

VISITOR'S GUIDE: NPH HONDURAS

Country Overview

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Guide Sources: The CIA World Factbook, Lonely Planet.com, UNICEF

Honduras is one of the poorest and most violent countries in Latin America and suffers from widespread inequality in distribution of income and underemployment.

Area: 43,278 square miles – slightly larger than Tennessee

Population: 9,571,352 (2023 estimate)

Languages: Spanish, Amerindian dialects

Over one-third of infants in Honduras are malnourished.

Climate/Environment

- Climate: subtropical in lowland; temperate in mountains
- Natural hazards: earthquakes (frequent, but generally mild); extremely susceptible to hurricanes and flooding along the Caribbean coast
- Issues: deforestation, land degradation and soil erosion; mining polluting Lago de Yojoa
 the country's largest source of fresh water

A Brief History

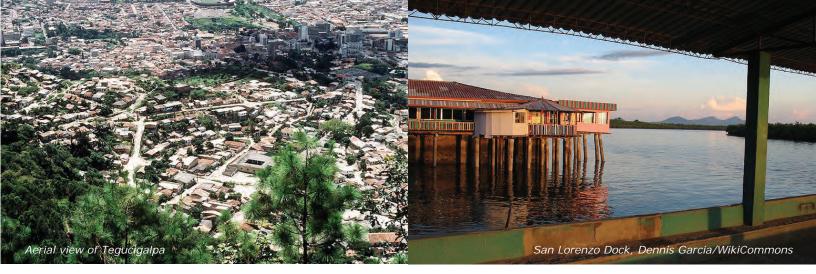
The oldest known evidence of human presence in present-day Honduras are stone tools thought to be around 6,000 to 8,000 years old. The Maya arrived later - around 300 BCE - and settled in the fertile Sula, Copán and Comayagua valleys. Over centuries, they came to dominate the area, as they did much of Mesoamerica. Copán was a heavily settled, agriculturally rich trading zone and eventually became one of the great Maya citystates of the Classic Period (300-900 BCE). The Classic Period ends with the rapid and mysterious collapse of most Maya centers, including Copán, where the last dated hieroglyph is from 800 BCE.

On his fourth and final voyage in 1502, Admiral Christopher Columbus made landfall near present-day Trujillo. Columbus named the area "Honduras," meaning "depths" for the deep waters there. Many explorers ventured in and out of Honduras, feuding over claims for much of the 1500s. The discovery of gold and silver in the 1530s drew even more Spanish settlers and also increased the demand for indigenous slave labor.

Native Hondurans had long resisted Spanish invasion and enslavement, and in 1537, a young Lenca chief named Lempira led an uprising against the Spanish. Inspired by Lempira's example, revolt swept the western region, and the Spanish were very nearly expelled. However, Lempira was assassinated in 1538 at peace talks with the Spanish, and the native resistance was soon quelled. A cycle of smaller revolts and brutal repression followed, decimating the native population. For the next few centuries, mining was an important industry in Honduras for the Spanish, but when silver prices collapsed and upheaval in the Spanish throne in the 1800s

Below: Ruinas de Copán (Copan Ruins), NPH International; Flowers in bloom, Dennis Garcia/ WikiCommons; Church in Ojojona, Chamo Estudio/WikiCommons





A Brief History (continued)

began, colonial rule was severely damaged.
On September 15, 1821 Honduras, along with
Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua
declared independence from Spain, and shortly
thereafter joined the newly formed Mexican
Empire. The relationship did not last long, and in
1823, the same countries declared independence
from Mexico and formed the Federal Republic of
Central America. Though Honduras was the poorest
and least-populated of the countries, it produced
some of the federation's most important leaders.
Chief among them was the liberal hero General
Francisco Morazán, who led the federation from

1830 to 1838. On November 15, 1838, Honduras became an independent nation as the federation disintegrated.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, conservatives who favored a pro-

church, aristocratic-style government wrestled with liberals who supported free market development of the kind taking place in the U.S. and parts of Western Europe at the time. Power alternated between the two factions, and Honduras was ruled by a succession of civilian governments and military regimes. The country's constitution would be rewritten 17 times between 1821 and 1982. Government has officially been by popular election, but Honduras has experienced hundreds of coups, rebellions, power seizures, foreign invasions and meddling since achieving independence.

During the 1980s, Honduras found itself surrounded on all sides by political upheaval and popular uprisings throughout Central America. Although Honduras experienced some unrest, the country never broke into out-and-out civil war. This in turn opened political space for genuine agrarian reform. Honduras has long had one of Central America's most effective and organized labor movements. Despite the overwhelming power of banana interests, Honduran workers have consistently managed to achieve concessions and accept compromises without resorting to violence.

In the past two decades, Honduras has dealt with a wide array of issues including unstable currency. The value of the lempira jumped from around 2 lempiras

to 8 to 13 to 20 (where it is today) against the U.S. dollar. Prices rose dramatically to keep pace with the US dollar, but salaries lagged behind. Hondurans grew poorer and poorer, a trend that still continues today.

The Banana Years

The banana entangled Honduras in a web of foreign interests and had spectacular economic success in the 19th and 20th centuries. It accounted for 11% of all the country's exports in 1892 and skyrocketed to 80% in 1929.

In October 1998, Hurricane Mitch – at that time the strongest Atlantic hurricane on record – devastated the country, killing over 5,600 people and causing \$2 billion U.S.D. in damage. Combined with increased crime and terrorist attacks in the 21st century, tourism in Honduras suffered drastically. Gang violence continues to be a prevailing issue. With new legislation, the recent administrations have tried to combat this growing concern. Economically, Honduras, along with several other Central American countries, recently joined the Central American and Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement, which aims to open markets in these nations for U.S. businesses.



Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH, Spanish for "Our Little Brothers and Sisters") opened a home in Honduras in 1986. Rancho Santa Fe – also called "The Ranch" – is less than an hour from the capital, Tegucigalpa. Over 400 boys and girls make their home in this vast wooded oasis in the hills, while an additional 60 children from the community attend the NPH school. Youths attending high school or university live in Tegucigalpa. The Ranch features preschool/kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, vocational workshops, a chapel, a farm, greenhouse and vegetable gardens, and clinics.







200 ft. 100 m

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Rancho Santa Fe

- 1. Entrance
- 2. External clinic
- 3. School
- 4. Boys' homes
- 5. Workshops
- 6. Farm: animals
- 7. Dining hall
- 8. Farm land
- 9. Chapel
- 10. Employee homes
- 11. Volunteer homes
- 12. Grandparent homes
- 13. Girls' homes
- 14. Guest homes
- 15. Offices

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16. Internal clinic



Highlights

- All children learn a trade in the vocational workshops, choosing metalwork, electricity, shoemaking, sewing, tailoring, or carpentry.
- About half of the furniture, school uniforms and shoes used by the children are made by pequeños in the vocational workshops.
- Approximately 57% of all the food eaten in the home is grown or produced on the ranch, including 25% of meat, 56% of fruit and vegetables, and 99% of the milk and dairy products.
- 13 new living spaces were opened in 2017 to transition children from peer-grouped housing into same-gender, mixed-aged housing.
- The NPH OneFamily program was launched in 2017 to reintegrate and support youth from the NPH home who are now able to live with their biological families. The program currently supports 44 children.
- In 2017, the Honduran National Directorate for Children, Youth, and Family awarded NPH Honduras their highest rating for NGOs operating homes for children in the country.

Responsibility

Responsibility is one of the most important values that NPH tries to instill in their children. This is why each child is expected to not only be responsible for him or herself, but to contribute to the family. This includes traditional chores such as washing clothes, making beds and serving food.

Each child also has additional responsibilities after school and during the weekends. Some work in the gardens, while others care for the grounds and clean common areas. Everyone knows how much effort goes into caring for their home and all the people who live there.

Before attending high school and university, *pequeños* are asked to give a year of service to the home.

Typical Day at the Ranch

5:30 a.m. Wake up and get dressed

6:00 a.m. Breakfast

6:30 a.m. Chores

7:00 a.m. Walk to school

7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Classes

1:30 p.m. Lunch in *hogares*

2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Vocational training for older youths

2:30 p.m. Chores

3:00 p.m. Study hour

4:00 p.m. Chores

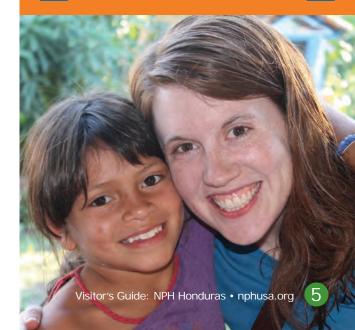
5:00 p.m. Free time

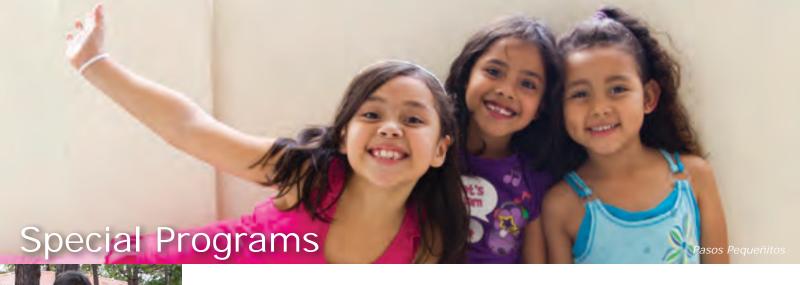
6:00 p.m. Dinner and homework

8:00 p.m. Bedtime

Godchildren

If you sponsor a child at NPH Honduras, arrangements will be made for him/her to spend time with you during your visit. Please contact your regional office if you are interested in becoming a Godparent.





Casa Pasionista, a hospice for adults living with AIDS, was founded by a group of American Passionist priests in 1991. It is the only facility of its kind in Honduras. It is especially unique because ailing parents can be with their children as their health deteriorates, comforted by the knowledge that after their death, their children will have a secure home with NPH.

Casa Eva was founded in 1992 as a home for up to 10 elderly abuelos, or grandparents, at Rancho Santa Fe. The abuelos, much like our children, have suffered abuse, neglect and abandonment before joining our family. They act as grandparents to our children. Meanwhile, the pequeños surround them with youthful energy and vitality. The kids routinely visit Casa Eva to participate in activities such as reading, praying, playing games and celebrating birthdays.

Casa de los Ángeles in Tegucigalpa provides 24-hour care for over 15 children with severe disabilities. A handful of NPH high school students that live in the home and help with their care, along with staff and volunteers provide physical, occupational, and speech therapy. Nearly all of the children are unable to move or eat on their own, but they enjoy activities such as attending camps, participating in horseback riding therapy, and going on planned excursions.

Holy Family Surgery Center, or *El Quirófano*, as it is called on the Ranch, was initiated in 2003 by Dr. Peter Daly, an orthopedic surgeon from the U.S., his wife LuLu Daly, a registered nurse, and Reinhart Koehler, Chairman of the Board of NPH International. Inaugurated in 2008, it provides much needed health assistance at drastically reduced costs to local Hondurans who cannot afford to pay the fees at the public hospital. It also offers training for the local medical community and hosts annual surgical brigades. With its state-of-the-art equipment, it is blossoming into an impressive full-functioning medical facility with the goal of becoming a sustainable surgery center handling daily operations.

Pasos Pequeñitos (Spanish for "Little Steps"), is a children's daycare center in Tegucigalpa. Started in 2005 by an international volunteer for former pequeñas with children of their own, it now assists single mothers who have a job or are furthering their education. The center cares for approximately 15 children daily. The children, who range in age from 3 to 12 years old, are provided with two nutritious meals and a healthy snack, and participate in educational, creative and recreational activities.

Comedor Infantil is a soup kitchen in the impoverished community of Talanga. It serves more than 30 families daily by providing nutritious meals and tutoring for children, a nutritional program for babies ages 6-36 months, a girls' empowerment program, and scholarships for children who have aged out of the program.





Time Zone Central Standard Time UTC/GMT -6 hours



When traveling abroad, we recommend enrolling in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). This free service helps the U.S. government know where citizens are, so they can notify and assist them in case of emergency. To enroll, visit http://step.state.gov/step



The goal of the trip is to have fun, experience the culture of Honduras and meet the inspiring children of NPH. Each traveler has so much to share with this great family and so much to learn. We hope that each visitor grows from their interactions with the children we support, just as your visit helps them to do the same.

Entry Requirements

A U.S. passport valid for at least six months beyond the date of entry is required to enter Honduras. A visa is not required for American citizens, but tourists must provide evidence of return or onward travel.

Vaccinations

Before traveling to Honduras, please consult your physician and visit www.cdc.gov/travel. Most vaccines do not produce immunity until at least two weeks after they are given, so visit your physician four to eight weeks before departure.

Transportation

- For group trips organized by NPH USA, transportation will be provided by NPH.
- Do NOT hitchhike under any circumstances.

Accommodations

Lodging varies depending on trip package. See specific trip information or consult the coordinator for details.

Water

All water at the Ranch is chlorinated, though only some is filtered. Outside faucets painted blue provide potable drinking water, but we recommend that you DRINK ONLY BOTTLED WATER, which is provided during your stay. Remember that fresh juices and teas offered with meals are **NOT** made with purified water. You should not ever drink from the bathroom or kitchen faucets.



sign the form and return it to your trip coordinator.

Food

As a guest of the Ranch, we invite you to eat meals in the main kitchen (cocina grande) or with the children in one of their hogares. If you would like to eat with the children, please advise the Visitor Coordinator so he/she can make sure there is extra food brought to the hogar. Bring a plate or bowl, cup, and silverware (provided upon arrival) with you wherever you decide to eat. You will also have access to a full kitchen in the visitor center if you would like to cook your own meals.

Mealtimes:

Breakfast: 6:00 - 7:30 a.m.

Lunch: 1:00 - 1:30 p.m. (2:00 p.m. in the *hogares*)

Dinner: 5:45 - 6:30 p.m.

Food at NPH is NEVER wasted. If you are unsure you will like what is being served, ask for only "un poquito" (a little), and if you cannot finish, please offer it to one of the children.

While on day trips, we will eat in restaurants where we are sure that food will be safely prepared.

All visitors are welcome to bring snacks to share with the group. It will be warm and humid, so be sure to bring things that can withstand heat and preferably are individually wrapped.

Travel Tips (continued)

Snacks, Juices and Soda

If you want something to eat or drink between meals, here are a few nearby options:

- Main gate (portón) purified water, juices, and bottled sodas available for purchase
- Kitchen (cocina) ask during meals, larger bottles of cola or other soda sometimes available for purchase
- Warehouse (bodega, right next to the kitchen)
 soda sometimes available for purchase
- School & Vocational Workshops (Escuela y Centro Vocacional) - small casetas offer sodas, juices, chips & plate of the day

Bathroom Etiquette

It is not possible to flush toilet paper in most Latin American and Caribbean countries due to the poor plumbing systems. Toilet paper and all sanitary products must be thrown in small waste baskets next to the toilet. **DO NOT flush toilet paper or sanitary products while visiting the NPH home.**

Bring travel toilet paper, or a small packet of facial tissues on day trips. Tissue is not always available in public bathrooms.

Electricity

Feel free to bring your camera charger, hair dryer, etc. Electrical outlets are the same as the U.S.: 110 volt, 60 hertz. However, three-prong grounded plugs are not as common, so two-prong adapters come in handy. You should expect power outages. These are commonly an issue outside of first-world countries.

E-mail & Phones

There are Internet cafés for e-mail and phone calls.
Tegucigalpa has many cafés for e-mail and phone calls. There is also one a short walk from the Ranch.

We have satellite internet at the Ranch in a small building located in front of the administrative office. Please speak to the Visitor Coordinator for access. Also if you are in the capital there are plenty of internet



See page 12 for emergency contact information.

PLEASE DO NOT give children your address, e-mail or phone number even if you are their sponsor.

cafés, even one in Cerro Grande that is less than a minute walk from the bus stop. The cafés charge 20–30 Lempiras for an hour of internet connect time, and 2–10 Lempiras per minute for international calls. For short international calls using a calling card, you may be able to use the phone in the Ranch office. We also have two cells phones available which you may borrow if you purchase activation cards in Tegucigalpa. Please ask the Visitor Coordinator to help you with this upon arrival, as once you are at the Ranch it will be difficult to activate the cell phone.

Medical Assitance

The Ranch has two clinics. The External Clinic, serving the needs of residents from outlying towns, operates Monday through Friday in the mornings. The Internal Clinic, infirmary, and pharmacy, located near the main office, serve the needs of the Ranch community, including the children, staff, and volunteers. Hours are 7:00 AM–7:00 PM. If you need medical attention, please go to the Internal Clinic during normal hours and talk to the medical staff.

For emergencies, 24 hours a day, find someone with a radio or call the clinic extension (729) or the gatekeeper at the portón (715).

Clothing

You may wonder what to wear while visiting us. In most cases, your common sense will be all you need, but some idea of how others commonly dress may be helpful. Hondurans in general take pride in their clothing. Teachers, secretaries, and other professionals at the Ranch dress carefully in slacks or skirts, pressed shirts or blouses, and shined shoes. Children wear clean school uniforms with few if any wrinkles, along with sturdy shoes. No one is barefoot. Out of school, jeans and casual but clean shirts/tops are common.

For Mass or special events, many girls wear pressed jeans, skirts or dresses. Boys often choose their better T-shirts or dress shirts to go with slacks or jeans.

While walking around the Ranch, neat shorts or jeans, clean T-shirts, and sandals or casual shoes are almost always fine. Shorts, skirts and dresses above the knee are not considered appropriate, nor are tank tops with very thin straps. If you are

Travel Tips (continued)

planning to spend time inside the school classrooms or clinics, long pants or skirts are a good idea. If you go into Tegucigalpa, you will feel less conspicuous if you avoid shorts and overly casual clothing. NPH maintains a policy of not allowing short t-shirts and low waist pants that show the belly and bellybutton.

If you have any piercings other than ears, please take them out during your stay on the Ranch. If you have any tattoos, please keep them covered. These are cultural taboos in Honduras and may cause the children to have a bad impression of you. In addition, the children often admire visitors and want to copy them and we do not want to encourage piercings or tattoos because of the cultural taboo.

Currency and Credit Cards

The currency in Honduras is the lempira. Cash machines are prevalent throughout the country. ATMs operated by BAC/Credomatic, Banco Atlántida, and Unibanc are the most reliable, and most likely to accept out-of-country debit cards.

ATMs typically dispense 500-lempira bills, which can be a hassle to break – get in the habit of using big bills at hotels and larger restaurants, and saving the small bills for taxis, small eateries, street stands, etc.

Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted, including at major supermarkets, retail stores, hotels and car rental agencies. Expect a 6% to 12% surcharge. Please remember that credit card fraud is an issue all over the world, and while it should not stop you from using your cards, you should be cautious.

Tipping

It is customary to tip 10% to tour guides and restaurant servers, but not taxi drivers. At hotels, it is nice to tip someone for carrying bags for you, and \$1 to \$2 per day is fair for housekeeping staff. You should pay more at higherend hotels or for especially good service.

Safety

Outside the gates of NPH, we recommend that you never go alone anywhere. Be vigilant in regards to your surroundings. While at the home, we will be in a very safe and controlled environment. However, it is important to remember to watch your personal property. Our children have come from very different backgrounds and while NPH tries to help them realize that they are safe now, many of them are still in survival mode. They are not malicious, but for many, taking is the only way they have ever survived.

Departure

A departure tax of roughly \$48 is included in the ticket prices for flights to/from the U.S. They should be listed as D1 and D2 on your ticket.

Terms to Know



Good morning/afternoon/evening! - ¡Buenos días/tardes/noches!
See you later! - ¡Hasta luego!
How are you? - ¿Cómo está?
Fine, thank you. - Bien, gracias.

Please - Por favor

Excuse me - Permiso

Do you speak English? - ¿Habla inglés?

Yes - Sí

No - No

Thank you - Gracias

You're welcome - De nada

How old are you? - ¿Cuántos años tiene?

How much is this? - ¿Cuánto es?

More - más

A little bit - un poquito
House - casa
Home - hogar
School - escuela
Backpack - mochila
Office - oficina
Kitchen - cocina

Water - agua Food - comida

Rice - arroz

Beans - frijoles

Spoon - cuchara

Fork - tenedor

Cup - vaso

Plate - plato



Pequeño/a - literally "little," but it is the term used for all NPH children

Tío/a - literally aunt or uncle, but at NPH it is a caretaker

Fr. Wasson - Padre Wasson (Founder of NPH)

Padrino - Godfather (Sponsor)

Madrina - Godmother (Sponsor)

Ahijdo/a - Godchild

Hermano/a Mayor - Older brother/sister - the term for a former pequeño/a or graduate of NPH



Clothes

- Lightweight travel clothes there is no laundry facility, but you can hand wash!
- Jeans/shorts/travel pants your preference
- Comfortable shoes for walking tennis shoes or something with closed toes
- Poncho/lightweight rain jacket
- "Bug off" clothing REI or Ex Officio (if sensitive to mosquitoes)
- One "nicer," but still casual outfit

Remember to dress conservatively. No visible undergarments; nothing torn, ripped or too short.

Toiletries

- Hand sanitizer
- · Shampoo/Conditioner
- Soap (we recommend a pack of disposable face cloths that have soap in the fibers. They work as soap and a washcloth.)
- Toothbrush/paste
- Deodorant
- Razor
- Earplugs
- Soap for washing clothes (if you want)
- Suntan lotion
- Insect repellant
- Small packet of facial tissues
- Travel toilet paper

Medicines

- Personal perscriptions (can be hard to get or expensive outside the U.S.)
- Pepto Bismol/Immodium
- Advil/Tylenol/Excedrin
- Cipro/antibiotic for travelers' diarrhea
- Benadryl/Hydrocortisone
- Bandages/Neosporin
- Emergen-C/cough drops

Personal Items

- Pillow
- Umbrella
- Water bottle
- Camera/Charger
- · Fly paper
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight (plus extra batteries)
- Travel alarm clock (if desired)

Snacks/Food

While we encourage everyone to eat the food provided (it is tasty), if you are worried about not liking the food, or getting enough, consider packing some pasta or another substitution for a meal, just in case. In addition, you may also want to bring:

- Granola bars/fruit bars/popcorn/snacks to share
- Gatorade packets (it is easy to get dehydrated)
- Good ground coffee and sugar to share

Other

- Passport
- Two copies of passport and credit card information: leave one copy at home
- Pictures of your family to show kids (great conversation starters!) and/or postcards

Expensive or irreplacebale jewelry or other valuable items





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We often leave pillows,

towels, sheets and

dinnerware for the home

to keep after we leave.



Visitors often ask what items they can bring for the children. Following are some suggestions.

Clothing and Shoes

- Underwear Socks
- Sandals

Education/Arts & Crafts

- Books in Spanish
- Coloring books
- · Colored pencils and crayons
- Glue and tape
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Play-Doh
- Yarn and pipe cleaners
- Beads
- Stickers

Toys & Games (for every age group)

- Card games
- Board games
- Jigsaw puzzles (100 pieces max.)
- Marbles

Sports Equipment

The kids spend most of their time outside, so think of items that require little or no maintenance and can be shared by everyone!

- Balls
- Jump ropes
- Air pumps with extra needles

Hygiene

- Feminine products
- Shampoo
- Soap
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes (for kids AND adults)

Health Care

- Vitamins
- Bandages
- Neosporin
- Tylenol

These items are always needed in the clinic. Please contact us if you are interested in donating other medical supplies.

Other

- · Barrettes and hair accessories
- Inexpensive plastic jewelry
- Batteries of various sizes are always needed and easy to transport

When in doubt . . .

Bring things that NPH needs or wants, and that get depleted. If you are still unsure, ask!



PLEASE DO NOT

- Bring candy or small items to randomly pass out. This can result in hurt feelings among children who do not receive anything.
- Bring expensive gifts, such as music players, video games or jewelry. This may unintentionally create feelings of jealousy and cause problems for that child.
- Give gifts directly to the children. Give them to the home's Visitor Coordinator or a staff person.
- Give money to anyone at the home. This can cause confusion about how it will be used and will not qualify for a tax deduction under U.S. law. Please make all donations through

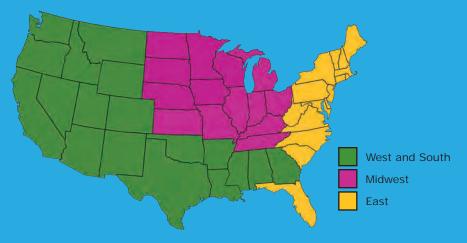
REMEMBER, YOUR VISIT IS A GIFT!

Neither NPH nor NPH USA want the children to associate your visit with material items. The best thing that you can bring is you! All your kind words, thoughts and affection are going to be the most lasting gift. Building relationships is the most valuable thing you can offer!









Contact Information

We suggest you leave this information as well as your flight and hotel details (if applicable) with your emergency contact.

National NPH USA Office

20 North Wacker Drive Suite 4000 Chicago, IL 60606-3193

Phone: 888.201.8880 info@nphusa.org

NPH USA, Federal Tax ID #65-1229309, is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that supports the homes, healthcare and educational programs of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos.

FUNDRAISING AREAS

West and South Area Seattle Office

2719 East Madison Street Suite 304 Seattle, WA 98112-4752

Phone 425.646.3935 infonw@nphusa.org

Phoenix Office

5110 North 40th Street Suite 248 Phoenix, AZ 85018-2143

Phone 480.967.9449 infosw@nphusa.org

Midwest Area

Minneapolis Office

1400 Van Buren Street NE Suite #200-210 Minneapolis, MN 55413-4605

Phone 651.482.1703 infoupm@nphusa.org

Chicago Office

20 North Wacker Drive Suite 4000 Chicago, IL 60606-3193

Phone 312.386.7499 infomw@nphusa.org

East Area

Quincy Office

265 Willard Street 3rd Floor Quincy, MA 02169-1514

Phone 617.206.4940 infoma-ne@nphusa.org



NPH Honduras Emergency Contact Information

Rancho Santa Fe Carr. nueva a Olancho, km 36 Dpto. Francisco Morazán Honduras, Central America Phone: 011.504.224.0573 Fax: 011.504.224.3684 e-mail: info.hn@nph.org

