

## 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 flying into Las Americas Jose Francisco Pena Gomez International Airport, which is about 20 minutes from the capitol, Santo Domingo. 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.



**Peralta:** Most of our week will be spent in Peralta, a mountain village in the Azua province, located about a two-hour drive northwest of Santo Domingo. We have a well-established relationship with the community in Peralta, and will be working in a clinic in the village as well as in the surrounding areas that have even less access to healthcare. We will be staying as a group in a house on a hill in the village; there is running water and electricity in Peralta, but it is not always reliable.

**Food:** Food is an important part of Dominican culture, and much of what we will eat during our time in Peralta is traditional Dominican fare. Rice and beans, plantains, fruit, scrambled eggs, chicken and pork are dietary staples, much of what we eat is grown or raised in the community, and there is always coffee at breakfast that is grown by the farmers living in Peralta. While in Peralta, we eat all three meals, which have been prepared by members of the community. On our way from Santo Domingo to Peralta, there will be an opportunity to buy snacks for the week; many team members have found it helpful to bring granola bars or meal bars as well as fiber supplements from home.

**Communication:** Cell phone service is dependent on where we are working for the day; the internet is available in certain parts of the hospital in Peralta; there is no service available at the house. Trips working in Azua should have Wifi at the hotel. The group leader will have access to a working cell phone in the case of an emergency. 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](mailto:Stephanie_Crane@rush.edu)

312-623-9433

Jennifer Towbin

[Jennifer\\_Towbin@rush.edu](mailto:Jennifer_Towbin@rush.edu)

504-352-6288

Alfredo Hernandez

[alfredo@community-empowerment.org](mailto:alfredo@community-empowerment.org)

Babs Waldman

[babs.waldman@gmail.com](mailto: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
- Flashlight with batteries
- Earplugs (roosters outside the house in Peralta are very loud in the morning)

### 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 outdoor shower
- 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)

**Packing List (continued)**

**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, 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.

### Information & Resources

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMra1508815#t=article>

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

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

## Money Matters

### **Your Budget includes:**

- Lodging (2-4 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, visit to the church hosts both pre and post trip for planning & evaluation reasons, 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.
- \$10 fee to enter country at airport





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

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

Venmo: [@C\\_empowerment](https://www.venmo.com/@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

A large, faded version of the Community Empowerment logo is centered on the page, serving as a watermark. It consists of the same stylized 'C' and bars graphic as seen in the top right, with the words 'community' and 'empowerment' stacked below it in a light gray, lowercase, sans-serif font.

community  
empowerment

## Budget Breakdown

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u># Days</u>	<u>Total Per Person</u>
Housing	\$35	6	\$210
Lunch	\$15	7	\$105
Dinner	\$15	7	\$105
Water	\$10	–	\$10
Transportation: van	\$110	–	\$110
On-site Logistics Coordinator	\$50	–	\$50
CE Admin Support	\$320	–	\$320
Recreational Day	\$40	–	\$40
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$950.00</b>