



# 2021-2022 Volunteer Application Packet

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*Relieving Disaster, Promoting Community*

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**Address:**

Bahamas Methodist Habitat  
P.O. Box EL-25803  
Camp Symonette, Symonette Road  
James Cistern, Eleuthera,  
The Bahamas

**Phone:**

Bahamas: (242) 823 -6891

**Skype:**

MethodistHabitat

**Web:**

[www.MethodistHabitat.org](http://www.MethodistHabitat.org)

**Primary Email:**

[MethodistHabitat@gmail.com](mailto:MethodistHabitat@gmail.com)

**Alternative Email:**

[volunteerBMH@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerBMH@gmail.com)

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# From the BMH Board of Directors



Dear Volunteer Applicants:

**Bahamas Methodist Habitat** is the disaster management and sub-standard home repair Outreach Ministry of the Bahamas Conference of the Methodist Church. Volunteers serve together to repair and build homes for families in the Bahamas because those with inadequate housing are at great risk in a disaster.

Our goal is to improve living conditions for families in need before, during, and after disasters strike. We strive to offer *transformational experiences for volunteers and homeowners* alike by sharing the love of Christ through service. The hope is that volunteers will return home with an expanded view of the world and God and inspired to create ways to be involved in their own community. Homeowners will come through the experience with safer homes and renewed sense of Christian community and hope.

**We would like to invite you to come serve with us in an exciting and unique way that puts your Faith into Action and celebrates that the well-being of every community matters to Jesus.**

We encourage you to review the service opportunities in this packet. Our Executive Director and wonderful staff and church members are willing to serve with you and care for the specific needs of your group. We want this to be the best experience possible and are dedicated to that end.

## Things to know:

- It is helpful if some members of your group have construction knowledge but not required. Our staff will teach you what you need to know. You just have to be willing to learn...and serve!
- Volunteers **Arrive** on **Sunday** afternoon and **Depart** the following **Saturday** morning.
- Volunteer fees cover: BMH Mask, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Filtered Water/Water Cooler, Lodging, On-Island Transportation, Site Leaders, and Tools needed for the duration of your stay (and we are always in need of donated tools and accessories).
- In light of the historic nature of Hurricane Dorian, we are prioritizing that work for 2021 and possibly beyond. Higher costs related to the hurricane plus the global pandemic and COVID-19 measures means that funds do not go as far. We are not increasing our fees but we are asking that churches consider raising additional funds for our building materials fund. \$200-\$400/person is recommended as a goal.
- Airfare is not included in the cost
- BMH is open to all people from all walks of life; **this is not just for Methodists!**

Serve with us and strengthen communities. Come find the place where your gifts and talents intersect with the needs of the world. Our schedule fills up fast, so please SIGN UP today. We look forward to seeing and serving with you soon!

Grace and Peace,

**Mr. Larry McPhee, Chairperson,**

Bahamas Methodist Habitat Board of Directors

on behalf of the all the Board and Staff of Bahamas Methodist Habitat

# Application Guidelines

Many questions that you have can be answered in this packet or on our website. You can also contact us: 1-242-823-6891 [MethodistHabitat@gmail.com](mailto:MethodistHabitat@gmail.com) or [volunteerBMH@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerBMH@gmail.com)

1. Go to [www.methodisthabitat.org/plan-your-trip](http://www.methodisthabitat.org/plan-your-trip) and submit a request for preferred week of service.
2. Once mutually beneficial dates are found, pay your \$500 non-refundable registration fee ASAP via our website or Wire Transfer. Contact us to discuss checks. Most volunteer groups schedule 6 mos. to 1.5 years in advance.
3. Complete the Application Form found both online and in this packet. Email your completed application to [volunteerBMH@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerBMH@gmail.com). Your Registration Fee and Completed Application both must be received in order to guarantee your week. No applications will be accepted via fax or phone call.
4. Receive Confirmation from BMH. Keep a copy of everything for your files and to assist in future planning!

**Teams are scheduled on a *first come, first re-served* basis.**

**Your Dates are not confirmed until after we receive:**



## Submit Online - Preferred

- Go to our website [www.methodisthabitat.org](http://www.methodisthabitat.org)
- Visit the BMH "Plan Your Trip" page on our website at Step 2
- Use 'Pay Fee' Button at Step 2 to pay your \$500 registration fee online. Please list team leader, group or church name & dates w/payment
- Email us your payment Confirmation receipt

## Submit via the Mail

**Mail Registration Fee Check & Application to:**

DHL Courier Service

Bahamas Methodist Habit

c/o Dingle Motors, Rock Sound, Eleuthera.

**ESTIMATING GROUP SIZE:** We all want as many people as possible to be able to have the opportunity to serve. If you are estimating your reservation, please give the most accurate number you can rather than overestimate by a large amount. It is easier for us to add numbers to a smaller reservation than it is for us to replace a whole group we have turned away because we expected your group to be larger. Please help us help the most people!

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** If cancellation is necessary, email [MethoditHabitat@gmail.com](mailto:MethoditHabitat@gmail.com) **ASAP**. Registration fee is non-refundable and separate from service week costs. (See "Payment Information" chart on the Application Form). A registration fee can only be transferred to a newly-scheduled date within 12 months of payment. Cancellation for the team or lowering your total volunteer number must be completed one 1 month prior to your week of service. *Note: we have made COVID-19 exceptions for 2020 teams.* Planning and Travel in 2021 and beyond is a risk even as conditions stabilize. In order for us to maintain this ministry through these changing conditions, we cannot refund the registration fee. Volunteer fees will be refundable for flight cancellations and unforeseen catastrophes. Individual circumstances should be covered by insurance.

**ABACO REQUIREMENTS** - Team size is capped at 8 persons max. Early Response Team training is a bonus.

# BMH Volunteer Application Form

Submit via Email [volunteerBMH@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerBMH@gmail.com)

**Group Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Street or P.O. Box)

(Suite #)

(Settlement / City)

(Island / State)

(Zip)

**Phone:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

*\*All correspondence will be sent to the church/group address in the attention of the contact person unless indicated otherwise.*

**Preferred Location:**  Eleuthera - Camp Symonette  South Eleuthera  Abaco  Freeport, Grand Bahama  
 Note that 2021 site options are limited to Abaco (team size 8 or less) and Freeport (team size 18 max, 12 preferred)

**Preferred Weeks:** 1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_

(Sunday Afternoon to Saturday)

**GROUP SIZE:** (Give total numbers in each category) **Youth:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Young Adults:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Adults:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ages: 14-18                      Ages: 19-24                      25+ years                      All ages

1. A typical "Work Crew" is 6 people. Youth Teams: 5 youths + 1 adults = 1 work crew.
2. Each work crew must have at least 1 adults. (We ask that at least one adult has some construction experience!)
4. Adult to Youth ratio is 1:5. Attention to gender ration should be considered when recruiting chaperones.

## Payment Information

| Registration Fee* (one per team) | 4 Months Out 1 <sup>st</sup> Payment (per person) | Upon Arrival 2nd Payment (per person) | Total (per person) |
|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| \$500*                           | \$400*  | \$400                                 | <b>\$800</b>       |

Your fees cover building materials, housing, meals, **on-island** transportation, site leaders and a BMH mask.

*\*Non-refundable.* A reg fee may be transferred only to a substitute participant or week for the same year.

### Application Checklist:

- Completed **Application** (this sheet)
- Included or submitted online **\$500 Per Team Registration Fee** (non-refundable)
- I have read and agree to the terms outlined in the **Covenant Sheet**
- I have read and agree to the **Cancellation Policy** (listed above on the Application Guidelines)
- I have downloaded the appropriate **Group Leader Packet** from the website to help me prepare for the trip
- I understand that it is required to obtain international medical evacuation /UMVIM Sports insurance for my group

**Signature of Group Advisor / Senior Pastor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Contact Person:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information and planning guides can be found in the Volunteer tab of our website. Be sure to download the **Group Leader Packet, Volunteer Information Form, FAQs, Travel tips, Packing Guides, BMH Needs List** and more.

# Bahamas Methodist Habitat Covenant Sheet

A covenant is a promise between two parties. Because communal living and cooperative working require agreements in behavior and expectations, BMH offers to enter into this Covenant with you, our volunteers.

**BMH promises to:**

- Facilitate a unique service opportunity for your group.
- Provide a facility, staff, and all the details that go into making your service experience a success.
- House and feed volunteers during their stay with us.
- Do our best to help ensure safe working and living conditions.
- Work with volunteers to make Christian service a valid and meaningful part of their faith/ life journey.

**Volunteers promise to:**

- Come to BMH with a willingness to serve and be open to a flexible schedule that will allow for incidents out of BMH’s control. Abide by Bahamas laws and regulations especially around Covid-19 measures.
- Read, understand, respect, and abide by the stated ***Expectations, Rules and Regulations of BMH*** found in this packet. (Be sure that each of your volunteers read and sign this covenant sheet.)

***For BMH Mission Service of:***

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|                   |             |              |                        |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
| <i>Group Name</i> | <i>City</i> | <i>State</i> | <i>Week of Service</i> |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|

**Group Leader:** I covenant with my Bahamas Methodist Habitat volunteers and with the BMH staff to responsibly prepare my team for the BMH service experience. I have read BMH’s ***Expectations, Rules and Regulations*** and agree to abide by them during our BMH mission trip.

**Please have your group sign their names and date their signature in the space provided below. (This needs to be turned in upon your arrival in the Bahamas.)**

By signing your name, you are making an official covenant with your group and with Bahamas Methodist Habitat. Thank you! (Use additional sheets if needed)

| Signature | Date | Signature | Date |
|-----------|------|-----------|------|
| 1.        |      | 13.       |      |
| 2.        |      | 14.       |      |
| 3.        |      | 15.       |      |
| 4.        |      | 16.       |      |
| 5.        |      | 17.       |      |
| 6.        |      | 18.       |      |
| 7.        |      | 19.       |      |
| 8.        |      | 20.       |      |
| 9.        |      | 21.       |      |
| 10.       |      | 22.       |      |
| 11.       |      | 23.       |      |
| 12.       |      | 24.       |      |

# Expectations, Rules and Regulations for Volunteers

Bahamas Methodist Habitat is a disaster management and home repair mission and all activities and energies should be focused to this end. You have made a commitment to BMH, and on the basis of that commitment we have committed to the housing needs in the Bahamas. We expect all volunteers to participate fully in each aspect of the BMH experience for your safety and our common purpose.

## **These Expectations, Rules and Regulations apply to all BMH volunteers.**

BMH staff has overall responsibility for all activities. Directions given by the staff are to be strictly observed.

Adult leaders are responsible for the safety, compliance, and conduct of their youth volunteers at all times (at camp, worksite and in the community) while your group participates with BMH.

The summer youth program is designed for senior high youth (ages 13 and older AND having completed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade). Youth younger than 13 must be accompanied by a parents or a designated guardian.

Everyone is expected to act responsibly the entire time they are in the BMH community. Since you will all be coming from outside the region, you will be an obvious presence in affiliation with BMH. There might be times when you need to modify your lifestyle or habits so as not to be offensive to the community as well as being a good representative of BMH. Take your cues from the staff.

Please use tools, supplies, materials and other resources responsibly and for their intended home repair purposes. Always keep the safety of others a priority, as well as being sensitive to the family you are serving. If a family requests that you stop an activity, please respect their wishes. Don't place items behind another person.

Water Safety - Jumping from rocks, cliffs, docks, or other platforms is dangerous in unfamiliar water. We observe a NO JUMPING policy except for certain locations (often visited on excursion day.) If BMH staff say it is ok to jump at a particular location, always jump FEET FIRST and do not jump until the person/s before you is clear. BMH is not responsible for injuries that are a result of reckless or risky behavior by volunteers.

Possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol is strictly forbidden! Violators will be asked to return to their home immediately at their group's expense.

The staff will inform you of any specific facility or community guidelines prior to or upon your arrival, especially for Hurricane Dorian sites in Grand Bahama or Abaco.

Smoking or use of tobacco products is restricted to specific areas at the BMH facility and work sites. Underage youth are not permitted to smoke anywhere!

Fire arms, air rifles, BB guns, any kind of weaponry (or replicas) or fireworks are not permitted.

No animals permitted to be brought back to a BMH housing facility.

Females are not permitted at any time in the males' sleeping area. Males are not permitted in the females' sleeping area, at any time.

A strict 10:00p.m. quiet time and 10:30p.m. "lights-out" rule applies to all volunteers. Possible exception will be Friday night, when lights out can be extended to 12:00a.m. if agreed upon by staff and adult crew leaders.

**Casual attire-** Discretion in clothing must be used at the housing facility and in the community. Shirts must be worn at all times. Modest shorts and T-shirts are acceptable attire at housing. Halter/cut off shirts, spaghetti strap, sheer and/or strapless tops, sports bras worn as an outer garment are not appropriate. Leggings/spandex clothing must be worn with long top with short sleeves but are not safe for work sites. Clothing/hats expressing alcohol/beer slogans and obscenities are not acceptable. Sturdy hiking sandals with ankle straps are highly recommended for casual time and for excursion day.

**Work attire:** T-Shirts, long pants (light cotton or nylon, scrubs, jeans) and sturdy shoes (work boots are preferred) must be worn at all times at the work site. Sweat pants, shorts, ripped pants, half shirts, sleeveless shirts, leggings, sports bras, tank-tops and halter tops are not acceptable.

**Beach Attire:** Swimsuits should be modest. Girls need to have a **full coverage** one-piece or tankini. Guys should have loose trunks. If you have a two-piece or cut-out one piece, please bring a tee shirt to wear over it.

**Church Attire:** Most weeks we are able to join with a local congregation for worship or Bible study one evening. Appropriate church attire is business casual i.e. collared shirt/polo and long pants for males and long skirts (knee length or longer) and covered shoulders/modest neckline for females.

Because you are visiting an unfamiliar community, please always go from place to place in a group of three or more people. Never travel alone. Make sure your Team Leader is always aware of your location.

All volunteers (youth and adult) are expected to participate fully in the programs of BMH, including meals, chores, meetings, evening gatherings and special events. To keep the housing facility functioning smoothly, volunteers will be asked to assist in chores such as camp clean up, tool and supply organization, after meal clean up, loading/unloading of building materials.

To ensure sensitivity to the families and communities we serve, taking pictures of or recording people without permission is strictly prohibited and video equipment on work sites should be discussed with staff.

Take time to fully experience the Bahamas. Limit the use of cell phone and other electronic equipment. Internet availability will be limited to Group Leaders and should only be used for necessary updates. No youth should expect to have Internet access on a regular basis.

A work crew is normally 6-10 people. Groups with 11 participants must be divided into two work crews (6 & 5.) Due to COVID-19 restrictions, work crew size will be capped at 6 persons for 2021 and possibly 2022.

Working hours are from 8:00am - 4:00pm Monday - Thursday. We will attempt to have time at a beach each day to cool off and relax after working. There will be more site seeing and recreational activities on Friday, or your last full day on the island. This is to ensure the best possible experience for you, the staff and the families we serve.

We expect lunch to be eaten at the worksite. You may bring extra sandwiches to share with family members. (Some individuals will go out of their way to make you feel appreciated - even overextending themselves). If a family member insists on showing their appreciation by preparing lunch, accept their offer. If you have any questions or concerns, please check with the staff.

BMH does not condone or tolerate harassment or abuse of any kind and will take measures to reconcile the situation. This includes but is not limited to intentional insensitivity or hostility towards others of sexual, gender-based, or racial, ethnic nature. Incidents deemed unintentional will be handled as a 'teaching' moment and an opportunity to clarify or set appropriate boundaries.

When sharing information about your plans before or after travel over the internet publicly, please be mindful that people outside of your church or organization will have access to it. Always speak as if someone from the Bahamas, especially your homeowner might see what you post. Please be sure to consider tone, language, and words used. Our goal is to celebrate the Bahamas by empower local communities and serving together.