

2026 Obras Program Orthopedic Teams Information Guide

This document provides a brief overview of what to expect when serving on an Obras team in Guatemala. Please also read the **Volunteer FAQs** prior to completing your application.

Faith In Practice may deem it necessary to adjust the guidelines as needed during the year. Thank you for your flexibility, understanding, and willingness to work within these parameters.

Recruiting

Faith In Practice Obras surgery team leaders will elect to operate out of up to 5 operating rooms. If you would like to consider running 6 ORs please contact Faith In Practice first.

Team size: 35 - 52 U.S. volunteers. The max capacity we can hold at the Quinta is 52 US volunteers. That is using two volunteers to one king/queen bed. It is essential you consider the team make-up/team size when recruiting your team. **Please check with your Faith In Practice staff contact about your hotel reservation prior to recruiting more than 45 volunteers.**

Roles to recruit for each Operating Room:

- Surgeons: 1-2
 - Primary/Lead surgeons are required to have a minimum of 5 years' experience in their surgical field specialty.
- Anesthesia Provider: 1*
- Physician Assistant/First Assist: 1 (as needed)
- Scrub tech/nurse: 1
- Nurse Circulators: 1

*Anesthesia Team: Anesthesia team must include at least 2 MDs, and there must be at least 1 ADDITIONAL anesthesia provider than number of ORs you plan to use.

Other Roles required to recruit for the team

- OR Director: 1
- Post-op/PACU: 4-5
- Convalescent Ward Physician/NP: 1
- Pharmacist: 1
- Ortho Implant rep: 2-3 (**Faith in Practice will place 2-3 Zimmer reps from corporate with each orthopedic team planning to do hips/knees**)
- Physical Therapist: 5
- Spiritual Leader: 1
- Photographer/Blogger: 1 – 2 (can be filled by one person)
- General Support: 2 (if you have non-medical volunteers interested in joining your team and you have already filled your non-medical roles, general support staff can help out at Casa de Fe).
- Translators/interpreters: based on Spanish proficiency of the medical professionals

Specialties

Most Needed Orthopedic Specialties (in no particular order)

- Hip – primaries and revisions. Revision cases will only be given to specific surgeons.
- Knee – primaries and revisions. Revision cases will only be given to specific surgeons.
- Trauma
- Arthroscopic/Sports Medicine
- Foot & Ankle
- Shoulder
- Spine
- Hand

Other Specialties or Possible Clinics

- Dental Providers: If you are interested in learning more about adding a dental component to your team, please let us know. Please note that all dental supplies will need to be procured by the dentist/team
- Mobility Clinics: We have determined which teams will have a mobility clinic. The team leaders have been notified if their team will have a mobility clinic and the roles the team leader(s) will recruit.

Staying Healthy

Faith In Practice strongly encourages all volunteers to be current with the vaccination schedule outlined by the CDC, including routine flu and pneumonia vaccines. Please refer to the Center for Disease Control for traveling to Guatemala at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/guatemala>. The CDC has extensive and valuable information related to travel in Guatemala, and Faith In Practice encourages all volunteers to review this site. Faith In Practice also urges all volunteers to consult with their personal physicians for specific, individual advice regarding medical precautions.

Please review the **Illness During Mission Protocol (IDMP)** for additional information that outlines expectations and steps to be taken when a communicable illness may be present among the FIP staff, US volunteers, or Guatemalan volunteers during a medical mission.

Please note that the rainy season in Guatemala runs from May through October. These are the months that mosquito borne illnesses are commonly the most prevalent. Similar to the US, increases in mosquito activity and mosquito-borne illnesses in Central America happen every year around this time. Faith in Practice volunteers are reminded to use mosquito repellent and to cover their arms and legs at all times

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Face masks are required to be worn at all times in the ORs at the hospital. The most up-to-date protocols will be provided to you and the team during your team orientation in Guatemala.

Supplies & Medications

It is critical the team leaders and medical professionals on the team review the Medication and Supply lists of items that Faith In Practice will provide for each surgery team. It is the team's responsibility to determine what additional medications and/or supplies are needed for your mission week and for the specialties you plan to bring. If there are additional items your team needs, we ask for the team to procure the items to bring with them for the trip.

The **2026 Medication and Supply list** for surgery teams will be available in the fall of 2025. The information will be listed on the Faith In Practice website at https://www.faithinpractice.org/volunteer_resources/.

Our surgery program staff will connect with the team leader(s) three to four months prior to the mission week to set up a call to discuss in detail the medications, supplies, and equipment the team will need for the mission week. Anesthesia Directors, OR Directors, pharmacists and other team members may be asked to join these calls.

Flights and Travel Requirements

A visa is not required for U.S. citizens entering Guatemala. Your U.S. passport must be valid at the time of entry and exit out of Guatemala. We recommend having a minimum of 6 months validity on your passport when you enter Guatemala. For the most up to date information on US passport information to enter Guatemala, please visit the Travel.State.Gov website for travel to Guatemala.

If your passport is from a different country, please check with your state department on requirements to enter Guatemala.

We ask volunteers **not to book flights** until they are officially added to the team in the database and receive a confirmation email stating that they have been added to the team.

It is very important for team members to make every effort to arrive to Guatemala on the team flight or on a flight that is within the same timeframe. Faith In Practice is not able to support multiple pick-ups from the airport or arrivals prior to the mission week.

When leaving Guatemala, team members should depart on flights within the same timeframe and ride the team bus to the airport. In the event that a volunteer is unable to depart with the team on the departure date due to geographical limitations or limited flight options, Faith In Practice can set up individual transportation for a team member for an additional fee.

Volunteers extending their stay in Guatemala will be required to make their own proper accommodations. Faith In Practice is not responsible for arranging accommodations or financially contributing to arrangements outside of the official team dates.

Hotel/Lodging

There will be double occupancy rooming during the mission week. Each U.S. volunteer can expect to have a roommate during the mission week.

Ground Transportation

We continue to work with many of the same providers and some new providers. Public Health regulations regarding public transportation, including shuttle buses, will be occupied at full capacity.

All team members must be on team transportation.

Share The Mission

Share The Mission (STM) is Faith In Practice’s volunteer fundraising program and serves as a vital source of funding that helps provide life-changing healthcare to patients in Guatemala. Through donations and prayers from volunteers’ family and friends, STM directly supports the costs associated with medications and supplies, patient transportation and housing, follow-up care, mobility aids, and other essential operational needs. All volunteers are encouraged to create a personal fundraising page and invite others to participate in the mission, with resources and support available through the Share The Mission toolkit and at sharethemission@faithinpractice.org.

We will strive to keep these Information Sheets updated.

*For more detailed information about our 2026 teams—and answers to the most frequently asked questions from your team members—please refer to the **Volunteer FAQs**.*

Pictures from teams serving at Las Obras

