

VBM Overseas Intern Handbook

Vision Baptist Missions, Inc.



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this *VBM Overseas Intern Handbook* (Handbook) is to provide local churches and all prospective and enrolled Interns an understanding of the identity, policies, and procedures of Vision Baptist Missions, Inc. (VBM) and the expectations of the VBM overseas internship program (Internship). This Handbook was prepared by Intern Leaders who intend for this Handbook to be consistent with the teachings of the Bible, the Articles of Incorporation, and the Bylaws of VBM, as well as federal, state, local, and international laws. This Handbook applies to all Vision School of Missions (VSM) students as well as those from other colleges and ministries who desire to complete an overseas Internship with VBM.

DEFINITIONS

Intern: A man or woman serving overseas with VBM to gain missionary training.

Intern Leadership/Leader(s): The President, General Director, Dean of Students and/or missionaries they appoint (“Supervising Missionaries”) who mentor and oversee interns enrolled in the overseas internship program.

Internship: The overseas internship program of VBM described in this Handbook.

Sending Church: A Baptist church of which the Intern is a member and which has sending authority for an Intern, holding them accountable to carry out their ministry with integrity, wisdom, and doctrinal purity.

Sending Church Pastor: The Pastor of a Intern’s Sending Church appointed according to the Sending Church’s appropriate governing documents or, in the event of a vacancy, a deacon or another male member authorized by the church to act in this capacity.

Supervising Missionary: A missionary or missionaries appointed by the President, General Director, and Dean of Students to mentor and oversee the Intern while on the mission field. Supervising Missionaries are normally VBM missionaries, but in certain instances non-VBM missionaries may be appointed. In all cases, Supervising Missionaries must have completed at least one full four-year term on the mission field and be in agreement with the Statement of Faith of VBM. When the Intern is a female, the wife of a Supervising Missionary may act in the same capacity of supervision over the Intern as the husband.

CHAPTER 1: IDENTITY

1.1 History

Vision Baptist Missions, Inc. was born out of the heart of a local church to serve missionaries who desired to reach the world with the gospel in our generation.

In 2008, Vision Baptist Church of Alpharetta, Georgia, was preparing to send its first missionary candidate, who was finishing his final preparations at the church. As the church considered sending agencies and how this missionary candidate would be sent, the church decided it would serve him and other upcoming missionaries training at the church best by starting a missions board out of the church, which would help keep them unified in beliefs, philosophy, and vision. Therefore, VBM was created, and its first missionary (to China) was accepted on June 20, 2008. He began full-time deputation in January 2009.

Initially, VBM only served missionaries who were missionary members of Vision Baptist Church. As time passed and more missionaries were sent out, VBM was approached about accepting missionary candidates from other local Baptist churches, especially those involved in the missions training at Vision Baptist Church. After some consideration, VBM agreed to accept missionary candidates from other like-minded Baptist churches, partnering with them to train and send missionaries worldwide.

The overseas internship program of VBM developed over the years with young people wanting to get training and mentoring from the early days of the mission getting started. The Lord has blessed the program, and we hope that it might be a help to many others who desire to be equipped to serve the Lord around the world.

In February 2022, God opened the door for VBM to purchase the current “VBM Campus” in Dawsonville, Georgia, that is home to the daily operations of VBM.

In December 2022, a new independent Board of Directors was appointed to govern VBM. The purpose of this Board is to provide independent oversight and governance for VBM, to ensure that the leadership pursues the mission of the organization in accordance with its policies and procedures, financial guidelines, and doctrinal statement.

1.2 Vision, Missions, Methods, Distinctives

Vision: VBM is a mission agency with a vision to evangelize the world in our generation for the glory of God. We envision a world where every person has heard the gospel, every community has an indigenous Baptist church, and every church has trained national leadership.

Mission: VBM is dedicated to partnering with local churches to train and send missionaries worldwide.

Methods: VBM trains missionaries through biblical teaching, practical training, and personal mentoring. VBM sends missionaries by providing financial services, member care, and accountability.

Distinctives: Missionaries with Vision Baptist Missions are:

1. Passionate about world evangelism, seeking to evangelize the world in our generation.
2. Purposed in mission, focusing primarily on church-planting and leader-training.
3. Prepared through life-on-life missions training, developing a humble confidence.

1.3 Statement of Faith

1.3.1 Authority of Statement of Faith

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all VBM believes. VBM does believe, however, that the Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all Interns.

1.3.2 Doctrinal Beliefs

The Bible: We believe that the Bible is the Word of God and that it is divinely inspired. We believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration of Scripture. We believe that the Bible is the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man and the supreme, infallible authority in all matters of faith and conduct. We use the King James Version of the Bible for teaching and preaching in the English language.

God: We believe in the Trinity, the unity of the Godhead. There are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are equally perfect in every divine quality and execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. We believe in God the Father. We believe in Jesus Christ. We believe in the Holy Spirit.

The Father: We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He infallibly foreknows all that shall come to pass, that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ: We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into Heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and His personal, visible return to Earth. We believe Jesus is God.

The Holy Spirit: We believe in the person of the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.

Man: We believe that all men by nature, choice, and practice are sinners, but that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” We believe, therefore, that those who repent of their sins and, by faith, receive Christ as Lord and Savior will rejoice forever in God’s presence, and those who refuse to accept Christ as Lord and Savior will be eternally separated from God.

Salvation: We believe salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who obtained eternal redemption for the believer by His blood. We believe that Jesus tasted death for all men and wants all to be saved. Salvation, in its broadest sense, includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. Therefore, we affirm that the Gospel is the good news that God has made a way of salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ for any person. This truth is in keeping with God’s desire for every person to be saved. Therefore, we deny that only a select few can respond to the Gospel while the rest are predestined to an eternity in Hell.

Eternal Security: We believe in the eternal security of all blood-bought individuals or believers and that such inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled. The power of God keeps each believer, and nothing can separate us from Him, ourselves included. We believe that believers can lose the joy of fellowship with God, can grieve God, and can quench the Spirit of God in them but not lose their salvation.

Eternal State: We believe in a literal Heaven, the eternal home of the redeemed. We believe Heaven to be the literal place where the saved will live forever in the eternal bliss and blessings of God. We believe in Hell, the Christ-less eternity for the lost, where there will be burning and tormenting for those without salvation who have refused to receive the gospel and Jesus Christ as Lord. We believe that Hell, unbelievers, Satan, and all the fallen angels shall be cast into the lake of fire to be tormented day and night forever and forever.

The Church: We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of professing, born-again believers in Jesus Christ, immersed in a credible confession of faith and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that to those local churches were entrusted the perpetual observance of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper and the task of proclaiming to a lost world the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the enthroning of Him as Lord and Master. The scriptural officers of the church are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the offices of pastors and deacons are limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The Relationship Between Church and State: We believe that every human being is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and autonomous and must be free from any ecclesiastical authority or any illegitimate, unconstitutional, or illegal political authority; therefore, Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions with each fulfilling its duties free from the dictation or patronage of the other.

Baptism: We believe in baptism by immersion after salvation with no merit for salvation in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Spirit). Baptism is an outward expression of our inward faith in Jesus Christ and a public testimony of what God has done by His grace. Therefore, we reject infant baptism and any form of sprinkling for infants or adults.

Spiritual Gifts: We believe that spiritual gifts are given to the church for the express purpose of winning the lost and edifying other believers. The Holy Spirit is given to each believer upon acceptance of Christ, and His purpose is to exalt Christ and bring people to Christ. Speaking in tongues was the least important of these gifts in the New Testament and was a sign for unbelieving Jews. Therefore, we do not teach or practice speaking in tongues.

World Evangelism: We believe that the Apostolic office ceased with the death of the New Testament Apostles. We believe that it is His church that He promised continual existence, to continue the work He started until He comes again. We believe that the ministry of reconciliation is committed to every believer, and all are saints/priests of God. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations.

Biblical Separation: We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; that they should be separated from the world while being present in the world; and that they should abstain from all appearance of evil as a testimony to the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ecumenicalism: We believe that doctrinal purity is essential to gospel harmony and that the Bible commands us not to partner with someone preaching another gospel or teaching contrary to sound doctrine.

Second Coming: We believe in the literal return of Jesus Christ in the clouds to take all saved people from the earth before the beginning of the Tribulation period. We believe in the bodily/visible return of Jesus Christ with his saints at the close of the Tribulation period to rule and reign for a thousand years on earth. According to their works, we believe that unbelievers will face and be judged by God at the Great White Throne Judgment, not for salvation, but for their proper and rightful places in the lake of fire.

1.3.3 Biblical Positions

Marriage and Sexuality:

1. We believe that the term “marriage” has only one, legitimate meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, covenantal union, as delineated by Scripture. Marriage ceremonies performed in any facility or space owned, leased, or rented by VBM personnel will be only those ceremonies sanctioned by God, joining one man with one woman as their genders were determined by anatomy at birth (and not subject to change). Whenever there is a conflict between VBM’s position and any new legal standard for marriage, VBM’s statement of faith, doctrines, and biblical positions will govern.

2. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage as defined in (1.6.3.1.a) above. We believe that any other type of sexual activity, identity or expression that lies outside of this definition of marriage, including those that are becoming more accepted in the culture and the courts, are contradictory to God's natural design and purpose for sexual activity.
3. We believe that God creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, unchangeable genders together reflect the image and nature of God, and the rejection of one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

Family Relationships:

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church.
2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the spiritual leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a wonderful gift and heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle examples and appropriate training and discipline.

Sanctity of Life

1. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion is murder and constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life.
2. We believe that an intentional act or omission that facilitates premature death, is assuming a decision that is to be reserved for God. We do not believe that discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome is euthanasia.

Love: We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal graciously, humbly, gently, and patiently with those who oppose us. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such actions.

Protection of Children: We believe that children are from the Lord and must be absolutely protected within VBM from any form of abuse or molestation. VBM has zero tolerance for any person, whether paid or volunteer personnel, or visitor, who abuses or molests a child.

1.4 Core Values

In addition to the Statement of Faith above, VBM has fifteen Core Values that are the foundational and distinctive guiding principles of our mission board. These values help to establish the culture, determine the practice, and accomplish the mission of VBM. While interning with VBM, we expect all Interns to respect the following core values and to not seek to promote any values that are contrary to them.

1. **Walk with God:** To prioritize a personal relationship with Jesus and become more like Him each day
2. **Build a Godly Home:** To continually work on building a God-honoring marriage and family
3. **Lead with Integrity:** To be honest men and women of godly character in every aspect of life and ministry
4. **Be a Learner:** To be teachable, continually growing, learning, and pursuing wisdom
5. **Be a Servant:** To be Christ-like servant-leaders who love and serve others
6. **Be a Giver:** To be generous givers and faithful stewards of our time, resources, and abilities
7. **Do Life-on-life Discipleship:** To prioritize “witness” in making disciples by spending time with and doing life together
8. **Train Leaders:** To train the next generation of Biblical leadership by investing our lives in them
9. **Start Multiple Churches:** To multiply Biblical churches that are healthy and indigenous through proper church-planting methods
10. **Work Hard:** To work heartily as unto the Lord and to labor abundantly by the grace of God
11. **Work As a Team:** To build and maintain an edifying team with a family spirit
12. **Pursue Humility:** To be meek and lowly in heart, clothed with humility, and esteem others better than ourselves
13. **Extend Grace:** To be gracious in our words, deeds, and interactions with others
14. **Keep a World Vision:** To stay actively engaged in “both” our local ministries and in evangelizing the whole world
15. **Strive For Excellence:** To do the best we can in everything we do for the glory of God

CHAPTER 2: LEADERSHIP

The overseas Internship program is supervised by the President, the General Director, the Dean of Students and other Supervising Missionaries they appoint to mentor Interns in the needed mindset, philosophy, doctrine, and training necessary to serve the Lord and, if called by God and qualified, be accepted as missionaries with VBM.

2.1 President

Jeff Bush - Jeff and Mindy served as church-planting missionaries to Argentina, South America from 2000 to 2012 where they were blessed to start five churches, a radio ministry and a Bible college. Jeff served as VBM General Director from 2012 to 2021. In October 2021, he became the President of Vision Baptist Missions. Jeff has a bachelor's degree from The Crown College, as well as a Master of Ministry and Master of Divinity from Vision School of Missions.



2.2 General Director

Travis Snode - Travis and Teri served as church-planting missionaries to the United Kingdom from 2002 to 2022 where they were privileged to start three churches. Travis became the General Director of Vision Baptist Mission in October 2021, a role he served in remotely until August 2022 when he and his family moved back to the USA to take up the role full-time. Travis has a bachelor's degree from The Crown College and a master's degree from Liberty University.



2.3 Dean of Students

Ty Pepperdine - Ty and Rebecca Pepperdine left a successful life and career to become missionaries to China in 2017. After God closed the door for them to go, the Pepperdines accepted the position of Asia Representatives and Deputation Director for Vision Baptist Missions. Ty also serves as the VSM Dean of Students. Ty has an associate's degree from Butte Community College and a bachelor's degree from California State University, Chico.



2.4 Supervising Missionaries

Supervising Missionaries are missionaries appointed to mentor and oversee the Intern while on the mission field. Supervising Missionaries are normally VBM missionaries, but in certain instances non-VBM missionaries may be appointed. In all cases, Supervising Missionaries must have completed at least one full four-year term on the mission field and be in agreement with the Statement of Faith of VBM. When the Intern is a female, the wife of a Supervising Missionary may act in the same capacity of supervision over the Intern as the husband.

CHAPTER 3: APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

VBM requires all Interns to meet the following requirements before being accepted as an Intern with VBM. Unless specified, these requirements apply to the husband and wife of married Interns and to all single Interns, whether male or female.

3.1 Spiritual Requirements

An Intern candidate must meet the following spiritual requirements:

1. Have had a personal experience of salvation through the person and work of Jesus Christ and have been baptized by immersion after salvation in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. Agree with the Vision, Statement of Faith, Core Values, Code of Conduct, policies, and procedures found in this Handbook
3. Be a member in good standing of a Baptist church that:
 - a. Is in agreement with the Statement of Faith of VBM
 - b. Is willing to act as the Sending Church for the Intern and hold them accountable to carry out their ministry with integrity, wisdom, and doctrinal purity.
 - c. Is supportive of the Core Values, policies, and procedures of VBM found in this Handbook and is willing to delegate some oversight of the Intern to VBM within the parameters of this Handbook.

3.2 Educational Requirements

An Intern candidate must meet ONE of the following educational requirements:

1. Have completed at least 90 credit hours in the Vision School of Missions.
2. Have a bachelor's degree of at least 120 credit hours from an approved Bible College.
3. Have a master's degree of at least 30 credit hours from an approved Bible College.
4. Have served for five years in full-time or part-time pastoral ministry in an Independent Baptist church.
5. Be a wife whose husband meets one of the above educational requirements.
6. Be planning to serve as a helps missionary and have: a) completed at least 30 credit hours of Bible college coursework from an approved Bible college or institute OR b) served for four years and six months in full-time or part-time ministry of an Independent Baptist church, Christian school, or another ministry similar to the type of helps ministry they desire to do.

3.3 Health Requirements

An Intern candidate meet the following health requirements:

1. Be able to meet the physical demands of the particular mission field where they will intern. Any serious illnesses, operations, accidents, or physical health issues must be declared on the VBM Intern Application.
 - a. Before departing for the field, all Interns will be required to pass a physical exam.
 - b. The doctor who does the exam should also complete the [VBM Healthcare Release Form](#) which should be given to the General Director or President. Any health concerns the doctor shares that might impact their ability to go to their prospective field must be evaluated by Intern Leadership in consultation with the Missionary's Sending Church Pastor. Interns with any serious health issue that their doctor deems might prohibit them from going to the field must gain special approval from both Intern Leadership and their Sending Church Pastor before they can be accepted as an Intern.
 - c. No Missionary medical records should be recorded or stored by VBM without permission from the Missionary. Those that are stored should be password protected and kept confidential with only the General Director and President having access.
7. Be able to meet the mental demands of the particular mission field where they will intern. Any nervous disorders or mental health issues must be declared on the VBM Intern Application.

3.4 Citizenship Requirements

An Intern candidate must meet ONE of the following citizenship requirements:

1. Be a citizen of the USA or Canada and/or the spouse of a citizen.
2. Have a US green card (permanent residency card) and be actively applying for US citizenship.

3.5 Financial Requirements

An Intern candidate meet the following financial requirements:

1. Have the financial ability to pay for all costs associated with the internship either through personal savings or fund raising efforts
2. Have no more than \$5,000 of unsecured debit, exclusive of student loans.

3.6 Application Process

Below is the process an Intern candidate must follow to become a VBM Intern:

Step 1: Preparation Phase

The Intern candidate gathers digital copies of the following documents:

- Proof of any degrees/coursework completed at a college, institute, training center, or university (certified by an official from the educational institution)
- Proof of any ministry experience, if seeking to satisfy the ministry requirement, such as a letter from a church leader where you served, with relevant dates and responsibilities.
- A completed VBM Health Screening Form from a doctor
- Proof that you meet the citizenship requirement such as a passport, birth certificate, or a permanent residency card
- A recent financial (credit) background check¹ (within the last three months)
- A recent digital photo (within the last three months)

Step 2: Application Phase

The Intern candidate submits the following and any supporting documents:

- [VBM Intern Application](#)
- [VBM Background Check Consent Form](#)

The Intern candidate pays the following non-refundable application fee which covers the cost of their background check:

- [\\$75 Application Fee](#)

The Intern candidate's Sending Church Pastor submits the following:

- [Pastoral Reference](#)

Step 3: Review Phase

After all the above forms and any supporting documents have been submitted, Intern Leaders will be notified and have at least one week to review. If further documents are requirement or discussion is needed, this review phase may take longer than a week.

Interns Leaders will make a decision to pre-approve the candidate, request more information, or reject the candidate's application.

Step 4: Interview Phase

If a candidate is pre-approved, a conference call or in-person interview will be set up with the candidate and Intern Leaders.

¹ A free credit check is available from www.annualcreditreport.com.

Step 5: Vote and Notify

Intern Leaders will then pray, discuss, and vote on the candidate. Once a decision has been reached, an Intern Leader will notify the candidate in writing.

CHAPTER 4: CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Code of Conduct

All Interns must abide by the following **VBM Intern Code of Conduct**:

As an Intern with VBM, I agree to:

- 1. Abide by the Statement of Faith, Core Values, policies, and procedures of VBM.*
- 2. Attend church services punctually and faithfully.*
- 3. Contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of my church and its missions program.*
- 4. Maintain personal devotions and take responsibility for my spiritual growth; which, for married men, includes pastoring my wife and family.*
- 5. Be a model Christian who lives a blameless, holy life; seeks the salvation of the lost; is just in his dealings; shows brotherly love and prays for the saints.*
- 6. Avoid all gossip, backbiting, slander, and excessive anger.*
- 7. Be courteous in speech, slow to take offense, and quick to reconcile.*
- 8. Abstain from all alcoholic beverages, illicit drugs, tobacco products, vaping, marijuana, and any practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize my or another's faith.*
- 9. Live in sexual purity, avoiding pornography, homosexuality, and sex outside of marriage. This includes having appropriate safeguards and accountability, especially concerning work environments and communication with members of the opposite sex.*
- 10. Conduct myself in a manner that is professional and modest as an ambassador of Christ.*
- 11. Be wise, respectful, and considerate in all communication, including social media. This includes not sharing private information or communications without consent.*
- 12. Refrain from immoral conduct, making identifying statements of immoral acts, or advocating for or advancing immoral conduct. Immoral conduct is defined as bodily contact, actively undertaken or passively permitted, between members of the opposite sex or members of the same sex in order to satisfy sexual desires or any bodily contact that a reasonable person would understand to demonstrate a propensity or intent to engage in an immoral act. Identifying statement(s) of immoral acts are ones in which the person does any of the following: engages in speech regarding sexual immorality; claims he or she is homosexual, bisexual, transgender, or otherwise identifies as being sexually immoral under biblical Christian standards; or uses words, language, or behavior, including by dress or other appearance or online activity that, in the discretion of the ministry, would indicate an intention to convey the impression that the person engages in, advocates for, or approves of behavior or identity that is immoral under biblical Christian standards.*
- 13. Married Interns must remain faithful to their spouses in every aspect of life, and single (unmarried) Interns may not participate in any sexual activity and may not live in a state of cohabitation.*
- 14. Refrain from inappropriate contact or interactions with minors, including but not limited to, sending or responding to private texts, emails, social media communications, or other electronic communications; meeting with minors alone and out of view of other adults or teens; phone conversations with minors without parental knowledge or permission; or any other contact that would contribute to undue familiarity.*

4.2 Social Media Code of Conduct

All VBM Interns must abide by the following **VBM Social Media Code of Conduct**:

As an Intern with VBM, I agree to:

1. **Be Respectful.**
 - a. *Be authentic and respectful. When posting about VBM, your fellow Interns or Missionaries, other Missionaries, and pastors, ensure content is always constructive and fair. Before posting, consider how other people might read and interpret your comment. You must only post content you would feel comfortable saying directly to another person without offending. If you respond to published comments that you consider unfair, always be accurate, kind, and biblical.*
 - b. *Avoid defamatory, obscene, indecent, abusive, offensive, harassing, violent, hateful, racist, inflammatory, or otherwise objectionable comments.*
2. **Be Professional.**
 - a. *Always act professionally and constructively and use sound judgment before posting. Always be polite to individuals' opinions, and show self-control, especially when discussions become heated.*
3. **Be Truthful.**
 - a. *All information about finances, dates concerning time on the field, trips to the United States, furloughs and travel, attendance in events, and the number of students, national pastors, and churches on the field must be honest and expressed with clarity and void of exaggeration or ambiguity.*
4. **Be Aware of Confidentiality.**
 - a. *Understand and only reference publicly available information and don't disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to VBM, its Missionaries, its supporting churches, or any third party that has confidentially disclosed information to you. Show proper consideration for other people's privacy.*
5. **Be Balanced.**
 - a. *Feel free to share personal insights into your family and life, but beware of your own family's privacy and security. Use wisdom, common sense, and sound judgment with what you share so as not to cause unnecessary danger, offense, or confusion.*
 - b. *Feel free to share ministry involvement and spiritual thoughts, but beware of your own ministry's privacy and security. Use wisdom, common sense, and sound judgment with what you share so as not to cause unnecessary danger, offense, or confusion.*
6. **Be Careful.**
 - a. *Avoid posting questionable/offensive content or content from questionable/offensive sources. This type of content includes personal pictures, pop culture content or references, music, authors' quotes, and current social movements. You may have personal preferences that could be offensive to others.*
 - b. *Limit or refrain from promoting political parties and candidates.*

4.3 Disciplinary Procedure

Interns are required to abide by all the policies and procedures of VBM. If an Intern does not abide by any VBM policy, then the following actions must be taken:

1. For a Non-Criminal or Non-Sexual Breach of Policy:

- a. The VBM Personnel who notices must:
 - 1) Lovingly confront the Intern.
 - 2) Inform an Intern Leader about the breach of policy and any actions taken to confront the Intern.
- b. The Intern Leader who notices or is made aware must:
 - 1) For a repeated or serious breach:
 - a) Issue a written warning, copying in the Intern's pastor
 - b) Seek to provide counsel to help the person change
 - 2) For any further breach, arrange a meeting with the Intern and the Intern's pastor. At this meeting, discussions will be held on how to help the Intern, and warnings will be given that any subsequent breach of policy could result in dismissal from the Internship
 - 3) For any subsequent breach, arrange a meeting with Intern Leaders, the Intern and the Intern's pastor. Following the meeting, Intern Leaders will meet to discuss their conclusions and vote on whether the Intern should be dismissed or what other course of action should be taken.
 - 4) Make notes of all actions taken and meetings held throughout this process.

2. For a Criminal Activity or a Criminal Breach of Policy:

- a. The VBM Personnel who has reasonable grounds to suspect such actions must:
 - 1) Immediately report all suspected criminal activity, including suspected child abuse, to the appropriate authorities.
 - 2) Inform an Intern Leader to discuss options for confronting the Intern who is suspected of the action.
- b. The Intern Leader who is made aware must:
 - 1) Immediately report all suspected criminal activity to the appropriate authorities if this has not already been done.
 - 2) Hold an emergency meeting with the Intern, the Intern's pastor to suspend the Intern from all classes and ministry until after the allegation, accusations, or offense has been thoroughly investigated. After this meeting, the Intern's pastor, and Intern Leaders will discuss how to help the Intern and his family, and, as applicable, the alleged victim and his or her family.
 - 3) Arrange a meeting with Intern Leaders, the Intern, and the Intern's pastor to discuss the results of the investigation. Following the meeting, Intern Leaders will meet to discuss their conclusions and vote on what course of action should be taken.
 - 4) Make notes of all actions taken and meetings held throughout this process.

3. For Criminal Sexual Activity or a Sexual Breach of Policy:

- a. The VBM Personnel who notices must:
 - 1) Immediately report all suspected sexual activity of a criminal nature, including suspected child abuse, to the appropriate authorities.
 - 2) Inform an Intern Leader of any suspected criminal sexual activity, including suspected child abuse, or any sexual breach of policy, to discuss options for lovingly confronting the Intern who is suspected of the action.
- b. The Intern Leader who notices or is made aware must:
 - 1) Immediately report all suspected sexual activity of a criminal activity to the appropriate authorities if this has not already been done.
 - 2) Hold an emergency meeting with the Intern, the Intern's pastor and another Intern Leader to suspend the Intern from all classes and ministry until after the allegation, accusations or offense has been thoroughly investigated. After this meeting, the Intern's pastor, and Intern Leaders will discuss how to help the Intern and his family, and, as applicable, the alleged victim and his or her family.
 - 3) Arrange a meeting with Intern Leaders, the Intern and the Intern's pastor to discuss the results of the investigation. Following the meeting, Intern Leaders will meet to discuss their conclusions and what course of action should be taken.
 - 4) Make notes of all actions taken and meetings held throughout this process.

4.4 Recall and Dismissal

VBM reserves the right to recall and dismiss any Intern as part of the processes above or at any other point that Intern Leaders deem their presence on the field or enrollment in the overseas internship program a moral, governmental, or doctrinal problem.

If an Intern is recalled or dismissed:

1. Intern Leaders will seek to inform the Intern's Sending Church Pastor of the reasons for recall or dismissal and provide any recommendations for any pastoral care.
2. Intern leaders will make sure that a letter is sent out to all individuals and churches that support the Intern, informing them of the Intern's dismissal.
3. VBM will continue to process support designated for the Intern for up to thirty days after dismissal, after which it will be returned to their donors for three months and then redistributed into the VBM Global Fund. VBM reserves the right to reduce the amount of time a dismissed Intern may receive designated support after dismissal.
4. VBM will normally² give the dismissed Intern funds up to \$2,000 from any excess retained funds. Any excess retained funds designated for the Intern will be redistributed to other VBM mission projects with first consideration being the country and region where the Intern was working. VBM reserves the right to reduce the amount of funds given to an Intern after dismissal.
5. The Intern will have one week to vacate any VBM accommodation where they are housed, unless other arrangements are determined by Intern Leaders. Interns will be responsible for any rent for any remaining time left in the month of their dismissal.

² Examples of when VBM might choose to not give a dismissed Intern escrow funds would be when the Intern has been engaged in some kind of illegal, fraudulent, or immoral activity.

CHAPTER 5: TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

In order to pass the the Overseas Internships, Interns must meet the reading, mentoring, language learning (if applicable), ministry preparation, and verse memorization requirements detailed below. VBM Intern Leadership will make the final decision about whether an Intern successfully completes and passes the Internship.

5.1 Reading

Interns are required to read the following books while on their overseas internship. After completing a book, Interns must write a one-page summary and then meet with the Supervising Missionary or someone they designate to discuss the book.

Books for Men

- 1 *The Challenge of Missions* by Oswald J Smith
- 2 *So You Want to Be a Missionary* by Don Mingo
- 3 *Mission Smart* by David L. Frazier
- 4 *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret* by Howard and Geraldine Taylor
- 5 *Missionary Methods: "Saint Paul's or Ours"* by Rolland Allen
- 6 *Culture Shock* by Myron Loss
- 7 *Psychology of Missionary Adjustment* by Marge Jones
- 8 *Cross-Cultural Servanthood* by Duane Elmer
- 9 *Ministering Cross-Culturally* by Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers
- 10 *The Master Plan of Evangelism* By Robert Coleman
- 11 *Mentoring for Mission* by Günter Krallmann
- 12 *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie
- 13 *Spiritual Leadership* by J. Oswald Sanders
- 14 *The Anatomy of an Effective Deputation Calendar* by Adam Riveiro
- 15 *The Anatomy of an Effective Prayer Letter* by Adam Riveiro
- 16 *The Deputation Manual* by Austin Gardner and Tony Howeth
- 17 *The Indigenous Church* by Melvin Hodges
- 18 *Planting Churches Cross Culturally* by David J Hesselgrave
- 19 *The Honest Guide to Church Planting* by Tom Bennardo
- 20 *The Principles and Practices of Indigenous Church Planting* by Charles Brock

Books for Women:

- 1 *The Challenge of Missions* by Oswald J Smith
- 2 *So You Want to Be a Missionary* by Don Mingo
- 3 *Mission Smart* by David L. Frazier
- 4 *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret* by Howard and Geraldine Taylor
- 5 *Church Planting Wife* by Christine Hoover
- 6 *Culture Shock* by Myron Loss
- 7 *Psychology of Missionary Adjustment* by Marge Jones
- 8 *Cross-Cultural Servanthood* by Duane Elmer
- 9 *Ministering Cross-Culturally* by Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers
- 10 *The Master Plan of Evangelism* By Robert Coleman
- 11 *Mentoring for Mission* by Günter Krallmann
- 12 *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie
- 13 *Ann of Ava* by Ethel Daniels Hubbard
- 14 *Control Girl* by Shannon Poplin
- 15 *Comparison Girl* by Shanon Poplin
- 16 *How to Thrive as a Pastor's Wife* by Christine Hoover
- 17 *Evidence not Seen* by Darlene Deibler Rose
- 18 *It's a Wonderful Life* by Teri Chappell
- 19 *Calm my Anxious Heart* by Linda Dillow
- 20 *Adorned* by Nancy Leigh Demoss

5.2 Mentoring

At Vision Baptist Missions, we have a philosophy of mentoring that we call “life-on-life discipleship.” We believe this method of training missionaries is very effective and a biblical pattern seen in the life of Jesus and the Apostle Paul. In his book *Mentoring for Mission*, Günter Krallman calls it “with-ness,” and we expect each Intern to seek out time with the Supervising Missionary to learn, ask questions, and be mentored.

5.3 Language Learning

All Interns serving in a field where the people speak a foreign language must do twenty hours of language learning per week. This is a good discipline, teaching humility and self-discipline, and preparation for future ministry. If there is no language to be learned, additional work should be substituted.

5.4 Ministry Preparation

It is vital that all Interns are involved in local church ministry. They should be given many opportunities to serve through evangelism, teaching, and, for men, preaching. Hands-on preparation will equip them for future service. All Interns should prepare at least ten lessons or sermons and discuss them with a Supervising Missionary during their overseas internship.

5.5 Verse Memorization

All Interns should memorize the following verses in both their native language and, if applicable, in the new language they are learning:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Romans 3:10 | 8. Romans 10:13 | 15. Romans 8:28 |
| 2. Romans 3:23 | 9. Ephesians 2:8-9 | 16. Romans 12:1-2 |
| 3. Romans 5:8 | 10. John 1:12 | 17. Ephesians 5:18 |
| 4. Romans 6:23 | 11. John 3:16 | 18. Joshua 1:8 |
| 5. Romans 5:12 | 12. Isaiah 59:1-2 | 19. Genesis 1:1 |
| 6. Romans 10:9 | 13. Titus 3:5 | |
| 7. Romans 10:10 | 14. John 10:10 | |

Verses should be quoted to the Supervising Missionary or someone they designate.

5.6 Additional Requirements

Supervising Missionaries may require additional things from Interns that will contribute to their training or be unique to their particular field or ministry (see the “Best Practice” section at the end of this Handbook for examples). These additional items are at the discretion of the Supervising Missionary.

5.7 Deadline

Ideally, all training requirements should be completed on the field. If a student needs more time to complete the reading or verse memorization requirements, they will have a maximum of 90 days after their internship ends to turn in their reading and verses. If all training requirements are not completed by this deadline, the intern will fail the internship.

CHAPTER 6: FINANCES

1. Interns must secure their own support for salary, housing, and ministry, including travel to the field, set-up expenses, travel insurance, and a minimum of \$1000 retained at VBM to cover the cost of an emergency trip home. Intern support levels will be regulated by Intern Leadership and detailed on the Intern Budget.
2. To help Interns raise their support, VBM provides training in support raising. This training is under the direction of the VBM Deputation Director. No Intern should begin raising support or promoting their internship without getting their support raising plan and promotional material approved by the Deputation Director.
3. Interns will not be allowed to leave for their Internship unless they have at least 85% of their support budget.
4. All Intern support must remain in a Vision Baptist Missions account and may not be transferred or requested any earlier than 30 days before spending the money, unless approved by the General Director or President.
5. No Intern support may be invested privately by the individual Intern or be held in the Intern's personal accounts for long periods of time unless they have a legitimate reason and gain approval from the General Director or President.
6. VBM makes every effort to abide by the Revenue Code governing non-profit organizations. All contributions to VBM become the unconditional property of VBM, and are under the complete discretion and control of VBM. VBM is committed to honor all designations of donors consistent with VBM policies and revenue laws. As a general rule, funds given to a specified Intern will be applied to the Intern as designated by the donor out of ethical, not legal, obligation to the donor. If any designation is unacceptable, the donation will be returned.
7. VBM will charge Interns \$3.50/transaction to process a check or make a transfer. This will come out of the Intern's support.
8. Interns must use the [Funds Request Form](#) to request additional support above the amount approved on their Intern Budget. Interns should allow up to 5 business days for their request to be processed. All fund requests require approval by the Supervising Missionary or another Intern Leader if the Supervising Missionary is unavailable.
9. At the end of the Internship, excess support funds up to \$2000 will belong to the Intern. Any excess support designated for the Intern will be handled according to VBM policies with preference given to needs in the region where the Intern was serving.
10. Once they arrive back from their Internship, VBM will only handle Intern support for 30 days, unless they are accepted as a VBM missionary before the 30 days is completed.

CHAPTER 7: EMERGENCY TRIPS

1. Interns must remain on the field for the entire length of their Internship unless given special permission by Intern Leadership. Special permission will be given in the case of death (or serious illness) of someone in their immediate family (e.g. parents, grandparents, siblings, etc.) Interns must assume financial responsibility for emergency trips.
2. VBM will make every effort to bring Interns out of any country where their lives may be endangered by an emergency or crisis.
 - a. Every Intern should take into consideration the possibility of danger when they go to their field. VBM will seek to advise Interns about what to do, but the final decision to leave the field, in view of immediate danger, will be left to the discretion of the Intern and their Sending Church pastor. There should be consultation with the leadership of VBM.
 - b. VBM does not negotiate with those who take hostages and will not pay ransom demands.
 - c. See Chapter 15 for more information about crisis situations.

CHAPTER 8: MINISTRY CHANGE

1. Any Intern desiring to change internship locations/ministries while on their internships must consult with Intern Leadership to present his reasons for the desiring the change.
2. Interns who desire to finish their Internship early must submit this to Intern Leadership in writing.
 - a. One week from communicating this intention, either verbally or in written form, a letter will be sent out to all individuals and churches that support the Intern informing them of the Intern's resignation.
 - b. VBM will handle the Intern's finances for thirty days, after which all funds will be returned to their donors. VBM reserves the right to reduce the amount of time they handle an Intern's finances.

CHAPTER 9: GRIEVANCES

1. Any Intern with a complaint or grievance must first seek to resolve the issue with Intern Leadership.
2. Any Intern who is not able to resolve a grievance within the normal administrative structure of VBM must then bring his grievance to his Sending Church Pastor and/or Sending Church to help facilitate discussions regarding the grievance.
3. Any Intern who is not able to resolve a grievance within the normal administrative structure of VBM or through the help of his Sending Church Pastor and/or Sending Church may submit their grievance in writing directly to the President of Vision Baptist Missions or to VBM's Compliance Officer.
4. Any grievances unable to be resolved through this process must be handled through a Christian alternative dispute resolution process conducted by the National Center for Life and Liberty.

CHAPTER 10: EVALUATIONS

10.1 Reentry Meeting Questions for Interns

In order to complete the Internship, Interns are required to attend a Reentry Meeting with Intern Leaders at the VBM Campus. This meeting must take place at the end of the Internship following the completion of the Reentry Meeting Questionnaire. The Intern should be prepared to answer the following questions:

1. How well did you do at abiding by VBM's Statement of Faith?
2. How well did you do at respecting and living according to VBM's Core Values?
3. How well did you do at abiding by the VBM Intern Code of Conduct?
4. Were you able to read all of the required books found in the Intern Handbook and discuss them with a Supervising Missionary? (Interns must upload PDF copies of their one-page summaries of all books they are required to read.)
5. Were you able to seek out time each week to learn, ask questions, and be mentored by a Supervising Missionary?
6. What were some of the lessons you learned from those times of learning, asking questions, and being mentored?
7. Explain how many hours of language learning you did each week and how your language learning went? (If you were not in a country with a foreign language, explain what other additional work you did as a substitute.)
8. Did you memorize all the verses on the list in the Intern Handbook?
9. How well did you do at raising and managing support for your Internship? (Please list how much you were able to raise and what your plans are for any excess support funds over \$2000.)
10. What were some of the ways that you grew spiritually through your Internship?
11. What were some of the skills that you learned or developed during your Internship?
12. What were some of the difficulties, challenges, or problems that you faced during your Internship?
13. Tell us about any opportunities you had to share the gospel and make disciples?
14. What are your plans for the future?
15. Is there anything else you would like Intern Leaders to know about your experience on your Internship (e.g. suggestions for how to improve the overseas Internship program, ways that we can help you with your next steps, pray for you, etc.)?

10.2 Evaluation Questions for Supervising Missionaries

At the end of the Internship, a Supervising Missionary will be asked to complete an evaluation that will ask them to answer the following questions from their perspective:

1. How well did the Intern do at abiding by VBM's Statement of Faith?
2. How well did the Intern do at respecting and living according to VBM's Core Values?
3. How well did the Intern do at abiding by the VBM Intern Code of Conduct?
4. How well did the Intern do at following your leadership?
5. Did the Intern write one-page summaries of the 20 books they were required to read on their Internship and discuss them with you?
6. How well did the Intern do at seeking out time each week to learn, ask questions, and be mentored by you?
7. For Interns in a country with a foreign language, how dedicated was the Intern to language learning and how well did they do at learning the language?
8. For Interns in a country with a foreign language, how well did the Intern do at trying to speak to others with the vocabulary they had learned?
9. Did the Intern learn all of the verses on the list in the Intern Handbook?
10. How well did the Intern do at managing their support during their Internship?
11. How generous was the Intern to the Lord's work and to others during their Internship?
12. How well did the Intern do at adapting to culture, dealing with culture shock, and relating to local people?
13. What were some of the ways you saw the Intern grow spiritually during their Internship?
14. What were some of the skills the Intern learned or developed during their Internship?
15. How well did the Intern do at handling difficulties, challenges, or problems they faced during their internship?
16. How well did the Intern do at sharing the gospel and making disciples during their internship?
17. What recommendations and suggestions for improvement would you offer to the Intern as they prepare and plan for the future?
18. Can you wholeheartedly recommend this Intern for missionary service? (Please explain why or why not.)
19. Is there anything else you would like other Intern Leaders to know about the Intern or your experience supervising the Intern? (This could include suggestions for how to improve the Internship program, etc.)

CHAPTER 11: CRISIS SUPPORT POLICY

Realizing Interns serve in a world that is increasingly subject to acts of violence, our responsibility as a mission board is to make adequate preparation to deal with such an eventuality, should it arise.

VBM recognizes the sovereign power of God to work out His purposes even in such a situation as this, and we, therefore, affirm our full trust in Him and reliance upon the wisdom and direction of the Holy Spirit in seeking a resolution of any crisis. Furthermore, we recognize the importance and the encouragement of mutual support of the Sending Church and supporting churches.

11.1 Definition of a Crisis Situation

For the purpose of this policy, a crisis situation shall include all cases where any VBM Missionary or an immediate family member is threatened with or suffers serious physical or mental harm, where any ministry property suffers or is likely to suffer substantial damage, or where the continuation of a VBM ministry in a particular location is threatened.

VBM recognizes the difference between those crisis situations that develop in stages (such as political or economic crisis, civil unrest or violence, war or international tension) and crisis situations which happen unexpectedly (such as a terrorist attack, coup d'état, natural disasters, imprisonment, kidnapping, etc.). In the first case, problems should be anticipated by leadership and contingency plans developed so that members are not subjected to panic situations. In the second case, where no prior planning is possible, the mission must have the ability to act quickly to provide appropriate guidance and assistance.

11.2 Basic Procedures in the Event of a Crisis Situation

1. The crisis is to be reported to the Sending Church Pastor, Supervising Missionary, and where appropriate, the relevant Embassy/Consulate.
2. The Supervising Missionary will notify the General Director and the supporting Churches (when possible) immediately and communicate subsequent developments to them.
3. The General Director will authorize the formation of a Crisis Support Team (CST) if appropriate.
4. The General Director, in conjunction with the Sending Church, will prepare or approve an initial statement suitable for and in the form of a press release if appropriate. No person in VBM is to use wording other than the approved wording of the release.
5. The General Director, as appropriate, will send out follow-up statements. In cases where a Crisis Support Team has been formed, only statements which have been approved by the Leader of the Crisis Support Team will be issued.
6. A final Full Report will be prepared by the Crisis Support Team Leader or Supervising Missionary and distributed to the Sending Church pastor and General Director.
7. On the basis of the Full Report, and if necessary, the General Director may prepare a full and final statement to be released for publication through appropriate channels.

The General Director, in assessment of the following circumstances, will approve of a Crisis Support Team:

1. When the crisis is likely to be extended in time and to demand an abnormal commitment or amount of resources.
2. When the actual or potential consequences of the crisis threaten life or the continued ministry of VBM in a particular area.

11.3 Crisis Support Team Membership

Membership of the CST will normally consist of the following:

1. A Leader within VBM Home Office Staff (CST Leader)
2. The Supervising Missionary
3. A Sending Church Leader, if appropriate and possible.
4. A representative of the national church in the crisis area, if appropriate and possible.

In a case where a crisis victim is a member of the immediate family of any person who would normally serve on the CST, that CST member will be replaced by another person nominated by the CST Leader or the General Director.

The CST will have the power to co-opt additional members and call in outside resource people as appropriate to the situation.

If possible, the CST will assemble at a location as close to the scene of the crisis as possible while still maintaining reliable communications. Members assigned to the team are to be relieved of their normal responsibilities. VBM realizes the expense of a Crisis Support Team; therefore, VBM will endeavor to establish a Crisis Support Fund solicited from all supporting churches. Upon establishment of a CST, all other members and staff of the Mission shall refer all information, suggestions, or other data relating to the crisis to the CST. All members of VBM are to refrain from taking any steps or conducting any actions relating to the crisis without specific direction from the CST Leader.

11.4 Crisis Support Team Authority

The CST is responsible for handling all aspects of resolution of the crisis. This may include protection for members and their families, protection of facilities, information gathering, negotiations, coordination and assignment of resources, press and government relations, and both internal and external communications regarding the crisis and its resolution.

The CST will appoint a Negotiator where necessary. The Negotiator will not be a member of the CST, but will act in an advisory capacity to the CST.

In carrying out its responsibilities, the CST will act with authority of Vision Baptist Missions and will endeavor at all times to maintain consultation with the General Director and President of VBM.

11.5 Kidnapping/Hostage-Taking

In the event of a hostage situation, the interests of the hostage and his family will be jointly considered in light of the primary objective of gaining the release of the hostage at the earliest possible time with the least disruption to his/her life and the life of the family.

11.6 Communications with the Home Country Embassy/Consulate

Upon arrival in the country of service, Interns will register their names, address, and telephone numbers with their Home Country Embassy or local Consulate office.

In the event of a crisis, Interns should communicate directly with their Embassy or Consulate office for advisory information.

11.7 Outgoing Communication During a Crisis

During a crisis, all information to be released concerning the crisis will first have the approval of the CST. No member of VBM (other than those specifically designated by the General Director or CST Leader) is authorized to make any statement or comment, which relates in any way to an ongoing crisis. All press inquiries within the United States shall be referred to the General Director, who may serve as the spokesperson for the CST and/or may direct the inquiry directly to the CST.

11.8 Evacuation

The decision to evacuate a particular area shall be made by the General Director in consultation with their Sending Church pastor and appropriate Supervising Missionary. If the emergency is sudden and normal communication with their Pastor or Directors is not possible, the decision to evacuate may be made by the individual Missionary, if it is felt that there is a serious threat to his/her safety.

Evacuation should always be cautious and deliberate. Personal safety is of utmost concern for the Missionary and his family. At first, removal should be to other places of safety closest to their base of operation, if possible.

11.9 Evacuation Priority

1. First Priority
 - a. Mothers and Children (fathers too unless in an essential role)
 - b. Those with special medical care needs
 - c. Those unable to cope emotionally
 - d. Those specifically targeted for harassment
 - e. Those living in zones considered most dangerous

2. Second Priority
 - a. Those with a strong personal preference to withdraw
 - b. Those close to completing their term
 - c. Those who with minimum disruption can continue their work elsewhere (i.e., language study)
 - d. Those who, if cut off from other Missionaries, are likely to flounder (i.e., trying to communicate in the national language)
 - e. Those rendered ineffective or inoperative
3. Third Priority
 - a. Those with restricted resident permits
 - b. Those in some major leadership role
 - c. Those involved in work perceived as essential (i.e., medical work)
 - d. Those veteran Missionaries who give adequate reason to stay
 - e. Those located in areas perceived too dangerous to withdraw

VBM recognizes the extreme anxiety experienced by abducted persons and the equally extreme anguish caused to the next of kin in the event of kidnapping and the demand for ransom.

The host government should be informed immediately of any kidnapping/hostage-taking because it bears the responsibility for the safety of expatriates. The rights of citizenship of the abducted person(s) should be exercised in seeking the help of their respective governments.

11.10 Ransom and Extortion

It is the policy of VBM that as a matter of principle no sums of money by way of ransom or other forms of extortion will be paid. When possible, attempts will be made to obtain the release of the victims by reasoning with the kidnappers. However, it is not always possible or desirable to establish such direct links between a mission and kidnappers; therefore, non-mission mediators may be utilized.

11.11 Families of Hostages

In the event of a hostage seizure, the family of the hostage will be moved immediately to a safe location as determined by the Supervising Missionary. The CST will review the situation immediately when it convenes and recommend further action, including evacuation to the family's home country for emotional support if advisable, but only as a last resort.

From the time a crisis commences, a VBM member will be assigned to work with the hostage's immediate family on a regular basis until final resolution of the crisis. This member will obtain official news and information for the family, ensure that physical, emotional, and spiritual needs are being met, and take whatever steps are possible to minimize the stress and consequences of the crisis family.

VBM will assure the extended family of their concern and of the practical steps being taken to secure release and will exercise a spiritual ministry, as opportunity affords, to anxious relatives.

11.12 Crisis Counseling

It is recognized that all crisis situations will give rise to the need for adequate counseling and aftercare of those involved. The CST will evaluate the need for counseling and then arrange for all Interns who are directly involved in a crisis to receive counseling from a qualified counselor. These evaluations will be carried out immediately following a crisis and no more than three months later. The cost of these evaluations and any necessary treatment will be handled in such a way as not to impose a financial burden on the persons involved.

11.13 Imprisonment

In the event of imprisonment, VBM will follow, where appropriate, the same principles for action as a person who has been kidnapped or taken hostage. VBM will find appropriate means to urge the host government to determine the reasons for imprisonment and what can be done to secure a release. In addition, VBM will work closely with the appropriate Embassies to apply all legitimate pressure possible, unless this would negatively affect the possibility of release or the future proclamation of the Gospel.

11.14 Guidelines for Evacuation

1. If a perceived emergency situation arises, liaisons with VBM leadership and the Home Country Embassy/Consulate will be established.
2. In some areas of the world, it would be wise to have a suitcase ready with necessities (including rations, baby food, etc.). Maintain an evacuation list of important things to take if you had to evacuate at a moment's notice. Remember your weight allowance for baggage.
3. Make sure all travel documents are in order (e.g., up-to-date visa and passport).
4. Make sure advance arrangements are made for ticket payment for emergencies. Some possible options to be considered:
 - a. Have a US dollar account on which checks can be drawn.
 - b. Have a major credit card valid for purchasing airline tickets.
 - c. Have a written agreement with a local airline office.
 - d. Keep extra cash on hand.
5. All property titles and legal documents with insurance policies should be copied and other originals kept in locked, fireproof containers, preferably in a bank deposit box, the copies to be sent to VBM Home Office for safe custody.
6. All evaluations of property should be kept up-to-date, copied, and handled as above.
7. Records of funds should be handled as above and some cash kept for emergencies.
8. Arrangements should be made with other expatriates or nationals to assume title to personal property that cannot be evacuated quickly and easily.

9. If evacuation is necessary, notify your Pastor and Supervising Missionary of your plans as soon as possible.
10. Determine the safest and most direct route of transportation. Try not to let emotional reactions lead you to unnecessary radical action (e.g., boarding the first plane departing which would take you far away from your primary destination.)
11. Where practical and possible, keep Intern Leaders informed while en route or immediately upon arrival at your destination.

11.15 Evacuation Preparations

1. Spiritual
 - a. Major emphasis should be placed upon effecting an emergency evacuation in such a way that it will bear strong testimony to our deep love and concern for the spiritual welfare of those being left behind, especially those of the household of faith.
 - b. Every possible effort should be made so that it will not appear as though we are more concerned with saving our lives and possessions than we are in the immediate needs and future security of the national Christian.
 - c. We should remember that there is a Biblical precedent for evacuation (Acts 8:1-5), especially as a part of God's plan to spread the Gospel. So we should be alert to nearby opportunities for alternative ministries.
2. Physical
 - a. Have a location arranged to receive your family in a nearby country. The embassy's advice should be carefully considered in the case of serious emergencies.
 - b. Evacuation action should be taken rather than risk internment.
 - c. The Supervising Missionary shall be kept fully informed of the movements of Interns and their families when taking vacations and extended trips.

BEST PRACTICES

The following Best Practices are not binding policies. They have been prepared by Intern Leaders to give advice on practices that Intern Leaders deems are best

SUGGESTIONS FOR INTERNSHIP PREPARATION

1. Start a relationship with the missionary you are working with. Ask questions, stay in contact, and be quick to respond. It would be nice to take a small gift to them, something they may miss from the US.
2. Remember that you are there to learn and to serve in the ministry where God places you.
3. Ask questions whenever you don't understand something or need help. The missionary wants to help you, but won't know how if you aren't asking questions.
4. Start sending out emails about your ministry, especially to those who are supporting you.
5. Keep a journal of the lessons that God is teaching you.
6. Before arriving, work on memorizing the verses in English that you will be memorizing in another language. If you have not memorized the books of the Bible in order, this would be very helpful too.
7. Be faithful in your own walk with the Lord.
8. Get an accurate budget from the missionary about how much your Internship is going to cost. Make sure to calculate an extra for unforeseen expenses.
9. Make sure to communicate with the missionary about when your flight arrives and returns.
10. Do everything you can to help out with finding accommodation.
11. Set aside part of your budget to pay the missionary back for any expenses he might incur driving you around and helping you get set up.
12. Pray for your Internship and the missionaries you will work with.
13. Have a servant's attitude rather than a desire to be promoted and recognized.
14. Prepare to learn a new culture and language.
15. Begin reading the books on the reading list early. (You will still need to discuss those books with a Supervising Missionary.)
16. You are required to be able to prove that you have the needed monthly support BEFORE you can purchase your plane tickets.

GENERAL INTERNSHIP SUGGESTIONS

1. Realize that the missionary you are working under is your authority while you are on your Internship.
2. Be ready to serve in many capacities. This is a growing time; you may have to stretch yourself to go beyond something that is out of your comfort zone. Work hard and try hard; this is the time to learn new things that will help you in the future. Have a good attitude when asked to do something.
3. Be very respectful when you are at the home of the missionary. Ask if you can help and if they say no, then find something to do. Look around and find a job that needs to be done, because there surely is one. This most likely will not be offensive.
4. Do not ask the missionary if you can come over to their house just to use their washing machine or the internet or for a free meal. This disrupts their family routine.
5. Don't expect the missionary to pay for your meals, tickets, or anything when you are out and about.
6. Don't put financial pressure on the missionary. Make sure to pay all your bills on time. Do not expect the missionary to cover for you if you get low on money.
7. Take initiative - if you see a task that needs done, just do it. Don't ask if you can do it, they will appreciate that you saw something and did it. Jump in and help with whatever the missionary is doing. Learn to ask, "How can I help you?"
8. Find out ways to get into the community and meet people.
9. Remember that your actions reflect on the missionary. The missionary is trying to build a solid reputation in his local area so be careful before you do something that may cause the missionary problems in the future.
10. Make sure to be very grateful when the missionary helps you sort out all your details, i.e. bank account, housing, phone, etc. It takes time out of their workweek when they have a million other things to do. So don't just act like it's not a big deal for them to help you.
11. Find people to witness to everywhere you go. Pray for a convert/disciple.
12. The best way to learn the ministry is to do the ministry. You don't need hours and hours of Bible study with the missionary. What you DO need is to get involved in the work. The missionary is there to answer your questions about how to deal with the people that you are working with. The missionary can also advise you if you have questions about discipling someone.
13. Don't complain about the work. Nobody is going to force you to work. If you are not getting your work done, the missionary is going to stop asking you to do things.
14. Be flexible with the schedule you keep and the schedule that the missionary gives you. Things often change in a moment's notice. We know it's frustrating, but try not to get too annoyed if you have to change your plans at the last minute.
15. Clean up after yourself. Your home and room should be kept clean. The church where you work should also be kept clean.
16. It is not permitted for you to start a romantic relationship with someone that you meet while you are on your Internship. It would be a misappropriation of funds for you to spend your time focused on a relationship instead of mission work.
17. If you are in a relationship with someone back home, you are strongly urged to keep communication to a minimum.

18. Be careful with communication with the opposite sex. If you are a lady and need to communicate with the missionary, text both the husband and wife together.
19. If the missionary gives you a job, get it done. Don't procrastinate. Ask when it needs to be finished and get it done a day early if at all possible. Let the missionary know when you have finished it.
20. If there is a church function where food is needed, you should bring something. If you are not comfortable with cooking, there are many other selections at the stores that you can bring instead. If there is a signup sheet, be the first to put your name down.
21. If there is a church function where food is ordered, ask the missionary how much you need to pay for your share. You are expected to pay something. The missionary should not have to cover your costs.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADAPTING TO CULTURE

1. Be faithful in the small things. Be ready to go when the missionary has plans for you, don't make them wait on you. Set an alarm to get up on time.
2. Be careful not to complain about the weather, food, culture, people, or stores.
3. Be careful not to complain about being tired or the time change or jet lag.
4. Do not complain about the country to anyone, not even to the missionary and his family. You only have to live there for a short time, but they live there permanently. Don't get in a bad habit of complaining about everything that is different from America. Talk about positive things about their country.
5. Feel free to ask the missionary questions if you don't understand something about the culture.
6. Do not talk about America either good or bad. Don't compare America with the country where you are interning.
7. Learn to be independent quickly as far as your way of living, getting groceries for yourself, getting around the city with public transportation, etc. Don't depend on the missionary to get you from place to place or do everything for you.
8. Be careful to not be easily offended or let selfishness creep in. This happens easily when you are going through culture shock.
9. When you go to church, talk to everyone. Introduce yourself personally to everyone. If you don't, they will feel like you are an outsider. If you make the first move to get to know them, they will like you.
10. Do not play on your phone, computer, or iPad while you are in public or while you are in conversation with the missionaries or the people in the church. This comes across as very rude. Wherever you are, be all there!
11. You may be tempted to skip church, but push through culture shock and attend church services faithfully unless you are physically ill.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUPERVISING MISSIONARIES

The following are a list of ideas that other Supervising Missionaries have implemented to contribute to Intern training. These are not required; they are just suggestions of what others have done and may help Supervising Missionaries with ideas.

1. Pass out 50 tracts a day (except on day off).
2. Spend 30 minutes a day trying to engage unbelievers in conversation about the gospel.
3. Meet weekly with a personal coach (missionaliving.org provides this free of charge to missionaries and interns).