

2027 Obras Program 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 4 or 5 operating rooms. Some Faith In Practice Obras teams will be sharing the Obras with another organization. Team size: 35 - 50 U.S. volunteers. The max capacity we can hold at the Quinta hotel 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.**

It is critical that when you are recruiting for your team, you are securing all critical roles to run the number of desired ORs. If a team cannot recruit appropriate roles, staff will work with the team leader to scale down the OR plan. Faith In Practice cannot guarantee hire of roles the team does not recruit.

Please see the recruiting guidelines below for Obras Teams.

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
- Convalescent Ward Physician/NP: 1
- Pharmacist: 1
- Spiritual Leader: 1
- Photographer/Blogger: 1
- Interpreters: 5 (based on Spanish proficiency of the medical professionals)

Specialties

Most-needed specialties within our scope of care at Las Obras Hospital. Referral specialties can fluctuate throughout the year.

- GEN & Pediatric GEN
- URO & Pediatric URO

- Less GYN and more URO/GYN
- ENT & Pediatric ENT (pediatric highest need)
- Orthopedics (various sub-specialties)

Other Specialties or Possible Clinics

- **Dental Providers:** If you are interested in adding a dental component to your team, please let us know. There is a functioning dental clinic at Obras that a dentist and dental assistant/hygienist can utilize but we need to check with the Obras that your team will be able to use it during your designated mission week. Please note that all dental supplies will need to be procured by the dentist/team.
- **Mobility Clinics:** Select Obras teams will include a mobility clinic component. Your Houston staff contact will notify you if this applies to your team and will confirm the roles the team leader(s) need(s) to recruit. Please note that if a team does not recruit all critical mobility clinic roles, staff may cancel the clinic. This decision will be made at least 60 days before your trip.
 - 3 PTs/OTs
 - 1 Medical Provider (either MD or NP)
 - 3 Assemblers
 - 4 interpreters, based on the Spanish proficiency of the PTs/OTs and medical provider.
- **Audiology Clinic:** If you have brought an audiologist in a prior year, please let us know if you are interested in bringing audiology back in 2027. Teams bringing audiology will need to bring batteries, aids, and supplies.

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 information and resources provided by Faith In Practice regarding illness and communicable diseases that may occur before, during, and immediately following your mission trip. These resources outline expectations and steps to be taken when a communicable illness may be present among Faith In Practice staff, U.S. volunteers, or Guatemalan volunteers.

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 the specialties you plan to bring during your mission week.** If there are items your team needs that are not provided on the medication and supply workbook, we ask the team to procure the items to bring with them for the trip.

The **2027 Medication and Supply list** for surgery teams will be available in the fall of 2026. The information will be listed on the Faith In Practice website at https://www.faithinpractice.org/volunteer_resources/.

Roundtable Call with Team Leaders and Team Members

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. Team Leaders should plan to invite members from their team to join the call, including; Anesthesia Directors, OR Directors, pharmacists and other team members critical to the discussion of medications, supplies, equipment, OR plan, patient recruiting, etc.

Flight 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 have been officially added to the team in the database and have received a confirmation email. Your team leaders will designate the team flights to and from Guatemala. To help ensure smooth logistics and minimize transportation costs, volunteers are strongly encouraged to arrive and depart on the designated team flights or on flights that arrive or depart within one hour of the team's scheduled flight times.

If a volunteer is unable to travel on the designated team arrival or departure flight, Faith In Practice may need to arrange separate transportation to and/or from the Guatemala City airport. A transportation fee will apply to volunteers requiring individual airport transportation. This fee will be passed along to the volunteer.

Volunteers who choose to arrive in Guatemala before the official mission start date or extend their stay beyond the mission end date are responsible for arranging their own accommodations and transportation outside of the official mission dates. Faith In Practice is unable to arrange or financially support accommodations outside the scheduled mission dates.

Ground Transportation

Obras teams will walk to and from the hospital each day. We ask that the team stay together when walking to or from the hospital. Please be in groups of three or more when walking around in Antigua.

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.

Quality Assurance Standards and Guidelines

Faith In Practice has a Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to support the organization's mission in Guatemala. The QAC supports with issues that may occur related to quality care and the vetting of volunteers who serve in medical roles. The QAC reviews any incidents that occur when the teams are providing patient care in Guatemala. This includes both patients and volunteers.

Any event that is of concern or that compromises or directly affects patient care, volunteer health, volunteer safety, or volunteer conduct must be documented on an Unusual Occurrence Report form provided by the in-country staff. Submission of an Unusual Occurrence Report is required when an unusual or unexpected event occurs. Team Leaders are responsible for ensuring that an appropriate Unusual Occurrence Report is completed and submitted whenever an unusual occurrence or unexpected event takes place during the mission week. Team Leaders must work with the volunteer providers and/or other team members involved to ensure that the report is completed accurately, thoroughly, and in a timely manner. When appropriate, Team Leaders should also be available for any necessary follow-up related to the unusual occurrence.

Members from the Quality Assurance Committee will follow up with the Team Leader or provider regarding the unusual occurrence report and any necessary follow-up. All team members and Team Leaders are expected to read the Quality Assurance Manual before their trip. The Quality Assurance Manual can be found in the volunteer portal.

Share The Mission

Share The Mission (STM) is Faith In Practice's volunteer fundraising program and a vital source of support for our mission of providing hope and healing to patients in Guatemala. At its heart, Share The Mission is exactly that-**sharing the mission**. Whether you are serving with Faith In Practice for the first time or have participated for many years, STM provides an opportunity to share what connected you to this work, why you have chosen to serve, and the Faith In Practice story with your family, friends, colleagues, churches, and broader networks.

By sharing the mission with others, volunteers help introduce new people to Faith In Practice, deepen existing relationships, and invite their networks to **invest in the mission and help grow the community of support that makes our work possible**.

Funds raised through Share The Mission support the broader costs of making our medical mission programs possible, including medications and supplies, patient transportation and housing, follow-up care, mobility aids, and other mission-critical needs. Each Share The Mission page gives volunteers a personal platform to tell the Faith In Practice story-sharing what inspired them to serve, what they hope to experience or have experienced through the mission, and why they believe this work is worthy of support.

Mission team members are encouraged to create a personal fundraising page and invite their networks to become part of the Faith In Practice story through prayer, advocacy, and financial investment.

When you share what connects you to Faith In Practice, you Share The Mission—inviting others to join us in serving God by serving those in need in Guatemala.

Additional resources and instructions for creating your Share The Mission page will be provided as you prepare for your mission.

Questions can be directed to sharethemission@faithinpractice.org.

We will strive to keep these Information Sheets updated.

*For more detailed information about our 2027 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

