



Policies & Expectations

Gift Policy

WIND recognizes that giving gifts can promote relationship building – and that is certainly a WIND objective. However, gift giving can cause harm. Gifts can create dependency, further the perception of the recipients being “poor” and “needy” and or can cause jealousy among recipients who receive fewer, smaller or less valuable gifts. Giving gifts may also make the recipient feel the need to give something else back – putting the recipient in a difficult position.

One-time gifts often interfere with WIND goals of long-term, sustainable development. In an attempt to support programs that empower and equip people to acquire things they desire on their own, WIND supports a “no gift” policy and asks that visitors:

“Leave nothing (new or second-hand) with individuals in the area that could create dependency or interrupt long-term development efforts. Refrain from leaving money or gifts with anybody, including staff, no matter how needy the individuals might seem.”

Tipping Policy

WIND understands and respects the value of tipping those in the service industry who provide exceptional service. While tipping at hotels, restaurants, etc. is entirely appropriate, we would ask that you refrain from tipping persons employed or contracted by WIND in-country staff. WIND contracts with specifically selected candidates for their services in hosting outside visitors, and builds into their compensation a full, fair, and adequate wage for their services. There are many ways to express gratitude for exceptional service, and we hope that you do express your gratitude to both staff and contractors as appropriate.

Communication Guidelines

WIND requires that all communication regarding WIND programs be directed through established channels. This allows accurate information to be shared in a clear, timely manner without confusing our partners. Questions or concerns pertaining to the WIND Program may be directed to the team leader(s) during a WIND trip. Outside of these trips, all inquiries should be directed to WIND, PO Box 544, Lopez Island, WA 98646.

One of the goals of WIND is to foster relationships with the people we serve in the Ixil. However, correspondence between individuals or families often causes unintended harm. Use WIND staff as the primary mode of distribution for correspondence. WIND does not recommend the exchange of personal information such as telephone numbers, home addresses or email addresses as we cannot control the discretion and use of this information. The sending of gifts and money is prohibited. If you receive communication that raises any special concern, including any type of request for assistance or information, please contact WIND Staff.

Risk Management

As with anything in life, there are risks associated with a WIND trip. These risks may include: health risks, man-made risks, and natural disasters.

- The WIND Trip Participant Agreement intends to disclose these potential risks; please carefully review this document.
- WIND instructs all travelers to practice the safety guidelines outlined in the Trip Participant Agreement, and the “In-Country Etiquette & Helpful Tips” document, to proactively mitigate potential risks.
- WIND provides all trip participants country specific emergency and international medical and evacuation insurance information to be carried on their person throughout the duration of their trip; each person should carry a copy.
- The United States Department of State (<http://www.state.gov>) and the CDC (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/guatemala.htm>) may be helpful websites in determining and evaluating potential risks.
- WIND only shares trip participant information with staff on a need to know basis, Latin American partners only know names for logistical purposes; no other information is shared internally or externally.
- WIND hires local drivers whenever possible and requires travelers who may drive to sign off on and abide by specific safe and defensive driving guidelines including wearing seatbelts and avoiding driving after dark.