passport
- ☐ (2) copies of passport & airline tickets
- ☐ Toiletries: soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrush & paste, feminine products
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Insect repellent with 30% DEET per CDC recommendations
- ☐ Towels: Washcloth (bath towels are provided)
- ☐ Personal meds: NSAIDS, Benadryl, allergy meds, antacids/antidiarrheals
 - ☐ Zofran (for nausea)
- ☐ Toilet paper: 2-3 rolls (for clinic)
- ☐ Earplugs (shared rooms)

Clothing:

- ☐ Scrubs for clinic (one set per day)
- ☐ Seasonal clothing; sweat wicking material is great, as it is very hot/humid
- ☐ One outfit for a night out
- ☐ Bathing suit
- ☐ Socks & underwear
- ☐ Comfortable, close-toed shoes for walking (tennis shoes or work boots)
- ☐ Flip flops for possible beach day
- ☐ Sweatshirt or jacket for nights
- ☐ Raincoat
- ☐ A bag or backpack to bring your phone, passport, and medical supplies to clinic

Medical Supplies:

- ☐ Stethoscope
- ☐ Penlight/Pens
- ☐ Copy of medical license or hospital ID
- ☐ Medical Spanish dictionary if needed
- ☐ Trauma shears and Oto/ophthalmoscope (if you have them)

Miscellaneous:

- ☐ Spending money or credit card for souvenirs (if desired- there are ATMs in Santo Domingo with good exchange rates)
- ☐ Snacks/granola or meal bars and fiber supplements
- ☐ Plastic bags for dirty clothes
- ☐ Travel games, books, headphones for downtime after clinic
- ☐ Suitcase with medications
- ☐ Mosquito tent for bed (if desired)

What **NOT** to Bring:

- ⊗ Bottled water
- ⊗ Expensive jewelry or other personal valuables
- ⊗ Bed linens or pillow

Packing tips:

- ✓ Use duffel bags or sturdy luggage that can sustain a beating
- ✓ Pack as lightly as possible to accommodate medical supplies

Travel Smart, Travel Safe

Evacuation Insurance:

Per policy, evacuation insurance is required for all Rush trainees in all programs, and strongly encouraged for everyone else. Depending on your trip, the cost is usually about \$60-\$80.

Malpractice Insurance:

The Rush captive policy will cover students and residents who are acting within the scope of his or her duty on behalf of RUMC. This policy has a worldwide territory, however will only respond to suits that are brought within the US, its territories or possessions, or Canada. In non-legal terms, this means that if a patient sues and the suit is brought in a US court, that provider is covered. If the suit is adjudicated in the country of origin and is not one of the above exclusions, the provider is not covered. Having said that, there is not a culture/system of medical malpractice litigation in the countries we serve, and while possible, a lawsuit would be extremely unlikely.

Malaria, Cholera, Dengue, Zika: What You Need To Know

First, understand and minimize your risk: ensure that all of your routine vaccines are up to date- these include the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine (Tdap), varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot- and wear insect repellent with at least 30% DEET per CDC recommendations. The CDC does recommend that medical personnel travelling to the Dominican Republic be vaccinated for Hepatitis A and Typhoid as well as take malaria prophylaxis; that said, many experienced trip leaders opt not to take prophylaxis because risk in the areas we work in is very low. In July 2016, the New England Journal of Medicine published a thorough review called Medical Considerations Before Travel- check it out at the link below. Also included is the link to the CDC pages on Zika and recommendations specific to travelling to the Dominican Republic.

Travel Advisory

We recognize that travel to the Dominican Republic poses certain risks and that the U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory recommendations change fairly often. We take maximum precautions and do everything we can to ensure your safety, however you do travel at your own risk. We are in constant communication with our partners in the Dominican Republic, and if we feel that the current climate poses grave danger to our team members, we will cancel a trip. You can stay up to date on the U.S. Department of State's warnings at the website below.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/dominican-republic-travel-advisory.html>

Information & Resources

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMr1508815#t=article>

<https://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/dominican-republic>

Money Matters

Your Budget includes:

- Lodging (2-8 persons per room)
- Transportation to and from the airport.
- Daily transportation to the work site.
- Orientation materials.
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Purified water.
- Administration cost: 3 month planning with a full time coordinator, telephone, fax, Internet, visits to the site both pre and post trip for planning & evaluation, etc.
- Tips/gratuities

Your Budget DOES NOT include:

- Telephone calls or phone cards.
- Any R&R activity outside of the Endeavor planned itinerary.
- Any alcoholic drinks.
- Departure taxes.
- Food outside meal times.
- Any other transportation service.

Please make a Venmo or Quick Pay transfer WITH YOUR NAME ON IT to:

Quick Pay: info@community-empowerment.org or (224-999-3235)

Venmo: [@C_empowerment](#)

OR

Send a Check or Money Order 2 weeks prior to trip departure date to:

Community Empowerment
Attn: Babs Waldman
8 Milburn Park
Evanston, IL 60201

Budget Breakdown

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u># Days</u>	<u>Total Per Person</u>
Housing	\$35	6	\$210
Breakfast/ Lunch/ Dinner	\$30	7	\$210
Water	\$10	-	\$10
Transportation: van	\$110	-	\$110
On-site Logistics Coordinator	\$50	-	\$50
CE Admin Support	\$360	-	\$360
		TOTAL:	\$950.00

