

BOLIVIA GO Team 2025 Trip FAQ 2025

Application Deadline: W 2 April 2025

Trip Dates: 15-23 October 2025

Trip ID# BOL1025

IMPACT MINISTRY

B BLACKHAWK CHURCH

Please Contact Jim (jferwerda@blackhawkchurch.org) for an application

What are we doing?

Blackhawk Church partners with Food for the Hungry in the neighborhood of Lajastambo, Bolivia (on the outskirts of Sucre, the traditional capital of Bolivia). Food for the Hungry is a Christian organization seeking to end all forms of human poverty by going to the hardest places and walking closely with the world's most vulnerable people. They actively partner with churches, leaders, and families to build mutually transformative relationships, usher justice, and renew communities so God's purpose is revealed in each person they serve. Blackhawk has partnered with FH-Bolivia since 2016

This team will come alongside Food for the Hungry and the community of Lajastambo through different activities in which there will be opportunities to build relationships with men, women and children. Two focuses of this team will *include providing pastors with specialized training on marriage and domestic violence and bringing encouragement to FH staff and shareholders* working towards economic sustainability, family stability, church partnerships, working with children, etc.

What are the dates?

We will be leaving 10/15/2025 and returning 10/23/2025, depending on available flights*. This includes 7 days in-country.

*These dates may change by a day on either end depending on available flights.

What will be the team composition for this GO Team?

This trip will consist of about 8 adult team members (including team leaders). Applicants must be at least 21 years old. It is important that our team members are mature, available, humble, and flexible, and would make a positive contribution to the team. Team members will be expected to be actively involved at Blackhawk in addition to this trip. The ideal candidate will be interested in developing mutually transformative relationships with people of another culture. While we are also seeking team members who are conversational or fluent in Spanish, this is not a requirement. Please take note of the Safety Concerns section below when applying.

Because this trip involves training for pastors in the areas of marriage and domestic violence, our team will include one or two people qualified to train in those areas, preferably with a background in Latinx culture.

How is the team selected/when will I be notified?

Applications will be accepted from **Sunday 9 March 2025** until **Wednesday 2 April 2025**. Individuals will be notified of their application status within 2 weeks of the deadline. It is important to fill out the application in its entirety; *an incomplete application (e.g. lacking reference addresses) will not be considered*. After reviewing applications, applicants may be asked to meet with trip leaders for an interview. Typically, the number of applicants exceeds the size limit of the team, so some applicants may not be accepted on this GO Team.

Who is leading this Bolivia GO Trip?

James Self is the Trip Leader, and Annie Rodgers will be the Trip Assistant Leader. Jim Ferwerda (Impact Ministry Coordinator) will assist with the trip planning.

How much will it cost and how will I pay for my trip?

Each participant will have an individual support raising goal. We're estimating this goal to be between **\$3800-4000**, however we may alert you to changes in this goal at the first team meeting once the final number of team members is determined. This includes airfare, transportation and lodging in Bolivia, meals, etc. **All funds support the entire team, and we'll work together to reach our goal.** The team leaders will help you raise funds through support letters that can be sent to family, friends, co-workers, etc. Further instructions will be given soon after the team is finalized.

Where do we stay?

While in Bolivia, the team will stay at a hotel in Sucre for the majority of the trip. The hotel is modest, but clean and comfortable, with private bathrooms and bedrooms. Team members may be asked to share a room with another member of the team. The team may spend 1-2 nights in Santa Cruz, also in a hotel.

Do I need a passport and visa?

Participants must have a valid passport that does not expire within six months of our return to the USA (expires after April 2026). The current turn-around on passports can be 8-15 weeks. In order to avoid a conflict with our departure dates please send in your passport application/renewal forms when you submit your application for this trip. You can learn more about this through the US Postal Service at www.usps.gov or at our local branch of the post office.

All U.S. citizens visiting Bolivia are required to obtain a visa. Tourist visas are available at a Bolivian Embassy or Consulate in the United States. Tourist visas can also be purchased at any land or air border. Visa cost is \$160 for a 10-year visa; an International Certificate of Yellow Fever Vaccination is required. Visit the [US State Department Bolivia Information](#) page and [the U.S. Embassy in Bolivia](#) website for the most current visa information.

Holders of a valid Bolivian visa should be able to use their visa for a 10-year period, even if the visa is in an expired passport. In this case, the participant will need to carry the expired passport that contains the valid visa, along with a current valid passport.

What are the risks of traveling to Bolivia?

The US Department of State has issued a general worldwide travel caution (10/19/2023) in response to threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens throughout the world. Bolivia is listed as a Level 2 Travel Advisory – Exercise Increased Caution (as of 6/6/2023). Recall that Blackhawk Church will not send Teams to locations under a Level 3 or 4 Advisory; we continue to monitor the situation. Please visit <http://travel.state.gov> to read warnings and for more information on traveling.

Mosquito borne illnesses, including Zika, chikungunya, yellow fever, malaria, etc. are risks in Bolivia, particularly in Santa Cruz due to its low elevation. Precautions should be taken while in country to prevent mosquito bites, and team members should see a travel physician to ensure they have the appropriate vaccinations/medications. Please visit <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/bolivia> to learn more about the CDC's recommendations for travelers to Bolivia. Sucre is on the fringe of the area for which an anti-malarial prophylactic is recommended. The CDC has more information about [Zika](#) and [malaria](#).

Sucre is high in terms of elevation (~9,000 feet above sea level). The team's flight will likely arrive/depart from Santa Cruz, which is approximately 1300 feet above sea level. Individuals with heart or other medical conditions that might be affected by high elevation should seriously consider whether it is safe for them to apply for this trip. Terrain can be rocky and uneven, and team members must be able to be on their feet for the majority of the day.

Impact Ministry monitors the security situation in any destination country, including Bolivia. We are frequently dialoguing with the in-country ministry partners to assess any safety concerns for traveling teams. We will continue to monitor all upcoming news related to traveler safety in the country.

Do I need shots or medications?

You will need to bring ample supply of whatever medications you take on a regular basis. We also encourage you to discuss your travel plans with your doctor to ensure you are up to date on all check-ups and immunizations and discuss any additional immunizations your doctor may recommend.

What about COVID or other public health issues?

COVID-19 has had a big impact on how people travel throughout the world. CDC guidance on travel is fluid, based on current national and local situations. We will ask that you abide by CDC guidance and any national, local, or partner-identified COVID restrictions. Currently, Blackhawk does not require COVID vaccination for GO Team participants unless required by our partner (FH-Bolivia), transportation providers (airline, bus, etc.), or local government.

Currently, travelers to Bolivia who are fully vaccinated for COVID (with vaccination card) have no restrictions on entry.

Please visit <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/> for more information about travel's health.

What happens if someone on the team contracts COVID (or has some other illness or injury)?

If any team member gets ill or injured while in Bolivia, the team will follow the recommendations for treatment given by FH-Bolivia and/or local medical personnel. The GO Team will have travel insurance purchased for all team members.

What's the climate like in Bolivia?

November marks the start of Bolivia's wet/rainy season (summer season), so this trip should fall in the end of the dry season. The average high temperature in Sucre in October and November is in the low 70s, and the average low is 50 degrees. Santa Cruz is warmer, with highs near 90 degrees and lows near 70 degrees. We recommend packing layers. Sucre is fairly high in elevation (~9,000) and the area is mountainous.

What are the timeframes for application and meeting as a team?

Timeline for the Bolivia GO Team Trip:

- Application Process: closes Wednesday, 2 April 2025
- Team meetings: We will begin meeting as a team in May 2025. Meetings will include team building, discussing support raising, trip logistics, training for the trip, etc. *Attendance at all meetings is mandatory*, and it is expected that prospective team members will communicate about a personal need to miss a meeting at the time of application.
 - Team meeting #1 - Sunday, 4 May 2025 (2:00-4:00 PM @ Brader Way)
 - Team meeting #2 - Sunday, 1 June 2025 (2:00-4:00 PM @ Brader Way)
 - Team meeting #3 - Sunday, 20 July 2025 (2:00-4:00 PM @ Brader Way)
 - Team meeting #4 - Sunday, 17 August 2025 (2:00-4:00 PM @ Brader Way)
 - Team meeting #5 - Sunday, 21 September 2025 (2:00-4:00 PM @ Brader Way)
 - Team meeting #6 / Packing Party - Sunday, 12 October 2025 (2:00-4:00 PM @ Brader Way)

Questions?

Contact either:

- James Self, Trip Leader
 - tajself@aol.com | 608.206.2489
- Annie Rodgers, Assistant Trip Leader
 - arodgersfam@gmail.com | 608.225.8688
- Jim Ferwerda, Impact Ministries Coordinator
 - jferwerda@blackhawkchurch.org | 608.828.4219