

The Committee on Mission Support

Grant Program Handbook

A resource for understanding the various types of mission outreach grants funded by The Presbytery of North Central California through the Committee, including funding levels and the various criteria applicable to specific types of grants, including copies of various policy agreements for mission trips and certain types of events.

- ✓ Mission Trip and Event Participation Grants
- ✓ Cents-Ability Hunger Alleviation Grants
- ✓ Special Project Support Grants

[Grant Applications are downloadable from the Presbytery's website.]

Published by the Committee on Mission Support

Purpose

Micah 6:8 (CEB)

He has told you, human one, what is good and
what the LORD requires from you:
to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with your God.

Matthew 28:19-20 (CEB)

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age.

The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness.

In light of this charge, the presbytery has responsibility and power to:

- a. *provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.* This responsibility shall include... providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in the [area] of mission
- c. *nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ.* This responsibility shall include... assisting congregations in developing mission and participating in the mission of the whole church...

-Selections from the PC(USA) Book of Order G-3.0301

The Vision Statement of the Presbytery of North Central California

Beloved by God, redeemed by Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Presbytery of North Central California is called to build bridges and connect deeply with each other as we worship and serve together in the name of Christ; nurture mature leaders and healthy congregations to proclaim the Gospel to all people; entrust ourselves and each other to the goodness and sovereignty of God as we live into the hope of God's Realm.

Rationale

The Presbytery of North Central California has established the coordination of mission as a priority for the work of the Committee on Mission Support. Part of that responsibility is to consider grant requests to support the work of congregations or ministries within the presbytery. Grant requests can be from individuals for personal mission or from a congregation or leader for group mission. In making a grant, the Committee on Mission Support considers itself in partnership with the requesting individual or organization. As such, recipients represent the Presbytery of North Central California and are expected to conduct themselves with integrity, inquisitiveness, and a heart for service.

Special Note on Mission Trips. Mission trips are wonderful opportunities for both mission outreach to a particular people and location as well as an effective tool for evangelism and spiritual growth for those who participate. Because of this reality we recognize there may be those participating on trips who have little to no experience with Christian faith. That does not diminish the importance of providing faith development or spiritual reflection opportunities on mission trips. In fact, it provides a unique opportunity to reflect the light of Christ. Behavioral expectations are the same for all persons participating in missions sponsored by the Presbytery.

This handbook provides basic expectations for mission teams sponsored or funded by the Presbytery of North Central California. Teams are encouraged to go above and beyond these basics, and tailor covenants and expectations specific to each team.

2022 Grant Program Opportunities:

1. Mission Trips, Conferences, and Event Participation
2. Cents-Ability Hunger Alleviation Grant – For application within Presbytery’s boundary.
3. Special Project Support Grants – For targeted mission outreach needs locally and beyond as well as hunger alleviation beyond Presbytery.

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Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Its Procedures – Its Application to Presbytery Entities and Requirements

Special note is made of the requirement for Mission Trip applicant groups or individuals to understand, plan for, and comply with the requirements applicable to all interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults found in the document **“Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Its Procedures.”**

The Committee on Mission Support of the Presbytery of North Central California has adopted the following policy to be adhered to related to any mission trip or event funded entirely or partially by the Presbytery:

All entities of the Presbytery of North Central California who apply for a Presbytery’s Committee on Mission Support grant in support of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult event shall be familiar with, plan for, and apply the policies and procedures of the “Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Its Procedures” to the event specific to the grant.

As complying with the policy requires considerable planning time to ensure (examples: a Safe Child Response Team, minimum age gaps between child/youth workers and appropriate age differences to youth or children, safe environmental considerations, travel, conduct, social media rules, background checks, etc.), it is advised that event planners involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults be sure to allow sufficient time to ensure that the denomination’s policy will be in place including working out accommodation needs at a venue to provide a safe experience for all.

A current copy of the policy may be found on the presbytery website under Forms and Publications as well as through the General Assembly website.

In addition to compliance with this denominational policy and its “Signing of Policy and Application to Serve” requirement (page 11 of the document), all mission trip personnel involved in a mission trip or event aided through this grant program (including leaders and volunteers) shall sign the Presbytery’s separate Sexual Misconduct Policy Form (found in the Appendix of the Committee on Mission Grant Program Handbook).

Advance Planning

(adapted from “Not all Trips are Created Equal,” Short-term Mission Conference, 2003)

The first thing to consider is what you hope to accomplish in this mission experience.

What are your goals? Here are some suggestions to consider:

- **Service:** to help the poor; to give hands-on serving experience; to offer a needed skill; to offer Christian witness through our presence, deeds, and testimonies.
- **Discipleship:** to see a community in action; to deepen commitment to Christ; to teach servanthood; to see a global vision of God and the Kingdom; to confront “cultural Christianity.”
- **Deepen Involvement:** to establish relationship; to investigate further involvement; to hear and learn about God’s work; to discern how we can be involved.
- **Vision Casting:** to expand your view of God’s Kingdom; to ignite a church’s mission vision; to learn and to be inspired

Five Important Components

There are five essential components to preparing yourself or mission team for a mission trip: spiritual preparation, trip details, cultural learning, and team bonding. This preparation should begin several months before departure. A team leader requesting funds should make time for each of these components during orientation. You don’t have to label each component or keep them separate, but it is important that each meeting touches on all areas. An individual requesting funds should make time for each of these components during the preparation period (including Team Bonding **and orientation** if you are to become part of a larger group).

1. Spiritual Preparation

A cross-cultural experience of mission will be faith-stretching because we are forced out of our own worldview and into another. It’s best to begin preparing for and anticipating the faith challenges of cross-cultural mission very early in the preparation process. Prayer, reflection on pertinent scripture passages, and individual journal-keeping are all vital ways to prepare for what God will do in and through your team.

Remember, spiritual preparation should be done individually and as a group. It is also important to plan for a daily time of worship, prayer, scripture reading, and spiritual reflection during the trip.

2. Partnership Coordination

A key component to any mission trip experience is the realization that we are not bringing Jesus to a particular place; rather, we are given the honor to participate in what

God is already doing in that community. Thus, it is imperative that the trip leader(s) facilitate a partnership and receive input from the leader(s) from the church, ministry, organization, etc. who have unique knowledge of the culture and community to be visited. This will require communication well in advance of the trip to ensure inclusion from all parties involved. Such coordination is vital to avoid misunderstanding, confusion, and/or an unsafe environment.

3. Trip Details

Leaving town without making sure you have all the plans in order invites trouble. Making decisions on the fly increases the anxiety of participants and distracts from attention to the core purpose of the trip. Details of travel should be communicated at orientation meetings and all necessary paperwork completed. These things are best prepared before the meeting and then presented at the meeting. Details and logistics are important, but don't let them consume your orientation time.

You also want the mission team to be prepared for the specific projects, meetings, responsibilities, or activities they will be doing on the trip. If you need to prepare a children's program, learn to swing a hammer, or lead a worship service take time in the meeting to work together on those efforts.

4. Cultural Learning

When outside of our own culture for a time, we suddenly are faced with unusual and even confusing new cultural norms. Even when we are visiting a culture that is similar to our own, the differences will seem significant. The best way to prepare for the cultural change is to learn as much as possible about the place and the people you will meet. Take the time in your meetings to learn and share about the place and the people—the language, history, social customs, religion, food, music, current events, etc.

It is particularly helpful to learn some of the basic phrases in the language of the people you will be visiting. Saying, “hello,” or “thank you,” in the language demonstrates your willingness to learn and your respect for their culture.

Having an open conversation with the group about the cross-cultural process, cultural sensitivity, and the cultural stress you may encounter is also important. You should not assume that the group will “go with the flow,” because it's harder to go with a “flow” that is strange to us. In addition, most Americans do not fully appreciate or understand the cultural baggage we carry with us. Preparing to be humble learners and listeners is a key to a successful mission trip.

5. Team Bonding

No doubt during the time of travel and cultural stress, there will be opportunity for conflict. The goal is not to eliminate the conflict, but to be bonded well enough as a team to be able to handle conflicts with grace and love as they arise. A part of your

Christian witness to the community you serve is the expression you give to the Body of Christ. “They will know we are Christians by our love.” Creating relationships among all team members is crucial to a positive cross-cultural experience and positive witness to Christ. Times of sharing and prayer can be helpful, as well as interactive activities which create space to get to know one another.

6. **On Applying Required Policies.** Provide sufficient time to ensure the application of denominational and presbytery policies related to child, youth, or vulnerable adults and to obtain pre-event acknowledgements and required form(s).

Tips for Planning Orientation Meetings for Mission Teams

- **Orientation meetings should be held a reasonable time ahead of departure and, if minors are participating, open to their parents or guardians as well.**
- Do not allow the entire time to be consumed with logistical planning. While this is essential to a successful mission trip, no one enjoys a meeting that is mostly concerned with details. Logistics are best worked out *before* the meeting, and then reported *briefly* at the meeting.
- Always make time for prayer. Prayer should not be a tag-line at the end of the meeting, but an important exercise for the whole group. Prayer is a way to prepare spiritually and bond as a team. You may consider having participants choose a prayer partner to commit to pray for one another until the next meeting.
- Be sure that you (the leader) do not do all of the talking. Prepare good open-ended questions ahead of time and allow time for everyone to respond. Be a facilitator of conversations. Be aware of the person who tends to dominate conversations and others who are quieter during meetings. Do your best to facilitate equity in conversation.
- Try to plan activities or conversations that integrate more than one of the components. For example, asking “What are your expectations for this trip?” at the first meeting opens up spiritual conversations and facilitates team bonding.
- For language learning, do a search online to find language learning resources, or invite a native speaker to come and help your group learn some basic phrases.
- Regardless of your group’s diversity or length of time together, the Mission Support Ministry Team requires that the following topics be discussed during orientation prior to creating the group’s covenant: sexual harassment, bullying, racism, and individuals with special needs.

- **Group Covenants.** It is recommended by the Committee on Mission Support ~~Ministry Team~~ that a team leader facilitate a group discussion during orientation to create the group's covenant. Experience has shown that youth and adult team members are more likely to abide by a covenant that they themselves have ownership in. All topics shown on the sample covenant in this handbook should be addressed creatively by the facilitator. A scribe may type the covenant during the discussion, making sure the entire group is in an agreement before leaving a topic and preparing a printed copy for each participant to

sign at the next orientation meeting. This model for writing a covenant is used very successfully at PC(USA)'s Montreat Youth Conferences.

Emergency Planning

Regardless of the best planning and preparation for a mission trip, something can go wrong.

1. An individual requestor must be prepared and make contingency plans in case a trip is cancelled, an emergency comes up that prevents the requestor from attending, or the requestor is unable to complete the mission activity for a variety of reasons. Much of this can be addressed with trip and medical insurance acquired before the mission activity. If a requestor is unable to attend a mission trip where grant money was received, the expectation is that the requestor will return the granted money to the Presbytery.
2. A team leader requestor must consider all scenarios where a mission trip might have failure and be prepared with contingency plans.

Scenarios could include evacuations for medical or behavioral reasons, transportation breakdowns, loss of leadership, weather conditions, political unrest, etc. Much of this can be addressed with reserved funds set aside for such emergency.

3. Emergency planning includes the requirement of the "Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Its Procedures" that each event or activity for minors have a trained Safe Child Response Team (see page 6 of that policy document).

Criteria for Disbursement of Presbytery Grant Monies

Goal: The goal is to distribute the monies entrusted to the Committee on Mission Support by the North Central California Presbytery in a faithful and due-diligence manner so all qualified persons and groups may have access.

Policy: The policy is to prayerfully consider every request that comes before the committee and to disburse the allocated monies in a manner to offset some of the expenses (not all) so as many people as possible can be a part of God's mission in the world. There is an expectation from the Mission Support Ministry Team that each requestor has some "skin in the game" with their own money and seeks money from other sources such as their own congregation. **Therefore, grants are normally considered for up to one-third support by Presbytery (as below). However, for group requests (two or more persons), participants from outside this presbytery are expected to look to their presbytery or denomination's structure for support.**

Parameters for Requests: (All funding parameters depend on the funds allocated by Mission Support to its grant year.)

- (1) Personal requests will be considered for short-term mission trips, travel study trips, peace conferences, Big Tent or similar events within the purview of mission. The committee expects each requestor to have other sources of funding, including personal funds, and therefore will consider funding a function up to one-third
- (2) For PCUSA mission functions that involve two or more participants from the Presbytery, Mission Support can grant up to one-third of the total cost, depending on the funds allocated by Mission Support for its grant budget and its ministry sub-areas.
- (5) A single requester cannot receive more than twenty percent (20%) of the committee's available funds (its grant budget) within a calendar year.
- (6) Due to limited grant funds, priority may be given to churches/NWCs that support the denomination's special offerings and benevolences.

Excess Funding

If more money is granted to a requestor than required (based on original grant assumptions) and less persons attend the trip/event, or other expected expenses are lower than originally planned, the expectation is that any excess granted money be returned to the Presbytery

Reporting and Interpretation

Reporting

Churches, worshiping communities, and other presbytery entities are asked to transmit a written post-event or post-project application report on any program for which the presbytery's Committee on Mission Support granted funding or purchased specific items or services.

Reports should be directed to the current Mission Support chairperson within 30 days of the end of trips, events, and program support disbursal.

Prompt written reporting is an important requirement as it enables presbytery to evaluate its over-all mission program and is a basic accountability tool.

The written report should include at least a narrative evaluation (things that went well and/or didn't go well and what was learned).

Specific to mission trips or events: Include a copy of group covenant(s) and a reflection on how the participants/ faith was challenged and nurtured, including but not limited to daily time of worship, prayer, scripture reading and spiritual reflection (how the spiritual preparation component of the trip or project time referred to on page 3 was carried out). Also included should be financial documentation that includes, but is not limited to:

Original Anticipated Expenses	\$ _____	
Amount Granted by Presbytery	\$ _____	(___ % of total raised)
Amount Raised by Sponsor(s) and Participants	\$ _____	(___ % of total raised)
Total Expenses	\$ _____	
Actual Expenses	\$ _____	

Note: Expense receipt copies should be attached to the financial report.

Should actual expenses end up being less than anticipated, the Committee on Mission Support may ask for the return of a proportion of the funding. (Also, please note the Excess Funding policy on page 9 regarding events involving less participants or other expenses than funded.)

The grant process attempts to make funds available to as broad an audience as possible. To accomplish that, we try to keep Presbytery grants to no greater than one-third of expenses as given in the grant proposal. (See Criteria for Disbursement of Presbytery Grant Monies [page 9] for applicable request parameters.)

Interpretation

Near-Term: Recipients of Mission Support grant funding should also plan on presenting a report on their mission trip or program experience directly to the presbytery. The scope and timing of these presentations, which are joyous milestones of the over-all presbytery journey, should be coordinated with the Mission Support chairperson. Every effort will be made to accommodate both the presbytery docket (or the Mission Support agenda) and grant recipient presenter(s).

Longer Term: Additionally, grant recipients whose experience would be helpful to other churches or worshiping communities that consider or plan similar or complementary programs may be asked to be a resource.

Sexual Misconduct Policy Certification Form

(To be signed by leaders of and participants in mission trips and events funded by the Presbytery of North Central California)

Definitions Related to Sexual Misconduct

Sexual harassment is defined for this policy as follows: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or a condition of an individual's employment or their continued status in an institution;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy and its procedures include the following:

1. Child sexual abuse.
2. Sexual harassment, as defined above.
3. Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.
4. Sexual conduct (such as offensive, obscene, or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling) that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.
5. Sexual malfeasance defined as sexual conduct within ministerial (e.g., clergy with a member of the congregation) or professional relationship (e.g., counselor with a client; lay employee with a church member; presbytery executive with a committee member who may be a layperson, a minister, or an elder). Sexual conduct includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

This definition is not meant to cover relationship between spouses, nor is it meant to restrict church professionals from having normal, mutual, social, intimate, or marital relationships.

Volunteer is the term used for persons who provide services and receive some benefits (e.g., food, shelter, transportation, risk management insurance, or the like) but no remuneration. For purposes of this policy, volunteers are treated the same as employees.

Please complete the following certification: I certify that (a) no civil, criminal, or ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct; and (b) I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Note: If you are unable to make the above certification, you may instead provide a description of the complaint, termination, or the outcome of the situation and any explanatory comments you care to add.)

Mission Trip Participant Form
The Presbytery of North Central California
Waiver of Liability, Emergency Form & Medical Treatment Authorization

Participant's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Parent/Guardian (if under 18): _____ Relationship: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: (____) _____

The Presbytery of North Central California, an entity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is sponsoring the _____ (trip name) on _____ (dates) (hereinafter referred to as the "Program").

In consideration of the opportunity to participate in the Program, and in consideration of other obligations incurred, hereby agree as follows:

1. I fully understand that I may be traveling or staying in areas of the world that may have unstable political, economic, and security situations where acts of war, potential danger from lack of control over local population, terrorism, or violence could occur at any time.
2. I fully understand that I may encounter difficult climates and living conditions; that risks are present concerning means of travel, food, water, diseases, pests, and poor sanitation and other health-related situations. Medical or emergency medical treatment may be inadequate or not available.
3. I accept and assume all responsibility for my personal actions and any and all risks of property damage or personal injury that occur during or resulting from my participation, including potential injury while working.
4. With the above in mind, I fully understand and agree that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the General Assembly, all of its entities, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a Corporation, the Presbytery of North Central California, the Sponsor, their staff members, successors, assigns, officers, agents, representatives, ministry divisions, and entities (hereinafter referred to as "PC(USA)") shall not be responsible or liable in any way for any accident, loss, death, injury, or damage to myself or my property in connection with the Program, or any portion of the Program, even if said injury or action is due to the alleged negligence of PC(USA). Further, I do hereby agree to indemnify and hold costs and expenses (including, without limitation, reasonable attorney's fees) of whatsoever kind in connection with the Program or any portion of the Program. Further, I make this agreement on behalf of my heirs, agents, fiduciaries, successors, and assigns. I waive, knowingly and voluntarily, each and every claim or right of action I have now or may have in the future against the PC(USA) related to the Program, even if such claim or right of action is caused by PC(USA)'s alleged negligence.
5. I hereby state that I am in good health and have all medications necessary to treat any allergic or chronic conditions and am able to administer such medications without assistance. If at any time during the program I need emergency medical care and am not able to give consent because of my physical or mental condition, I authorize emergency medical care decisions to be made on my behalf, and I specifically release PC(USA), in making those emergency medical care decisions, from any and all liability associated with said decisions, even if injury or death is the result of PC(USA)'s alleged negligence.
6. This document does not release the PC(USA) from gross negligence.
7. **I HAVE READ CAREFULLY, AGREE TO, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INTEND TO BE LEGALLY BOUND BY ALL TERMS OF THIS WAIVER OF LIABILITY, AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE AUTHORIZATION.**

Health Insurance Co: _____ Group Number: _____

Phone Number: (____) _____

Primary card holder _____ SS# of insured _____

Primary Doctor: _____ Phone (____) _____

Note: I understand that my personal insurance is primary.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____

(if participant is under 18 years of age.)

Date: _____

Sample Covenant

(Trip Destination)

(Dates of Trip)

Covenant for Community Life

During this time, we will be living together, youth and adults in a Christian community. Christian community is based on love, respect, trust, and support. Each of us as a member of the community is important. Our belief that such a unique experience to travel, serve, and learn together will strengthen our individual and collective witness as the Church of Jesus Christ. The witness of our host church and partner organization is also to be considered in our conduct within their communities.

I commit to:

1. Pray for our host and those we will meet while traveling.
2. Ask my community for prayers as I prepare for this journey.
3. Interpret my trip experience to my community and church upon my return.
4. Share photos and reflections with others about my experience.
5. Be fully prepared by studying all pre-travel and trip materials recommended by the trip leaders.
6. Refrain from bullying other members of the group.
7. Speak to and about others with affirmative language, refraining from racially insensitive or inflammatory remarks.
8. Respect our hosts and community by refraining from illegal drug use, consuming alcohol, or smoking if not of legal age. Those of legal age who wish to consume alcohol covenant to do so responsibly and only in the evenings as part of a meal or informal gathering. Those of legal age who smoke covenant to do so only out of doors, away from others, and only in locations where permitted.
9. Refrain from inappropriate sexual behavior, including sexual intercourse with anyone other than my partner/spouse.
10. Participate in all scheduled activities including the trip orientation and debriefing.
11. Assist the community by participating in tasks while traveling.
12. Grant permission that my image, name, and voice may be reproduced and distributed for a variety of purposes, all of which may be available on the Internet.
13. Play music or use electronic devices (e.g. smartphones, cameras, flash photography) with the consideration of others in mind.

In a community based on love, respect, trust, and support, each participant is responsible for his or her own actions. I understand that I will be sent home (and that I will bear any expense or

financial loss incurred by being sent home) if I fail to abide by the rules and regulations set forth in this covenant.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Evaluations

Trip Destination _____
Trip Leader _____
Dates of Trip _____

Please return evaluation to:
Committee on Mission Support
Presbytery of North Central
California
9983 Folsom Blvd

How did you find out about this trip?

Your responses to the following will help us improve future programs. Please circle the number that most closely matches your experience and comment on that item. Thank you!

1= Much room for improvement
7= Fully satisfactory

- 1. Fulfillment of my expectations for the trip, given the trip purposes: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 2. The program activities of the trip: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 3. The registration/payment of fees process: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 4. Pre-trip material and orientation for preparing for the experience: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 5. Travel arrangements and accommodations: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 6. Leadership of the seminar/trip
(if more than one, please rate and comment on each)
- Name: _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Name: _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Name: _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comments:

7. What do you wish you had known ahead of time?

8. The most significant parts of the trip for me were...

9. My greatest disappointment was...

10. I plan to share what I learned and experienced in the following ways:

DOCUMENT UPDATE INFORMATION

Document Version	Section Reference	Sub-Section Affected	Change Date
July 1, 2021	Throughout	To reflect name of the new presbytery. Document source: Handbook of the Presbytery of Sacramento Mission Support Group.	07/01/21
July 15, 2021	Throughout	Updated committee name	07/15/21
October 5, 2021	Throughout	To include hunger and special project grants – re-title and contents updated.	10/5/21