



Shipyard Volunteer Guidebook



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Our ships are special.

They're hospitals. They're living quarters. They're offices.

They are also multi-tonned, complex vessels that need care and attention each year so we can continue bringing hope and healing.

While our medical programs aren't running during this time, shipyard is an incredibly unique (and fun!) experience.

This guidebook will provide you with important details about serving onboard. We want all crew to feel supported and prepared from the moment they submit an application until they arrive safely home after volunteering. We are here to help.

Together we bring hope and healing.

Note: This guide is intended only for those who are joining for our time in the Canary Islands, Spain. If you're joining in the Canary Islands but are staying onboard for the sail to the next field service location, please refer to the primary Volunteer Guidebook available at mercyships.org/volunteer.

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1. Training & Support

You may be coming for a short period, but don't forget the training opportunities we provide for crew!

Training in the US

Foundations of Mercy Ships is a 3-day course held at the International Support Center in Texas three times per year. If you attend this optional training, you'll walk away with an understanding of the mission and history of Mercy Ships, as well as what to expect onboard as a volunteer.

On Boarding is required for crew accepted to volunteer for 12 or more months. Serving for extended periods can be challenging, and we want every crew member making this investment to walk onboard fully prepared for their commitment and aligned with our mission.

Training in Europe

Introduction to Mercy Ships is a weekend-long course offered in the Netherlands three times per year, with similar content to the Foundations of Mercy Ships course in Texas.

Mercy Ships International Offices

Our crew come from all over the world and are supported by our international staff. While your application is handled by the Human Resources team at our International Support Center in Texas, we have 16 other offices around the world with devoted crew coordinators ready to help you throughout your Mercy Ships journey.

Maritime Training

Since our crew are living and working onboard, naturally some positions require certain licenses or maritime training. All non-medical crew joining for more than six months are encouraged to join us for **Basic Training** and **Crowd Management**. - and we arrange all the details for you.

Some maritime crew in our Deck and Engineering departments may also qualify for assistance with other, more advanced training. This is typically requested once you are onboard.

Onboard Training & Orientations

Immediately upon arrival onboard, you'll officially embark and collect your ID. Our Reception and Hospitality teams will be there to help you - and they even provide snacks! You will receive a new crew handbook to help you as you adjust to life on a ship, and within 24 hours, you'll be taken on a complete ship tour.

Incoming crew all undergo new crew orientation within one week of arrival, which includes a basic safety and security familiarisation specific to both the vessel and the country in which it is docked.

Crew also undergo an on-the-job orientation on their first day of work.

2. Why Shipyard?

While our annual maintenance is a critical part of what we do to ensure our ships are in working order and to be good stewards of the resources we have, it's also **mandatory** under maritime regulations.

The environment onboard can be dependent on the work being undertaken and sometimes services (such as laundry or galleys) are interrupted or not available, including air conditioning. Management onboard communicate these situations to crew prior to the project undertaking and take appropriate measures to care for the crew. For example, if the galley is closed for maintenance, we'll pick up locally catered food for the crew!

Our typical project list includes:

- modifications to office spaces and installation of new furniture
- installation of new equipment, lighting, cabling, and piping
- plumbing, welding, carpentry, and electrical projects
- upgrades to our public crew spaces, cabins, and galleys
- cleaning and regular maintenance of the vessel

While living conditions during shipyard are different than during our normal field services, our dedication to crew does not change! All efforts are made to ensure a safe and pleasant environment.

The Canary Islands also offer a much different environment than we are accustomed to the rest of the year, including reliable and safe public transportation, diverting activities, beaches, restaurants, shopping, and fewer restrictions on shore leave.



3. Ship Life

Think of the ship as a small town. There's obviously a hospital, but there's so much more! Meals are served in the **dining room** daily, provided by our Galley Team. There is also a **crew galley** if you want to make your favorite dish!

You can enjoy a hot beverage at our **Starbucks™ Café**, or visit the **library** and find a good book or movie to borrow! You can grab a snack from the **concessions stand**, buy some laundry tablets from the **convenience store**, withdraw some cash from the **Crew Bank** before a trip to a local market, or go workout in the small **gym** - all onboard. There's even a **pool** - don't forget your bathing suit! ¹

If you're feeling poorly, don't worry - our Crew Physician is there to help you recover.²

Work and Time Off

Our crew are some of the hardest working people on the planet. We have a big job to do, and our crew are up to the task! Different teams onboard have different schedules and shifts, including some weekends. More role-specific information can be found in [myMercy](#) if you're curious, but your specific schedule will be communicated to you upon arrival. Most crew work 40-45 hours per week.

During time off from work, crew typically spend their time hiking, going to the beach, trying local cuisine, shopping, and exploring the island(s).

While vacation / holiday time is only available for those serving three or more months, there is still plenty of time for fun and for building friendships with crew!



Period of Service

There is always a lot going on during shipyard. We depend on each crew to carry out the duties of their role on the team for the full length of the timeframe they've agreed to stay.

¹ Remember some services may be unavailable during shipyard depending on the projects undertaken.

² More serious issues may have to be addressed in your home country.

Spiritual Life

While shorter term crew are not required to be Christians, all crew are expected to respect and support the mission and core values of Mercy Ships. And while crew come from many different nations with different denominational backgrounds, it is important to come together as a community, supporting the mission of Mercy Ships together.

All crew are expected to attend departmental or community meetings onboard, which often include worship, prayer, and biblical references, in addition to ordinary business announcements and updates. Integrating our love of God with our passion for bringing hope and healing is what makes Mercy Ships such a unique community!

There are many ways to enrich your own spiritual health while onboard, and we encourage all crew to take advantage of these opportunities for small groups and visiting local churches. However, these activities are more limited while we're in shipyard.

Community of Faith

A Community of Faith is a group of individuals who choose to live, work, and worship together in community, sacrificially serving common values and purpose.

Mercy Ships follows the 2,000-year-old model of Jesus, bringing hope and healing to the world's forgotten poor. Shorter-term volunteers (onboard for a year or less) come to serve, learn, and grow alongside our Community of Faith that constitutes the core of life with Mercy Ships.

All serving with Mercy Ships worldwide are expected to:

Respect Mercy Ships Core Values.

- Love God
- Love and serve others
- Be people of integrity
- Be people of excellence in all we say and do

Abide by the Code of Conduct.

It is our goal to see all crew grow in their faith, love, character, skills, and competence, no matter how long their service or tenure.

Code of Conduct

As an international, faith-based charity, our foundation rests on an integrated biblical worldview of service to others and a personal relationship with Jesus. The Code of Conduct's purpose is to ensure the safety of staff and crew, as well as protect the reputation of Mercy Ships. A summary is included in this Guidebook; however, it can also be found [here](#) (Navigator) in full. All accepted crew are required to sign the document as an agreement before they arrive onboard. Any violations are handled by the Human Resources department and could result in a warning or dismissal.

Alcohol, Drug Abuse, & Smoking

All Mercy Ships locations are alcohol-, drug-, and smoke-free environments.

While ashore, at a restaurant, consuming beer or wine in moderation is generally acceptable. Excessive drinking is not tolerated, and crew are not to visit bars, nightclubs, discos, or similar establishments. Crew suspected of intoxication may be asked to take a breathalyser test. Under no circumstances should crew operate vehicles (owned by Mercy Ships or otherwise) after drinking.

We are a drug-free organisation and have a zero-tolerance policy relating to possession or abuse of drugs, including prescription drugs.

Smoking cigarettes, “vapes”/e-cigarettes, or similar items is permitted ashore; however, we do ask that you find a discreet area that is out of sight. No smoking is allowed onboard.

Sexual Conduct & Harassment

Crew are not to engage in sexual activity outside of legal marriage between a husband and wife. Crew are not permitted to be alone in a cabin with someone of the opposite sex (aside from their spouse or child) after 10 PM. A man and woman who are not married to each other should not travel alone together overnight or share accommodations, nor should a mixed group of men and women share the same accommodations.

Pornography in any form is not allowed.

Mercy Ships has a zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual harassment (both verbal and physical).

Child Safety

At Mercy Ships, we take children’s safety very seriously. Our policies are in place to protect both crew children as well as local children & patients. These rules are in effect at all times, for all crew and staff. Once accepted, you’ll be asked to read and sign the Child Safety Code of Conduct as well as complete a brief child safety training online.

Dress Code

Modest apparel is essential in community life. All staff and crew are expected to honour each other in their choice of attire. For more information, refer to the full Dress Code on page 12 of this guidebook.

Violence

Fighting and attempting bodily harm or injury will not be tolerated.

Betting & Gambling

Betting and gambling for individual monetary gain on Mercy Ships premises is prohibited.

Other

Other offenses requiring disciplinary action include destroying or defacing Mercy Ships property, theft or dishonesty, violation of safety rules or common safety practices, misuse of confidential information, and unauthorised use of Mercy Ships property, finances, or equipment.

4. What to Expect

Accommodations

Housing is a big challenge onboard, but we try to utilise this fixed resource to the best of our ability. Most cabins have self-contained bathrooms and also have a window or porthole. All cabins are furnished with beds, a small cabinet/closet for each crew member, and access to WiFi. Crew are responsible for cleaning their own bathrooms and cabin spaces.

Cabin assignments are based on the volunteer's length of commitment. Single crew can expect to stay in a multi-berth cabin (with 6, 8, or 12 beds), and incoming crew should expect to start off on the top bunk in their cabins. We do our best to facilitate special needs, but each person is encouraged to rise to the challenge of sharing space with other crew from different countries, cultures, and with different sleeping habits or schedules.

Cabins can be decorated and personalised by hanging pictures and other items using magnets or sticky tack.

Each cabinet is approximately 7 feet tall and 20 inches wide / 2 meters tall and 51 centimeters wide, so crew should plan to be creative with their packing and storage! We recommend packing with a duffel bag as opposed to a hard-shell suitcase, as the soft/collapsible luggage is easier to stow away.

Electricity onboard is 220 volts/5Hz, and the entire ship is fitted with British-style three-prong electrical outlets. Some electronics, including most laptops, come with dual voltage power supplies and may not need a transformer. However, any appliance that does not already have a British plug attached will require an adaptor - which can be purchased onboard or brought from home.



Meals

Our amazing Food Services crew makes and serves cooked meals in our dining room three times per day and twice on the weekends (with your lunch offerings set out for you during breakfast to take away). The menu is on a planned, 8-week rolling schedule, utilising ingredients sourced both locally as well as shipped from Europe. While fresh foods are usually offered daily, we are unable to fully cater to vegetarians, vegans, or to those on gluten-free diets.

Our Crew Galley is available to all crew for personal cooking. Food and supplies can be purchased at a local market or in the convenience store onboard, Pier 99.

It is helpful to bring or buy a container to store your lunch on the weekends, your meals from the Crew Galley, or meals to eat later (if you're a shift worker).

There is typically a good selection of local restaurants from which to choose, should you want to go out for any meals. Recommended restaurants can be found in country information binders in the lounge.

All food and water provided onboard is safe for consumption.

Fun, Games, and Time Off

The community onboard is both hard-working and fun! They love getting together, playing games, putting together “watch parties” for big sports matches and televised events, organising movie nights, beach or hiking trips, and more. Once onboard you will be shown an activity binder where you can sign up to join in!

Of course, sometimes the best fun is impromptu. Take a walk through the Midship Lounge after work, and you're sure to find a few groups jumping into a game. In fact, you may want to bring your favorite game with you to share with others!

Self-Care

Living onboard in a foreign country can be challenging. You're working and living in a confined space, away from family and the familiarity of home. The parts of life onboard that make it unique and joyful can also be the same things that sometimes make it difficult. We want every crew member to feel like a valued part of the community, with healthy boundaries, and space to rest when needed!

Being an introvert onboard can be a challenge, as “alone time” can be hard to come by! Extroverts don't get off so easily, though! It may actually be *more* common for extroverts to experience community burnout as there are seemingly endless opportunities to be around others. We encourage all crew to make a conscious effort to take measure of how they are feeling and seek out time to rest and be alone when necessary.

For crew who need a little help, advice, or nudge in the right direction, our Transition Facilitator and Chaplain Counselor are available to “unpack” your experience and to check in with you.



Staying in touch

The ship has a US based satellite phone system. Personal calls can be made from your cabin; however, you'll need a phone card if you want to call out. Mobile phones may be brought with you, but check with your service provider for network coverage/availability. Our shop onboard, Pier 99, sells both calling cards and local SIM cards.

Africa Mercy phone number:

+001.954.538.6110

Though we have an internet café onboard, you're encouraged to bring your personal laptop, tablet, and/or phone with you and connect to the WiFi, with access points in all cabins and in most common/public areas. Please note, the internet can sometimes become slow - at which time we may restrict applications such as Skype, FaceTime, YouTube/streaming services, and the like to limit bandwidth.

5. Dress & Uniform Guidelines

General Rules

- Knees must be covered when standing or sitting.
- Undergarments should never show, nor skin between trousers and top.
- Tight trousers (jeans/leggings) are only allowed under a dress, long tunic, or top reaching mid-thigh; otherwise, trousers need to be loose-fitting.
- Spaghetti-straps and low necklines are not allowed.
- Proper footwear must be worn at all times, unless in your cabin or at the pool.

Sporting Activities

- For sport onboard, clothing may be tighter-fitting than what's allowed for normal wear. Do cover up or change directly afterward.

Pool / Beach Activities

- Ladies - When swimming, suits/bathing costumes should be a modest one-piece or 'tankini' with no visible skin between the top and bottom. Clothing needs to be worn over the bathing suit to and from the pool (not just a towel!).
- Men - While enjoying the pool, wear boxer or shorts-style swim trunks - no super short or tight-fitting swimwear, please! Clothing needs to be worn over the bathing suit to and from the pool (not just a towel!).



Uniforms for Reception, Purser, & Hospitality

You'll need to bring 2-3 white uniform shirts, 1-2 sets of black trousers (and/or black skirts that fall below the knee when standing and sitting), and black, close-toed dress shoes.

Epaulettes will be provided for you onboard.

We do keep a selection of white uniform shirts onboard, but there's no guarantee we will have the appropriate sizes for everyone. Many online retailers sell these shirts, including Amazon.

Uniforms for Housekeeping

A uniform will be provided for you onboard. You'll want to bring some comfortable trainers / tennis shoes you don't mind getting a little dirty.



Uniforms for Galley & Dining Room

An apron and a uniform shirt and trousers will be provided for you onboard, though you should bring undershirts/tops to wear underneath your uniform shirt. If you choose not to wear the issued trousers, you can wear your own, as long as they reach to your ankles and can get a little wet or dirty!

You'll be provided with a uniform cap or hat to wear during shifts.

Non-slip shoes are important! We have a small selection of overshoes onboard but cannot accommodate wide sizes or guarantee we will have the appropriate sizes available for everyone. You can purchase non-slip shoes from any retailer as long as they don't have holes in the top of the shoe.

Uniforms for Deck & Engineering

Officers and engineers should bring at least one pair of khaki trousers and a khaki shirt with epaulettes for general work and on-duty days, as well as one pair of black slacks.

There is a selection of coveralls, steel-toed boots, and white epaulette shirts kept onboard, but we cannot guarantee we will have the appropriate sizes available for everyone. With this in mind, you may want to bring your own coveralls and/or steel-toed boots with you.

Mercy Ships will provide one set of epaulettes for each uniform.

Uniforms for Project Team

Bring loose-fitting clothes that you can get dirty. Steel-toed boots or shoes are highly recommended for the whole team, but mandatory for any doing steel-work.

6. What to Bring / Packing Lists

Clothing

Clothing onboard is conservative yet casual (refer to Dress Code on page 12). You may want to bring some nicer clothing for special occasions and/or church. Due to the limited space in the cabins, the rule of thumb is to pack enough clothing for 7-10 days.

Shoes

Consider bringing a pair of dress shoes, trainers, "flats"/casual shoes, and sandals. What you bring depends on your preferences, role onboard, and length of service.

Toiletries

We sell a range of toiletries in Pier 99, but the selection is limited and may vary. If you have preferred brands, you may want to bring these with you as we can't guarantee stock onboard. Local stores may also have items you run out of or forget to bring with you.

Remember nail polish, polish remover, hair colour, and perfumes cannot be shipped in the post due to hazardous materials regulations - so you might want to bring these with you if you use them.

Luggage

Duffel bags or collapsable luggage are preferred as they're easier to store.



You must bring...

- 7+ washable, cloth face masks - must be 2+ layers and fastens over the ears or around the head
 - Personal medical thermometer
-

Consider bringing...

- Laundry bag
- Small flashlight / headtorch
- Sunglasses
- Mosquito spray*
- Sunscreen / Sunblock*
- Sleeping bag / travel hammock if you want to travel / camp ashore
- Travel mug*
- Glass or plastic take-away containers
- Phone card*
- Electrical adaptor for the British plugs onboard*
- Electrical adaptor for the EU plugs ashore

- Non-prescription/over-the-counter medications*
- Backpack or secure bag
- Beach / travel towel
- Ear plugs
- Magnets or sticky tack*
- Battery-powered alarm clock
- Throw blanket (the ship can be quite chilly!)
- A favorite game
- Personal photos, etc. with which you may want to personalise your bunk-space
- Hanging bedside pocket
- Small hair-wrap drying towel

**denotes items also sold in Pier 99 or the Pharmacy*

Don't bring...

- Large suitcases
 - Large musical instruments
 - Firearms or any sort of weapons
 - Candles
 - Cordless appliances using butane-fuel
 - Products containing bleach
 - Expensive jewelry and electronics
 - Medical supplies for donation
 - Gifts for patients
-

We provide...

- One bath towel
- One fitted sheet
- One duvet with a cover
- One pillow
- One pillowcase

7. Vaccinations & Medication

Mandatory immunisations for adult crew:

- **Tetanus/Diphtheria** (one dose within last 10 years)

Recommended immunisations for all adult crew:

- **MMR - Measles, Mumps, Rubella** (series of 2)
- **Hepatitis B** (series of 3)
- **Hepatitis A** (series of 2)
- **Pneumococcal** (for crew age 65 or older)

For additional details regarding these requirements, please refer to the immunisation checklist you will be sent after you receive your official offer letter or contact our Medical Review Facilitator at medical.review.facil@mercyships.org.

Important note on immunisations:

If you hope to extend your commitment beyond our shipyard period in the Canary Islands, additional immunizations are required. These may not be available or may be very expensive locally, therefore we recommend getting all the required immunizations for sailing in international waters and service in Africa before you join Mercy Ships. If extending your time is something you want to consider, ask your Volunteer Coordinator to send you a full list of immunisations so you are aware of and can plan for the additional requirements.

Prescription Medications

If you take specific medication for a chronic condition, then we recommend you please bring a supply to last the entirety of your stay. When preparing your hand luggage pre-departure, we also highly recommend keeping at least a two-week supply in your carry-on luggage when travelling, in case your checked baggage is lost or delayed. If you have any questions about what our pharmacy can provide for you, don't hesitate to reach out to pharmacist.afm@mercyships.org.

8. Commitment Levels

Each position has a preferred minimum commitment length that determines the ideal Commitment Level for each volunteer.

The Commitment Level then determines factors such as what training is required, what your crew fees will be each month, how much time off you accrue, and more.


We seek to honour those who make longer commitments by providing crew fee discounts, offering more time off, and other benefits the longer you commit to volunteer.

Those with Level 3 and 4 commitments are also part of our Community of Faith as a legally organized religious order.

		VOLUNTEER POSITION COMMITMENT STRUCTURE	
		Shorter Term Service (Up to 12 Months)	
		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2
COMMITMENT		2 weeks to 3 months	3 to 12 months
CREW FEES (USD)		\$400	\$400
WITH DISCOUNT	For Attending On Boarding†	\$200	\$200
FINANCIAL AID		Available for Qualifying Maritime Roles	Available for Qualifying Maritime Roles
REQUIRED TRAINING		n/a	Equipping to Serve*
PTO BENEFIT / ACCRUAL		n/a	Accrued at .055/day, 10 days maximum
INSURANCE		Evacuation & Repatriation is covered by Mercy Ships. Health insurance is encouraged.	Evacuation & Repatriation is covered by Mercy Ships. Health insurance is encouraged.

*Equipping to Serve is a course facilitated onboard the ship.

†On Boarding is a course facilitated at the International Support Center in Texas, USA.

		VOLUNTEER POSISTION COMMITMENT STRUCTURE	
		Community of Faith (12+ Months)	
		LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
COMMITMENT		12 to 24 months	24+ months
CREW FEES (USD)		\$200	\$200
FINANCIAL AID		Available for Qualifying Maritime Roles	Available to All Level 4 Crew
REQUIRED TRAINING		On Boarding†	On Boarding†
PTO BENEFIT / ACCRUAL		1st year: 20 days/5 weeks maximum	30 days/6 weeks maximum
		After 1st year: 25 days/5 weeks maximum	
INSURANCE		Evacuation & Repatriation is covered by Mercy Ships. Health insurance is required.	Evacuation & Repatriation is covered by Mercy Ships. Health insurance is required.

†On Boarding is a course facilitated at the International Support Center in Texas, USA.

9. Money Matters

Crew Fees

Crew fees help cover operational expenses onboard so we can maximise the impact of donations by putting 75% directly into programmatic expenses, like the cost of surgery for a patient who needs it.

Crew fees are paid monthly with a base of USD \$400.

We are committed to keeping crew fees as low as possible, but crew can expect crew fees to increase 2-5% each year.

Discounts

As noted in the previous section regarding Commitment Levels, discounts are given to crew who

- make longer commitments
- have completed On Boarding previously
- those from "Tier II" countries¹

Financial Aid

Financial support is available to those making a commitment of 24+ months, and for any crew filling qualified maritime roles.

INDIVIDUALS			
Note: Crew fees are paid by every adult crew member.			
LEVEL	COMMITMENT	TIER I	TIER II
1 & 2	2 weeks to 12 months	\$400	\$200
3 & 4	12+ months	\$200	\$200

¹ Tiers are determined based on research published by the World Bank. Tier I is made up of what the World Bank defines as a "high income" nation, defined as any nation with a gross national income per capita of US\$12,536 or more in 2019, calculated using the Atlas method. Source: worldbank.org

Budgets & fundraising

Are you trying to wrap your head around budgeting, crew fees, and fundraising for your time onboard? Our Financial Support team is here to help!

They are there to coach and encourage volunteers and it is their goal to ensure everyone is financially prepared for their service onboard.

Whether or not you are fundraising, the Financial Support team is here to walk you through budgeting, expenses, financial planning, tax implications, and more.

Crew coordinators working in our international Mercy Ships offices may also provide additional information to you as appropriate, depending on your country of residence and/or citizenship.¹

Processing donations through Mercy Ships

Once you've received your offer letter to join, you can elect to process donations through Mercy Ships. We would then assign you a special code to give your donors, ensuring any gifts made for you through Mercy Ships are tax deductible.

Paying your crew fees

If your commitment is three months or less, your crew fees are due in one sum once you arrive onboard. Otherwise, crew fees are paid at the beginning of each month and can be paid by credit card, personal check, or transfer from your Crew Bank account.

¹ Refer to Appendix A for Mercy Ship international office contact information



What can the Crew Bank do for me?

What is the Crew Bank?

The Crew Bank is a service provided to all crew serving onboard. It operates very much like any other bank. You're even able to monitor your balance and spending activity from your computer! However, our Crew Bank isn't connected to any outside banking network.

How do I set up an account?

When you arrive onboard, you'll check in with our Finance team, and an account will be opened for you.

What can you do with your crew account?

You can pay your crew fees, make deposits, request cash withdrawals, transfer money to other crew accounts, and pay for purchases in Pier 99 and the Café.

In what ways can money be deposited into the account?

- Support from donors, received by Mercy Ships
- Bank transfers (wire transfers or EFTs)
- Personal check (USD, GBP, EUR, or CAN)
- Credit card with 3% added fee (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover)
- Cash (USD, GBP, EUR, or local African currency)
- Traveler's checks (USD, GBP, EUR)

Can I cash a personal check in the Crew Bank that is made out to me?

Yes, you can endorse it, and it can be deposited into your Crew Bank account. There are no fees or charges for this; however, if the check is from one of your supporters, they cannot be issued a receipt for their donation since the check is not made out to Mercy Ships.

How can I take money out of my account?

You can withdraw money by accessing your account online or by going to the Crew Bank onboard in person during its hours of operation. You can buy money in the local currency of the nation we are visiting, USD, GBP, or EUR at the exchange rate of the date of purchase.

What currency is used onboard?

US Dollars are used for transactions such as crew fees, deposits into your account, and purchases in Pier 99 and the Café. If you are not from the US and plan to use your card to make a deposit, you should tell your credit card company that you will have some transactions processed through the US so your account isn't flagged or locked!

10. Insurance

Evacuation and Repatriation Insurance

Evacuation and repatriation insurance is provided to all crew through Talent Trust, and you'll be automatically enrolled in the program.

What is evacuation and repatriation insurance?

The costs incurred¹ will be paid for (or reimbursed) by Talent Trust in the event that you're injured or seriously sick and we are not able to treat you onboard or in a local hospital. However, benefits are only applicable in the event of an **emergency** situation, so we strongly encourage all crew serving one year or less to also enroll in a medical insurance policy (with Talent Trust or another provider). Crew committing to more than one year onboard are **required** to have a medical insurance policy.

Health Insurance

We **require** additional health insurance during your time onboard while in shipyard. Typically this is not a requirement; however, during the pandemic we need to ensure every crewmember has proper coverage. Mercy Ships recommends the **Top-Up Plan from Talent Trust**, in which you can enroll by applying for the **Outreach program** at www.talent-trust.com.

You can also purchase short-term travel insurance in most countries and is typically an option when purchasing your airfare through travel agents. Cost is variable depending on what type of coverage you elect.

¹ To a certain amount - refer to table on the right.

Crew Evacuation and Repatriation Policy Benefits

- Worldwide: US \$250,000 per year
- Emergency evacuation to nearest appropriate facility: Full Refund
- Repatriation to home country: Full Refund
- Return of mortal remains: US \$15,000
- Multilingual Medical Helpline: 24 Hours
- Choice of hospitals and physicians: unrestricted
- Emergency medical \$ for additional expenses: Full refund
- Emergency medical (inside home country): Up to US \$150,000
- Hospital cash benefit: US \$25 per day
- Pre-existing conditions: Coverage if not ongoing at the date of entry
- Claims processing: Scan and email
- Policy Excess: Nil

For further information, please visit www.talent-trust.com

Evacuation and Repatriation FAQs

When does coverage begin and end?

Coverage begins when the crew member starts travelling by air to the ship and once they arrive back in their home country.

If a crew member takes a 'side trip' on the way to or from the ship, are they covered? For example, a Canadian travels to Egypt for two weeks prior to travelling to the ship's location.

No, a side trip would not be covered by this policy. In this example, the trip to Egypt is not covered, and the time *in* Egypt is not covered; however, the policy would begin as soon as the volunteer started travelling from Egypt to the ship's location.

Does the standard policy cover pre-existing conditions?

The policy will cover **new** incidences of a pre-existing condition, but it will not provide coverage for ongoing medical treatment related to a condition for which you may be currently seeking treatment.



What determines if a crew member needs to be evacuated and to where would they be evacuated?

Evacuations are conducted only for emergency situations where appropriate medical care cannot be found in the policy member's current location. This decision is made in consultation with medical services on the ground/ship and with the emergency evacuation providers. The definition of an emergency does require that the treatment is necessary on an in-patient basis.

Crew being evacuated would be transported to the nearest in-patient facility that can address the needs of the emergency (typically in South Africa or continental Europe).

If it was determined that sufficient medical coverage can be received in-country (versus being evacuated), who would cover those costs? For example, if a crew had a compound fracture in the Canary Islands, and it was determined that the hospital there could provide sufficient treatment, would the evacuation and repatriation policy cover these expenses?

The evacuation and repatriation policy does still cover emergency medical costs in the event that treatment is needed, but an evacuation is not necessary.

11. Flights & Travel

Are you ready to arrange your travel? Remember to confirm your plans with your Volunteer Coordinator before you purchase any tickets!

Ticket refund policy

Flexibility is key!

Because the ships' schedules can change, and with so many things up in the air due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we strongly recommend that all crew purchase changeable and/or refundable tickets. Mercy Ships cannot offer refunds or financial assistance with extra costs incurred for changing or cancelling airline tickets when caused by a change in the ships' schedules or from unexpected travel restrictions.

Arranging your flights

Use the service dates in your offer letter as your date of arrival and departure for your flights. Please try to book flights arriving between 7 AM and 11 PM. **Weekend arrivals cannot be accommodated.**

Flights should be booked in/out of **Tenerife North Airport** (code TFN) or **Tenerife South Airport** (code TFS) *except* from mid-June through mid-September while the *Africa Mercy* is in dry dock. During that time, flights must be booked in/out of **Gran Canaria Airport** (code LPA).

Once you've purchased your flights, complete the Pre-Arrival form and submit it to your Volunteer Coordinator. You're almost done!

Travel agents

Mercy Ships recommends **Safe Harbors Travel** as our partnering travel agent. They can help secure seaman or humanitarian fares. By booking with Safe Harbor, you will also be granted access to World Aware, a travel risk management app.

SAFE HARBORS TRAVEL

safeharbors.com

travel@safeharbors.com

+1 877 443 1415

+1 443 616 2430

Immigration, visas, and paperwork

Because the Canary Islands are part of Spain, an EU nation, a visa *may* not be required. To confirm if you need a visa, visit www.spain.visahq.com. If a visa is required, Mercy Ships can provide a volunteer confirmation letter on your behalf.

For **EU citizens**, you can typically enter and exit the Canary Islands by using your passport *or* your ID card, however immigration is **currently requiring a passport of all crew**.

Before you travel, make sure you have all the required documentation to travel - this often includes your crew verification letter, health authorization, QR code from Spain's ministry of health, negative Covid test results, etc. Contact your travel agent or volunteer coordinator to double check!

As you travel, you can always call either the Purser onboard or the HR offices in Texas, USA if you encounter any issues.

- Purser, answered 24/7: +1 954 538 6110 (satellite phone) or +34 644 957 421 (WhatsApp - call or text)
- HR, answered 0800-1700 CST Monday-Friday: +1 903 939 7000

Arriving in-country

Upon arrival, a Mercy Ships representative will be waiting to collect you from the airport. You will collect your baggage and be taken by taxi to be processed by the immigration authorities before being taken onboard or to your hotel quarantine location, if required.

Bon Voyage!



12. Before you go... Ship / Shipyard Tips

- Don't forget your face masks! Masks are required to be worn at all times unless in your cabin, eating meals, or jogging!
- Once you arrive onboard, all crew are subject to quarantine or physical distancing measures for the first 14 days. If you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you are exempt from quarantine upon arrival. These regulations change as the situation changes!
- Practice taking **short showers** before you arrive! We try to conserve water as much as possible - try making it a personal contest to get the lowest time!
- Need to do your washing? You can utilise the washing machines for your **laundry** by signing up for a time. Be careful not to be late, though!
- Along with a small welcome basket in your cabin, when you arrive you'll also receive a **Nalgene water bottle** - don't lose it!
- Shipyard can be noisy sometimes - bring your headphones!
- About every other year we "go dry" and take the ship completely out of the water! You won't have to worry about getting your "sea legs" while we're in drydock!
- The Canary Islands has a sizable tourist and ex-pat community, so many speak English or French in addition to their native Spanish.
- Because tourism is such a large part of the Canarian economy, you'll find a lot of delicious food choices - but don't overlook Canarian cuisine, which has elements of Spanish, Latin American, African, and native Guanche

What does *Pier 99* offer?

- Soap & sanitiser, body wash, shampoo, conditioner
- Razors, shaving cream
- Toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss
- Lotions, sun creams, bug spray
- Feminine hygiene products
- Washing powder/laundry soap
- Dish soap, sponges, all-purpose cleaners
- Tweezers, nail clippers
- Lip balms
- Nail polish remover
- Trash bags, Ziploc bags, hand towels
- Magnets, Envelopes, Batteries
- Basic stationery supplies
- Phone cards
- UK power adaptors, basic computer supplies
- Balloons, wrapping paper
- Branded shirts, lanyards, mugs
- Locally-crafted souvenirs
- Chocolates, candies, gum/mints
- Chips/Crisps, crackers
- Cake mix, cookie/biscuit mix
- Granola bars, trail mix, popcorn
- Canned soups
- Basic baking and cooking supplies
- Assorted sodas and juices

This is a sampling of items typically available in Pier 99, our convenience store onboard. All items are subject to availability.

13. Support from Mercy Ships offices

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Thank you.

This life-changing work wouldn't be possible without the passion and selfless commitment from our volunteers.



