

****Print out and carry in carry-on luggage.****



**Amigos de las Américas
Panama: El Pacifico and Costa Rica: La Bahia
Travel Procedures**

AMIGOS Hotline for Travel Day Support

If you are lost or your flight is delayed or canceled, dial:

1-888-AMIGOSL (264-4675) OR (832) 549-0218

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION THOROUGHLY!

Notes on Unaccompanied Minors

All volunteers traveling on the Panama: El Pacifico and the Costa Rica: La Bahia project are 13 or 14 years old. As such, they are considered “unaccompanied minors” by United Airlines. Unless individually communicated otherwise, each AMIGOS volunteer will fly as an unaccompanied minor from their home destination to Houston (IAH) and back. (Note that this may not apply to volunteers traveling to/from SFO or originating in Houston at IAH.)

The international flight from Houston (IAH) to Panama City (PTY) or San Jose (SJO) will be chaperoned by an AMIGOS staff member.

Recommended reading before travel:

United Airlines Unaccompanied Minor travel information can be found at this link:

<https://www.united.com/ual/en/us/fly/travel/special-needs/minors.html>

Preparing to Travel

As soon as you receive your volunteer’s airline ticket...check it immediately! Double check the following:

1. Does it have the correct spelling of your volunteer’s name?
 - a. Please disregard any discrepancies in spacing, hyphens, or apostrophes. Airlines do not include special characters on airline ticket reservations.
2. Does it have the correct travel day?
3. Does it have the correct flight/city information?

If not, email AMIGOS Headquarters as soon as possible at travel@amigosinternational.org

Luggage Considerations:

- Check the airline’s website for detailed information on prohibited items as well as bag size and weight limits.
- Carry-on bags must not include liquids or gels over 3 oz., knives, aerosol cans, scissors, matches, lighters, or tools.
- Write your volunteer’s name and address (both home address in the USA and local Panama or Costa Rica address) on and in each bag. Colorful tags or ribbon will help you

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identify bags. This local address is specific to each project and will be sent to you in an email one week before your departure.

Day of Travel Preparation

What to bring and what to wear:

1. A teal or turquoise bandana to wear or tie on your backpack.
2. Print out and pack in your carry-on bag:
 - This **Travel Memo**
 - Your current **passport** and **travel documents** and ALWAYS keep them with you.
 - Do not put them in your checked bag. Make electronic copies of your passport and all travel documents in case they get lost. These documents are needed on the way home, too.
 - If your volunteer has a new or recently renewed passport, make sure that they have signed the page above their photo.
 - **Original signed & notarized** "Power of Attorney and Parent Permission to Travel" and "Single Parent Affidavit" (if submitted) forms in the carry-on bag.
3. Bring cell phones for communication with the Travel Team while in transit.
4. Bring a **credit/debit card** to pay for baggage fees (if needed) and food in the airport or on the plane.
5. Bring an extra set of clothing, toiletries, and medication in case checked bags are lost.

Travel Day Procedures – Departure

Airport Arrival Procedures:

- Please pay close attention to the date and time on your itinerary!
 - Note that all red-eyes require you to be at the airport the night before your project start date. For example, if your project starts on June 8th and your flight leaves at 12:30am on June 8th, you need to be at the airport on the night of June 7th.
- Always wear a mask while traveling and follow all COVID-19 safety procedures.
- Arrive at the airport at least 3 hours prior to your volunteer's flight departure.
- If the flight is delayed, call the Travel Support Hotline at 1-888-AMIGOSL (264-4675) immediately!! **Save this number to your phone!**

Check In

- Unaccompanied Minors are not permitted to check in online. You must check in your volunteer at the airport.
- Be sure to have travel documents – passport, flight itinerary, Unaccompanied Minor (UNMR) fee receipt – in a safe place in a carry on!
- **FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS**
 - Upon arrival, proceed to the United Airlines check-in counter, where you'll be able to check-in your volunteer, check their luggage, and receive a "gate pass" to travel with your volunteer through security.
 - Since they are an UNMR, you will have to travel with them through security and drop them off at their departure gate with a United Airlines desk agent.

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- At the check-in counter, the agent should see in their system that the UNMR fee has been paid in advance. DO NOT PAY THIS FEE.
 - Have a copy of the receipt in your email (sent by AMIGOS) accessible should they request additional information.
 - If you have any issues with this at check-in, please call the Travel Hotline for assistance.

Luggage

- Most volunteers will automatically have bags checked through to their final destination. It is best practice to verbally verify that with the agent at check-in.
- Many flights include a checked bag, but you may be required to pay for checked luggage upon check-in. Additional fees may apply for overweight bags or for a second bag. These baggage fees can only be paid with a credit/debit card. Please see the table below for destination specific baggage fees.

Airline	Country	Baggage Fee
United Airlines	Costa Rica	1 st Bag: \$35
	Panama	1 st Bag: No fee

*Baggage fees can also be paid for your volunteer’s return trip during check-in. Please let the agent know that you want to pay for their return baggage fee, and they will give you a receipt to present at the airport for your volunteer’s return trip.

- Instruct your volunteer to be sure to keep their baggage claim ticket with them until they have picked up their bag at their final destination.

Gate Drop Off

- Arrive at the correct departure gate at least 60 minutes before your volunteer’s departure.
- Unaccompanied Minors will board the flight first.
- Parents/guardians must wait until the flight is in the air to leave the terminal per United Airlines’ policy.
- Remember: if the flight becomes delayed, call the Travel Support Hotline at 1-888-AMIGOSL (264-4675) immediately!!

Gateway City Arrival Instructions (Houston)

- You arrive in Houston as an Unaccompanied Minor. This means that you will be escorted off the flight by a United Airlines representative.
- An AMIGOS staff member will be waiting at your arrival gate to receive you. This staff member will be pre-arranged with United Airlines as the “designated adult.”
- You will walk with the AMIGOS staff person to meet the rest of the group at the international flight departure gate.
- The group will fly together from Houston (IAH) to Panama City (PTY) or San Jose (SJO) with an adult AMIGOS chaperone.
- When all the volunteers have arrived safely in Panama City (PTY) or San Jose (SJO), parents/guardians will receive an email from our On Call Health and Safety Team (oncall@amigosinternational.org).

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Travel Day Procedures – Return Home

What to Do: Day of Project End – Pick-Up Volunteer at Home Airport

On the way home, the international flight from Panama City (PTY) or San Jose (SJO) to Houston (IAH) will be chaperoned by an adult AMIGOS staff member. In Houston, AMIGOS staff members will support each volunteer as they make their connecting flights home.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

To pick up your Unaccompanied Minor volunteer at your home airport:

- Please arrive at the airport at least 2 hours before flight arrival
- Make sure to bring your photo ID – this is required to pick up your volunteer
- Be sure to have your volunteer's itinerary on hand to show at the United Airlines check-in counter. With this you'll receive a "gate pass."
- Upon arrival, proceed to the United Airlines check-in counter, where you'll let them know that you are picking up an unaccompanied minor on "Flight xxxx", and show them your volunteer's itinerary for verification.
- You will receive a "gate pass" to proceed through security, where you should then proceed to your volunteer's arrival gate.
- Once the flight arrives, your volunteer will be escorted off the flight, where you'll have to show a United Airlines Flight Attendant or Gate Agent your ID to verify that you are the correct person to pick up your volunteer. You will also need to sign a form indicating that you have taken "custody" of the volunteer.
- Note that the parent/guardian picking up the unaccompanied minor volunteer must be the same adult as was communicated to AMIGOS. This adult will be in United Airlines' records, and they will only release the volunteer to this individual.
- From there, you and your volunteer can proceed to baggage claim and start sharing stories from their experience!

VOLUNTEERS:

If you at any point get CONFUSED or LOST at the airport:

1. Find an airline employee/representative and ask for assistance, and/or use your own phone or borrow a phone and call the AMIGOS travel line at 1-888-AMIGOSL (264-4675). Do not call your parents first and then have them call the travel team, as we will need to speak directly with you.
2. Find AMIGOS staff in the gateway cities (wearing AMIGOS gear) to ask for assistance.

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