Returning for a Home Visit

A GUIDE FOR CHURCHES AND MISSION PARTNERS

Returning for a Home Visit

When It's Time to Visit Home

Mission Partner return to visit New Zealand for many reasons. Sometime a visit to New Zealand will be for a family event, it may be for rest and relaxation and it will probably involve reconnecting with family, friends, supports and local churches, so there is a lot to consider. All sorts of plans will need to be made and lots of arrangements need to be put in place.

But whose responsibility is it to ensure these arrangements are made? Is this something the mission partner should sort out themselves? Or should their family and friends take care of this? Or is it the responsibility of the sending church?

In reality the answer is probably all of the above!

This booklet is designed to raise a number of questions and provide some guidelines to help a Mission Partner as they visit New Zealand. Very often, church leaders will assume that the mission partner and their family will sort everything out, however may not be the case. The commending church leadership should accept responsibility to ensure that the Mission Partner is well supported during their time back home.

We encourage the Mission Partner and their commending church to work together on the matters raised in this guide. You may also need to liaise with the mission agency your mission partner is associated with.

There is no fixed answer to "who does what?" but we know that the best outcomes occur when everyone works together and the matters we raise here are properly planned, well in advance of your mission partner's visit.

Please contact us if we can be of assistance.

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Executive Director

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Notifications

First up, notify us here at GC3.

This is of prime importance for a number of reasons. We can publish the relevant information in e-Connect, allowing people to make appropriate contact, arrange meetings and generally liaise with your mission partner.

It provides for more intelligent prayer interest and communication.

There are trusts in New Zealand who use our notification as a source of information, and make financial distributions to mission partners when they are back in New Zealand.

Notify any other mission agency that your mission partner is associated with.

Close liaison with the mission agency's personnel department is critical in determining whether the agency has a policy impacting your mission partner being back, what their expectations are for refreshment leave, continuation of support, retraining, etc.

THE ESSENTIALS

When completed, please scan this page and send to Michael Hanson, michael@gc3.org.nz

MISSION PARTNER

Name: _____

CONTACT NUMBERS:

Is your mission partner able to be contacted while in transit?

Cell: _____

Email address: _____

In the event of an emergency who will your mission partner call?
(Common issues are sickness, missed connections, or insufficient funds to cover departure taxes.)

_____

NAME OF SENDING CHURCH:

Name: _____

NZ postal address: _____

_____

_____

_____ Postcode _____

Landline: _____

Email address: _____

CHURCH LIAISON:

Name: _____

Position: Elder / Pastor / Missions Coordinator

Landline: _____

Cell: _____

Email address: _____

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE DESIGNED TO BE A STARTING POINT for the conversations that need to happen before your mission partner returns to New Zealand. We know just how many arrangements need to be made and we appreciate that communication is not always easy when geographical distance is a factor.

We encourage you to share this guide with your mission partner and consider all the points listed. We know too, that everybody is different and each situation unique, so please don't be limited by these ideas.

Our hope is, that you will use this as a framework to ensure that your mission partners have all the practical and emotional support necessary. Remember, we will gladly support you in this process, so feel free to contact us here at the GC3 office.

Travel Plans

- Does your mission partner have the necessary funds to purchase airline tickets?
- Should airline tickets be purchased in New Zealand?
- Ask your mission partner if they would like to purchase tickets in NZ. (This may be more economical and tickets can be sent via email)
- Is a break for a holiday on the way home necessary or desirable?
- Is finance and accommodation available for this?
- There are houses available for little or no rent to missionary partners. For more information email the GC3 office.
- Has travel insurance been organised?
- Will your mission partner need assistance while in-transit?
- Would your mission partner like to be met at the airport?
- Is a meal or food parcel needed on arrival?

Arrival

DATE _____

TIME _____

AIRPORT _____

FLIGHT NUMBER _____

Departure

DATE _____

TIME _____

AIRPORT _____

FLIGHT NUMBER _____

Accommodation

Does your mission Partner need accommodation for all or some of their stay in New Zealand?

There are houses available for little or no rent to missionary partners. For more information email the GC3 office.

Transport

- Does your mission partner need a car for some or all of their time in New Zealand?
  Some trusts provide cars for mission partners to use while on home assignment. Contact us here at GC3 to find out more.
- Are children's car or booster seats needed?
- Has accident insurance been organised?

Medical

- Is there a medical condition that requires immediate attention?
- Would your mission partner like you to make appointments for dental or medical checkups?
- Are immunizations or boosters needed?
- Is a specialist appointment needed?
- Please encourage your mission partner to have comprehensive medical and dental examinations soon after arriving.

Home Assignment Activities

At GC3 we suggest that home assignment should be split into thirds and that setting clear and realistic goals is the best way to make this happen.

RELAXATION AND REST

Does your mission partner have finances to cover holiday expenses?

We suggest that specific dates are set aside for holidays and we encourage you to respect your mission partners need for uninterrupted time and space.

RETRAINING AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

See notes under debrief.

VISITING CHURCHES TELLING THEIR STORY

- Is your mission partner comfortable speaking upfront as part of a service, or would they prefer to speak in a small group?
- Does your mission partner need help to put a power point or visual presentation together?
- Will fundraising activities be a part of this home visit?

Arrange for your mission partner to be welcomed back to your church. Remember there may be many new people who are unfamiliar with your mission partner and their work. If necessary, ask GC3 for help in arranging meetings outside your area.

Children

Check with your mission partner to ensure the needs of their children will be met now that they will be back in New Zealand on a permanent basis. Encourage parents to seek the views of their children and include them in the debriefing process when appropriate.

Practical

Is there a need for new clothing or shoes? This can be very important for young people

Social

Can children be linked up with youth group or Sunday school leaders before they arrive back in New Zealand?

Psychological

Is counselling needed for anxiety or any other issues?

Education

Is educational, tertiary or vocational advice needed?

Would your mission partner like to enroll their children at a school prior to arriving in New Zealand?

Debrief

Debriefing is essential each and every time your mission partner is on home assignment. A debrief is to help your mission partner transition back into New Zealand life and is a chance for them to reflect on their experience. A debrief is not a performance review and does not include counselling (which should be addressed separately, if necessary).

Ideally debriefing should be split into two parts, an operational debrief and a personal debrief. We suggest that these are conducted separately and by different people. In both cases the debrief should be carried out by skilled and experienced facilitators.

OPERATIONAL DEBRIEF

This is a review from a factual perspective and is best carried out by someone with knowledge of the organisation or project.

IT IS A TIME TO:

- Recognise achievements.
- Reflect on the term of service, the highs, the lows, the difficulties,
- and surprises.
- Plan for the future, to ensure your mission partner has a fresh or continuing call to do this work and has the necessary financial and pastoral support.
- Identify new challenges and training required.

PERSONAL DEBRIEF

Is a chance for your mission partner to reflect on how their experience has affected them personally and explore feelings and emotions. It should be facilitated by a trained and experienced person.

IT IS LIKELY TO COVER:

- Family issues, marriage and children.
- Faith and beliefs, the call to ministry or possible re-direction.
- Stresses, low points, losses and discouragements.
- Positive changes and high points.
- Transitions and future aspirations.
- Training or support needed to reach their full potential.

Counselling

What we are referring to here is different to and separate from debriefing.

Counselling should be offered to your mission partner if they are struggling with anxiety or depression or have been through a traumatic experience during their term of service. Remember to include both spouse and children. For more information or help in accessing the right services, contact Michael Hanson at GC3.

Financial Support

Even if extensive deputation is undertaken, it is not to be assumed that gifts from churches visited will be sufficient to meet your mission partners personal needs. Sometimes mission partners find home assignment a time of testing because monetary support drops significantly. We strongly encourage you to monitor this.

THE QUESTIONS AND CONVERSATION STARTERS in this guide will ensure your mission partner has the practical and emotional support needed on their arrival in NZ. It contains suggestions for a successful home visit and ways for your mission partner to reflect on their experience and ensure they have a fresh or continuing call for a new term of service.

OTHER GC3 PUBLICATIONS YOU MAY FIND USEFUL

IS GOD CALLING YOU?
OUR COMMENDATION PROCESS

This guide outlines the biblical basis of commendation and considers how commendation might work. It also contains topics and conversation starters to help explore a candidate's suitability for mission work.

RETURNING TO NZ PERMANENTLY?
A GUIDE FOR CHURCHES AND MISSION PARTNERS

This guide encourages churches and mission partners to consider all the arrangements that need to be made when a mission partner returns permanently from their service for God overseas.

HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR MISSION PARTNERS
RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 2015

This publication explores what the Health and Safety at Work Act means for mission partners and churches and provides practical ways for church leadership meet its obligations.

www.gc3.org.nz