

PEACE Volunteer FAQ

1. **What type of volunteer activities are available** – We have a wide range of activities available for our volunteers and it all depends on what your skills are. There are many projects and initiatives that we have going on at any given time, and many of them require volunteers. We are often doing beach cleanups and mural projects and gardening initiatives. Some of our programs do not require volunteers in the same ways as others might. It is important that you get in touch with our volunteer coordinator so that you may discuss your options and what specific needs we have at the time of your visit.
2. **What is the community need?** We work with many different communities in the area and each community has its own needs depending on which program you are referencing. The communities are in constant need of passionate people willing to actively participate in educational programs and give up some of their time to help better the situation on a one-to-one basis.
3. **I have little to no experience volunteering. Can I still be helpful?** Of course! In this case, it is very important that you communicate with our volunteer coordinator to determine what type of volunteer project you will be working on and how you will do it. You may be able to start with something easy, like a mural project and see how you feel about it and go from there. Volunteering is an extremely rewarding experience and most people who do it once will continue doing it for the rest of their lives. It is important that you think about what you want to get out of the experience and express that to our coordinator.
4. **How often will I be volunteering?** Your volunteer schedule all depends on what projects you will be working on and your timeline with PEACE. We have had some volunteers that only work on one project and they do it until it is finished, we have had others that work a few days a week, we have had volunteers that work from home and some that come down to stay with us for months. It is important that you work out a schedule with our coordinator so that you feel like you are helping, however you do not want to burn yourself out. Make it clear what you want your schedule to be like and try to come to an agreement with the volunteer coordinator about it.

5. Will someone pick me up at the airport? It depends on what type of volunteering you will be doing and what your commitment to PEACE is. This will have to be discussed with our coordinator during your planning stages.
6. I do not speak Spanish. Is this a problem? Absolutely not! Depending upon the position that you are interested in, your Spanish skills and needs from the community vary. There are certain programs that require Spanish, however we will try our best to place you in the appropriate position based upon your skills and your interests here at PEACE
7. I have children. Can they be involved in volunteering? We have many family projects that you can become involved in! We have painting and mural days, park building projects, gardening or simply cooking at our main center. Please contact our volunteer coordinator to find out what you can plan with the whole family.
8. Where are you located? PEACE is located in the Punta de Mita community in the southern coast of Nayarit. We are about an hour north of the Puerto Vallarta area, on the Pacific coast of Mexico. Puerto Vallarta is located on a large bay, the 3rd largest bay in North America, Bay of Banderas. The ocean and its natural elements are a very large part of the lifestyle in these communities and many of the daily activities (recreational and professional) revolve around the ocean. We have maps and links available on our volunteer page that will help you orient yourself to our location. There are many things to do in Punta de Mita and the nearby towns; surfing, hiking, biking, kayaking, paddle surfing, snorkeling, etc.
9. How do I get to PEACE? Depending upon where you are staying or visiting while in town, you can get to our main offices on a bus, by car or perhaps even walking! Please let our coordinator know where you are located and they will provide you with specific directions.
10. Is housing provided? Generally housing is not provided by PEACE. In very special circumstances we may, however it is not part of the typical volunteer process. We have many recommendations and contacts for housing and are more than happy to guide you in the right direction according to your needs.
11. What is the volunteer time commitment? It is very flexible. As mentioned before, we have different needs in different programs and communities and different levels of volunteer involvement. It all depends on what you are interested in and what your availability is. We have had some volunteers come once to an event to help paint a school, some come for months at a time and work every day, some work from their homes and come only when their project/initiative is finished.

12. How many volunteers are there at any given time? Our organization is very broad and covers many different programs and elements. We have many volunteers working for us at any given time in different locations and projects. When you confirm your volunteer experience with our coordinator, it is best that you ask this question again, so that you may receive a more specific answer.
13. Is there a need for me? ALWAYS. PEACE relies greatly on volunteers and their many contributions to these communities and our organization. We have had volunteers that photograph for us, create marketing material, donate food, donate locations for events, create workshops for children, educate our woman's group, etc. We only place volunteers in programs where they are needed. It is very important to us, that everyone benefits from their time here.
14. Are Spanish classes available? Absolutely, upon request. Please contact our volunteer coordinator for more information.
15. What are my phone options? TELCEL is the national phone company and they have very easy accessible system. You can get a cell phone for about \$35US and add credit to it via pre-paid phone cards.
16. What visa do I need? Depending upon your commitment level and your travel plans, you will need a tourist visa which you receive upon arrival in the country. That visa is valid for up to 6 months. If you plan on being in Mexico longer than that, you might want to contact the Consulate of your country in the area (Guadalajara or Vallarta) to see what your requirements are.
17. What vaccinations do I need? There are no specific vaccinations necessary to travel to Mexico. Please consult your doctor if you are concerned with any personal medical issue you have, to be sure that you do not need a specific treatment or vaccine before travelling.
18. Should I get insurance? You do not have any need to get insurance if you do not already carry an insurance back home.
19. How can volunteering help my career? A survey carried out by TimeBank through Reed Executive showed that among 200 of the UK's leading businesses:
73% of employers would employ a candidate with volunteering experience over one without
94% of employers believe that volunteering can add to skills

58% say that voluntary work experience can actually be more valuable than experience gained in paid employment

94% of employees who volunteered to learn new skills had benefited either by getting their first job, improving their salary, or being promoted.