



## **Adult Short-Term Trip Policy of Midland Evangelical Free Church**

### **Introduction:**

It is the belief of the GMT that short term trips, if done well, can introduce the goer to global missions, getting them to engage more fully in this portion of God's work of making his name famous globally. These trips can also provide encouragement and support for the Christian workers in the area of the trip, and they can help draw unbelievers in this area toward the Christian workers. Because of this the GMT will set aside some budget money toward short term trips. The guideline established here is that the budgeted amount should not exceed 10% of the cross cultural budget. The GMT portion of the restricted missions money is by design designated toward short term trips and is not considered in the calculation of the 10%.

### **This policy will cover**

- Funding Formula
- Scholarships
- Trip Expenses
- Field Selection
- Team Member Selection
- Team Leader Selection
- Pastoral Staff Participation
- Congregationally Developed Trips

### **Funding Formula**

There are 3 components to the funding: GMT Funds, Personal Contribution, and Support Raising. The GMT will set each of these for each trip.

#### **GMT budget for short term trips**

The amount of GMT money in the budget and from the "Restricted Missions Funds" (aka "the bucket") will be designated by the GMT. The GMT portion should be less than one third of the total cost of each trip.

#### **Personal Contribution**

The team leader can ask the GMT to change the amount that is split between the personal contribution and the support raising. Absent any such request each team member is expected to contribute the set amount prior to departure. The team leader could set a payment schedule with 2 or 3 payment due dates if desired. The personal contribution should be between \$500 and \$1000 and

be proportional to the total cost of the trip. Personal contributions are considered donations to the church and as such are not refundable. Past practice was to require a \$25 deposit with the application but this was dropped in 2013.

The team leader contribution will be set by the GMT and may be lower than the other members of the team in recognition of the additional work that the leader does to make the trip happen.

### Support Raising

All members of the team are expected to participate in support raising for the trip. Trips that don't meet the support raising target as a whole team prior to departure will need to close the gap after the trip either through personal contributions or further support raising. Each member is responsible for their own "gap" but the team leader can decide to do this as a team.

Money raised above the target level will reduce the GMT contribution not the personal contribution. The excess financial resources will not be used to add ministry activity to the agenda of the trip unless the team leader gets approval from the GMT.

The main activities of fund raising are letter writing and participation at the annual rummage sale. Other means of raising support are possible - the balance between effort and money raised needs to be considered as does the number and types of fund raisers taken to the congregation. Each fund raiser needs to be approved by the GMT.

### Scholarships

Scholarships not to exceed 1/2 of the personal contribution can be given at the discretion of the GMT. The request for the scholarship should go through the team leader to the focus team leader (if applicable) to the GMT.

### Trip Expenses

Typical trip expenses may include:

- Overnight training / team building trip
- Supplies for training such as books / devotionals
- Debrief day
- Team shirts
- Gifts in-lieu of lodging expenses
- Ministry supplies
- Travel to and from ministry and lodging including reimbursement for gas to and from airport
- Food in transit and during the ministry time

- Travel Insurance in the name of the participant

A budget for the trip should be developed estimating the trip costs. This will be used to set the levels of the components of support. If the actual expenses for the trip are significantly different than the budget the team leader needs to communicate this to the GMT (and focus team if applicable) for their direction on how to proceed.

#### Field Selection

The primary focus will be to use the short term trips (STT) to support our long term strategies such as an adopted people group, global compassionate care, workers sent from MEFC, or the exploration of new focus areas. As such the main source of the trips will come from the various focus teams. Since funding may not allow a trip for each focus team each year a rotation may be necessary.

#### Team Member Selection

An application process will be used to gather interest in the trip. An interview process is recommended but if there are fewer applications than openings on the team the team leader may waive the interview process. The team leader should review the candidates with the GMT prior to acceptance on the team.

Background checks may be done for any team and should be done for any trip with significant interaction with children such as a vacation Bible school type event. Existing background checks on file with the church will meet this requirement.

The team leader will make the final decision of the selection of the team. The team leader is responsible to notify all applicants of the result of this decision.

The range of the number of participants will be determined during the initial planning of the trip and will be based on the limits set by the workers in the ministry area, the ministry planned, and other practical constraints.

Other things may determine the specific make up of the team but with other factors being similar preference will be given to people who are active in the ministry of MEFC, those who have not been on a previous trip, MEFC members, followed by regular attendees.

People who do not attend MEFC may participate on the team but no GMT portion will be allocated for them. The funding for the non MEFC person will consist of personal portion and fundraising or their expenses may be paid by another organization such as their church. The team leader owns this decision. This is expected to be the exception and not the general practice. Clear communication to staff is needed in these arrangements.

At no time will the GMT allow a trip to leave if the team consists of two people of opposite gender that are not married. While it is our preference that teams do not have only one person of a gender on the trip we will not prohibit this, but we will expect the team to take extra precautions to prevent a situation that may appear inappropriate.

#### Team Leader Selection

The GMT shall approve the trip leader.

Previous trip experience is expected and they must be a member of MEFC.

#### Pastoral Staff Participation (Pastors or directors)

A pastor may participate on a trip for several different reasons. The decision process and GMT funding will vary based on the reason for them going.

##### Reasons and funding:

- As a part of their job such as a missions pastor - GMT budget will provide all of the funding.
- To address an issue with a MEFC sent worker - GMT budget will provide all of the funding (this could be a pastor or a pastor and spouse or other person selected for the situation)
- Part of a development plan supported by the pastors' supervisor - No personal contribution but they will participate in fund raising. They will not be asked to personally cover any shortfall.
- Their own desire to go on a trip - funding will be per the normal process.

The issue of whether a pastor needs to use vacation time or if it is considered paid time is not the decision of the GMT.

Church staff may go on a trip and will be considered as regular team members unless supervisors determine it is job related. Funding will be considered on a case by case basis between the GMT, Executive pastor and supervisor.

#### Congregationally Developed Trips

Trips that are initiated from members of the church that are not on the GMT or one of the focus groups will be considered. The general criteria of supporting one of our focus areas, a worker sent from MEFC will still govern the use of MEFC funds.

#### Revision Information

This version was approved by consent 11/7/2017.