

Adventures in Missions Dignity Guidelines

Stories are powerful. Words are powerful. God created the world with words. And you can bring Kingdom here on earth by letting the Master Storyteller write your extraordinary life story - all you have to do is share it!

Think of these social media Dignity Guidelines as a resource to help you tell stories in a way that brings dignity and honor to the communities and people that you will serve all over the world.

Here at Adventures in Missions, we exist to mobilize a generation of radical Christ followers, discipling and training them to establish the Kingdom of God. We use the vehicle of short term missions and other discipleship programs to accomplish this.

We are committed to thorough social media training before Training Camp, during Training Camp, Launch, and while you are on the field. Throughout your time serving with us, you will be equipped with the necessary resources to know how to tell stories in a way that both honors God and brings dignity to the people that you serve. If you have questions, your leadership team is available to help you discern if the stories you want to share are honoring.

We expect participants to comply with these standards, but we get it, we're all human and sometimes we get so excited that we post before we think it through. If that happens, your Mentor, Squad Leader or Team Leader will reach out and ask you to remove the post in question. We'll go over the Dignity Guidelines with you to make sure we're all on the same page and then we'll head back onto the field and continue sharing about Jesus.

But if it keeps happening, we will have to walk through a disciplinary process and it may possibly lead to being removed from the field and/or organization.

But let's not focus on the negatives here! We're confident everyone wants to bring dignity and honor with them wherever they go - so keep being you - keep sharing the Good News and keep telling these awesome stories.

Ready to get started?

Ministry Interaction Guidelines

If you're a participant, you've recently said "yes" to God's invitation to bring the Gospel to the nations - maybe even to some of the most remote places on the earth.

You're about to witness some of God's most beautiful creations. You'll meet a diverse array of people and most likely, your worldly perspective will change drastically. You'll learn and grow and experience freedom in ways you've never experienced before. You'll make friends all over the world and hear stories that will change your heart.

You'll have a unique opportunity to become advocates for people, places, and ministries. Sometimes it can feel confusing knowing what is culturally appropriate in each country. We designed the following guidelines to help you create a safe and honoring environment wherever you are serving - and whether the camera is out or not!

Our ministry leaders and partners will also provide additional guidelines for being culturally sensitive in regards to showing affection to men, women, and children in their specific country. You will receive this culture briefing once you are in country. We work alongside our ministry partners to ensure you are well equipped and ready as you enter each country.

Here's the complete list of Ministry Interaction Guidelines:

1. Be attentive to the perception and appearance of the relationships you establish with the children and adults you serve. For everyone's protection, it is important to avoid even the appearance of inappropriate conduct.
2. Be aware of the various cultural sensitivities of the country you're visiting and avoid behavior which could potentially be interpreted as flirtatious, unwelcome or sexual in any manner. *For example:* in some countries, it is considered flirtatious to point a certain way, to hug, or to show your ankles in public.
3. Respect the parents'/guardians' relationship with their children, and do not interfere with parenting matters without expressed consent from your ministry host.

4. Adhere to your mission trip dress code. Dress codes are set based on cultural relevance, not to limit you, but to honor the ministries we serve and for the safety of all we serve.
5. Do not give cash directly to any children, families, ministries, or church members. If you feel led to give financially, consult your ministry host for the proper way to do so. Our goal is to avoid creating patterns of dependency and ensure we are truly aiding sustainable ministry opportunities in the future.
6. Do not hire men, women, or children for any purpose without express consent of local host.
7. You must not exchange personal information with children. This age range includes from birth-18 years old. This includes email, social media, addresses, phone numbers, etc.

What happens if I mess up?

We understand that it can feel overwhelming as you enter into a new culture and have to process all the different new norms - and sometimes these norms are vastly different than what you grew up with. But that's why we have trained staff members, Dignity Guidelines and many trainings lined up to help you navigate each new culture.

However, **we do expect you** to hold up your end of the bargain by complying with the above Ministry Interaction Guidelines. Each situation will vary depending on the circumstances but generally, the first violation will signal communication between you and your Squad Leaders and Mentor. From there, you and your leadership team will build an action plan to ensure you are honoring your host, your team and the ministry you are serving. If these guidelines are continually broken, it can possibly result in removal from the field.

We're confident your heart is in the right place and you want to bring dignity to the community you're serving, so don't feel nervous that you're going to mess up. We're here to help you, not "catch" you! So take a deep breath, and relax, you're going to do great!

Posting Guidelines

Everyone has a story to tell - and everyone's story is worth telling. The story you are currently living is an incredible story of God's love and work here on earth - and it's not yours to keep.

Revelation 12 says that in the authority of Jesus, we have *"triumphed over the accuser by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony."* By sharing the stories of what Jesus is doing, we can further triumph over the enemy and bring freedom to others.

So if your story is worth sharing, then, *"Why does it matter what photos you take or post online?"*

The truth is, many potential abuses can occur from media getting in the wrong hands. Seemingly innocent photos and videos of children and adults have put people in harm of sexual exploitation, abuse, and trauma of various kinds.

Even with good intentions, you can accidentally dishonor and disrespect someone by taking or posting a photo if you do not understand their culture and societal norms.

Please hear our heart, *we don't share this information with you to scare you from taking pictures*, but rather to provide some context of why it is important to know more about the culture you are serving before taking pictures and posting them online.

In today's highly advancing digital world, social media and blogs are used to process our experiences, to show our friends, family, and supporters what we're up to in real time, or just to share something that looks cool or unique. All of these things *can* be good.

However, for the safety and dignity of those you meet, it's *important* to consider whether the story or image you are sharing is safe, dignifying and honoring to that person.

When shooting video, photos or telling stories, it's important to not only think about what you want to capture, but how your interaction as a photographer affects the people you are with.

Even if you have permission and follow all official policies, you are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the impact of your social media images are respectful to all people.

Here's the complete list of Posting Guidelines:

1. When you arrive at a new ministry location, do not capture any form of media before your cultural briefing.
2. Please develop relationships and know the names of the people you are photographing.
3. Ensure your goal is God's glory, not building a name for yourself.
4. Do not post the personal information of any child you meet. This includes, but is not limited to, their last name, identification numbers, specific medical conditions, child measurements, home address, school name, community and village landmarks, or parental place of employment.
5. Refrain from posting pictures of children without the parent's consent.
6. Refrain from sharing personal information about any adult you meet. This includes, but is not limited to, their last name, identification numbers, specific medical conditions, size measurements, home address, school name, community and village landmarks, or place of employment.
7. If you do not have consent from someone to take their picture, don't post it. If you are unsure if you should post a photo, ask a ministry leader first. It's always better to create a personal photo album to remember your mission experience off-line and not post images publicly if safety is a concern.
8. Please do not take pictures of people's homes/huts/etc. to show the severity of poverty.
9. Show respect and compassion for culture and the people you are serving. Portray people with dignity. They are partners and brothers and sisters. Ask questions: *Does this photo show this person/place in a positive light?*
10. Show people their picture! (And try to give them a copy. Polaroids are great!)

Here's the complete list of the Media Captions Guidelines:

1. We want to avoid telling stories that we don't have context around. The honest truth is that we don't know what it is like to live in poverty and we need to honor the boundary and not exploit poverty.
2. When sharing stories on your blog or social media, change people's names and blur out faces if you don't have that person's permission to share their story or photo.
3. Please do NOT share orphanage names, and ask permission before sharing any other host ministry names online.
4. If ministering in an orphanage, the red-light-district, or with any known survivor of abuse/trauma based on your ministry partner's knowledge, you must, **ALWAYS use a fake first name and ALWAYS blur faces when sharing testimonies online; even with consent and permission to share.**

Before posting, ask questions like:

1. Does this glorify God and does it honor the people and culture I am sharing about?
2. What might be a better caption that could shift the narrative to make God the hero?
3. How might this post be perceived if a local saw it / read it?
4. If this was my child/sister/mother, etc. would I want someone to post this story on social media?
5. Should I remove the #11n11 hashtag to honor the ministry I am representing by keeping personal stories for my personal followers?
6. Am I in dress code / dressed modestly?

One helpful way to process whether or not a story should be shared is to wait a few a few days or even a few weeks before posting. This allows you to have time to think through your time spent in that country and decide on which pictures and stories should be told online and to your supporters.

If you're ever unsure if a post is within the guidelines, we encourage you to journal or scrapbook the photos so you can share with your family and friends once you return home.

What happens if I post the wrong thing?

We're here to help you navigate what is honoring and what brings dignity to the people you serve. While we want you to have the freedom to share all the stories that touch your heart, we have these Guidelines in place to help you discern the right things to post.

If a post is uploaded online that doesn't comply with these guidelines, your leadership team will reach out to discuss the post. Each situation will vary depending on the circumstances but generally, the first violation will signal communication between you and your Squad Leaders and Mentor. From there, you and your leadership team will build an action plan to ensure that you are honoring your host, your team and the ministry you are serving. If these guidelines are continually broken, it can possibly result in removal from the field.

Please note: Adventures in Missions reserves the right to ask you to remove any public posting that might bring harm to the people, ministries, and communities visited during your mission trip.

We're excited for you as you get ready to answer the call God's placed on your life to share Jesus' love with the nations. We know that you're going to tell a beautiful story about what He is doing throughout the world.

We're here to help and if you have any questions about the Dignity Guidelines, be sure to reach out to your leadership team. They will be happy to discuss them with you. We want to support you with the necessary tools and resources you will need so that your time spent overseas is a blessing to the ministry partners you will serve alongside and the people that you will meet.