



## **Volunteer Group Emergency Cancellation Policy (Guideline)**

### **Policy Statement:**

SchoolBOX takes the safety and security of our international volunteers extremely seriously. Prior to each and every volunteer trip to Nicaragua, SchoolBOX will perform a risk assessment to determine whether conditions are safe and secure enough to host a group. In the unfortunate event of civil unrest, terrorism, natural disaster or force majeure, SchoolBOX reserves the right to cancel a volunteer trip, with a full refund of trip fees, in order to keep its volunteer's safe.

### **Risk Assessment:**

SchoolBOX will perform a risk assessment 14 days prior to the departure of each volunteer trip to determine whether it is safe to send volunteers to Nicaragua.

In the event of an 'Avoid Travel' advisory issued by the Government of Canada, SchoolBOX will not run its volunteer trips. In some cases where a government travel advisory is not in effect, but where our team assesses that there is still a significant safety risk to volunteers, SchoolBOX may still cancel the volunteer trip.

A clause in our Volunteer Registration Form, Contract & Liability Waiver, and a clause on the volunteer page on our website ([schoolbox.ca/volunteer](http://schoolbox.ca/volunteer)) will make it clear to volunteers that this assessment will take place.

If it is determined through our risk assessment that it is unsafe to send volunteers to Nicaragua due to civil unrest, terrorism, natural disaster, or force majeure, SchoolBOX will notify volunteers of the trip cancellation by phone and/or email 14 days prior to the trip departure date.

SchoolBOX will provide a formal letter (PDF) signed by our Executive Director, explaining our reasons for canceling the trip. Volunteers are free to show this letter to the airlines and/or insurance companies when seeking reimbursement of their travel costs.

If SchoolBOX decides to proceed with the trip at the 14-day assessment point, but the security situation in Nicaragua changes due to circumstances outside of our control, we reserve the right to cancel the trip at any point up until the departure date. In this event, volunteers will also be notified by phone/email and a formal explanation letter will be provided to them.

In the event of cancellation, SchoolBOX will continue to assess the situation. Once all parties (our team, government, airlines, etc.) have deemed the danger has passed, we will contact the volunteer group with the hope of rescheduling to a future date.

### **Rescheduling a Cancelled Trip:**

In the event that an 'Avoid Travel' advisory is lifted and Nicaragua is deemed safe again to host volunteers, SchoolBOX will evaluate on a case by case basis whether it would be possible to reschedule a cancelled volunteer trip to a later date.

This will not automatically be offered to volunteers, but will be assessed by our team to determine whether this is possible with our existing build and volunteer schedule.

If a rescheduled trip date is provided by SchoolBOX, it would be up to each volunteer's discretion whether they would like to participate in the rescheduled trip. If they are unavailable, unable, or unwilling to participate, SchoolBOX will give them a full refund of their trip fees.

### **Refund Policy:**

In the event that SchoolBOX cancels a volunteer trip for security reasons due to civil unrest, terrorism, natural disaster or force majeure, we will offer a full refund of the volunteer trip fees.

A full refund of the volunteer trip fees will be issued within 10 days of the trip cancellation date.

The refund will be issued as a US money order and mailed to each volunteer by the SchoolBOX Finance Manager.

### **Flight Cancellations:**

SchoolBOX is not a travel company and is not responsible for making flight cancellations or appealing to insurance providers to reimburse for cancelled flights.

It is the responsibility of volunteers to familiarize themselves with the flight cancellation policies of airlines and insurance providers and deal directly with those parties in the event that the trip is cancelled for security reasons.

### **Returning Volunteer Trip Fundraising in the Event of a Cancelled Trip:**

In the event that SchoolBOX is forced to cancel a volunteer trip due to circumstances outside its control (natural disaster, civil unrest, terrorism, force majeure), volunteers will be responsible for returning any and all monies that they have raised to offset the cost of their volunteer trip fees. Volunteer trip fees are not a program expense, and therefore not considered a charitable

donation to SchoolBOX. Each volunteer must be responsible in returning this money to their donors in the event that a trip is cancelled.

With the consent of the donors, this money could also be donated directly to SchoolBOX programs, and then would be eligible for a tax receipt.

SchoolBOX will ask volunteers to sign an agreement stating that they will return all money raised to offset their volunteer trip costs if a trip is cancelled.