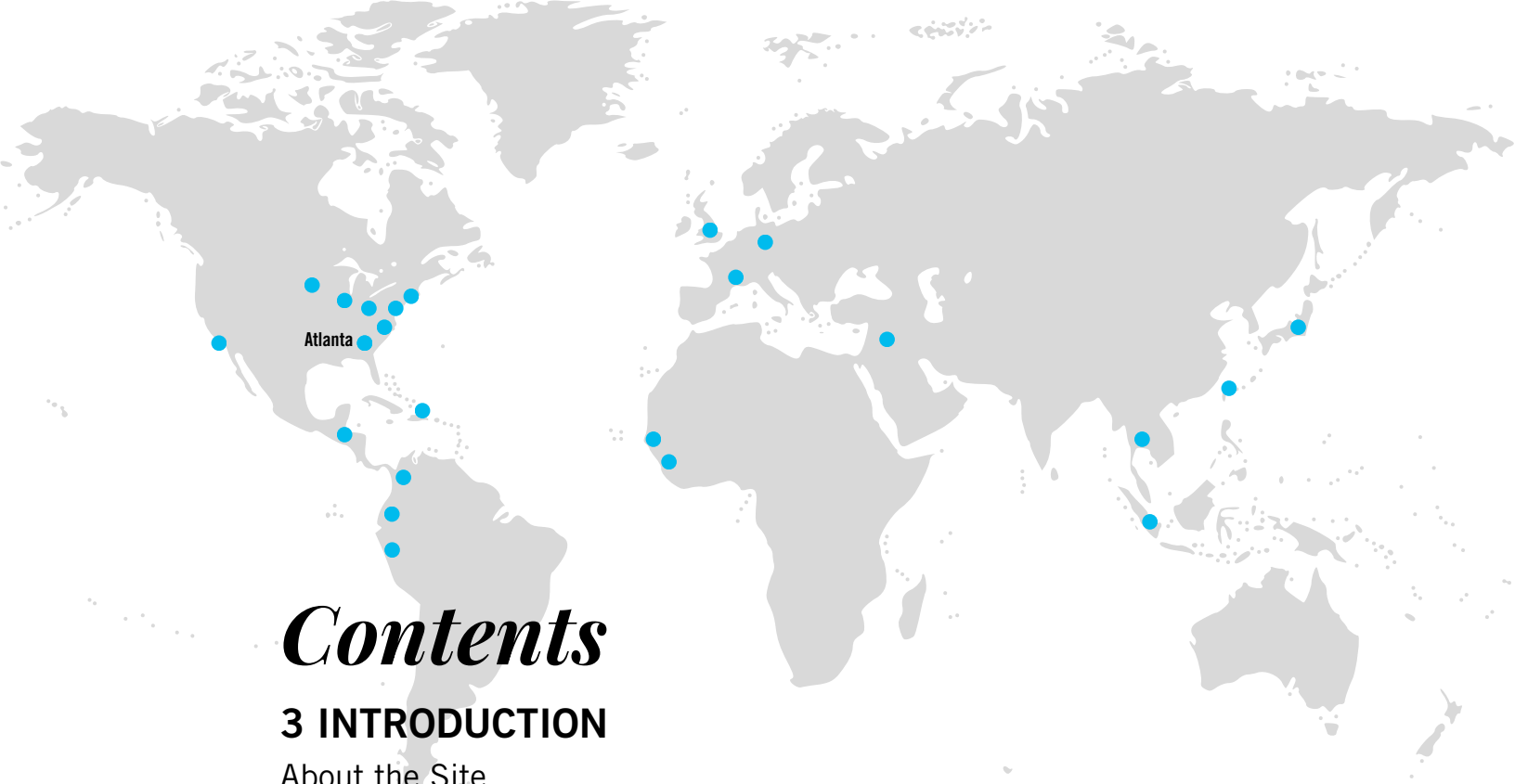




Atlanta

ENVISION HANDBOOK





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Introduction

ABOUT THE SITE

Envision Atlanta serves the needs of the refugee community while developing missional leaders in a multicultural setting through innovative ministry strategies and short-term mission opportunities. We are located in Clarkston, Georgia, 11 miles east of the heart of Atlanta. Clarkston is a hub for refugee resettlement, having welcomed tens of thousands of refugees over the past four decades. Within the city, there are more than 150 ethnic groups represented and 60 languages spoken. It is a unique city filled with stories, cultures, and challenges. In this diverse environment, we seek to tangibly love and serve our neighbors, many of whom have never heard the good news of the gospel. We desire to include short-term teams and interns in this work, providing opportunities to understand God's heart for refugees and to develop others holistically.

Check out our website at envisionatlanta.org to learn more.



General Information

TEAM COSTS

The cost is \$525 per individual for seven days. Trips run from Saturday afternoon at 4 p.m. until Friday morning after breakfast. The expense covers meals, lodging, and general ministry costs. Airfare and travel expenses are not included.

AGE REQUIREMENT

There is not a minimum or maximum age requirement for trip participants. However, children under 12 years old must be accompanied by a parent and obtain prior permission to participate.

HOUSING & FOOD

Our team house, the Friendship Center House, is centrally located in Clarkston on the Envision property. It is a four-bedroom home capable of housing up to 20 people. We require that you have a minimum of 10 people to book a trip. We provide beds with a mattress, a blanket, and a pillow. Please bring all linens/sleeping bags and towels. Envision Atlanta has sheets and towels available to rent for \$15 per person for the week. This service is requested and paid for separately from the trip payment.

All meals are provided. Breakfast is a variety of self-serve options from groceries we stock in the house. Lunch will be planned and provided. We intentionally keep breakfast and lunch lower cost so you can experience ethnic dinners, often provided by a refugee neighbor involved with Envision Atlanta. If someone on your team has been diagnosed with food allergies, please indicate such on the registration and contact Envision Atlanta in advance.

INTERNSHIPS

Envision Atlanta welcomes people over the age of 18 who are exploring a call to ministry. As an intern, you will be given broad ministry exposure, intentional discipleship, and leadership development as you serve and consider your place in God's mission.

All interns are required to raise their support costs, which are \$1,350 per intern per month. The expense covers meals, lodging, and general ministry costs. Airfare and travel expenses are not included in this amount, but additional funds can be raised to cover these expenses.

There are various roles in which an intern can serve: ESL, education, gospel outreach, and agriculture. Additionally, Envision Atlanta hosts interns to serve at the invitation of existing ministry partners who focus on soccer outreach, youth ministry, and health care.

Interns will plan their time at Envision Atlanta with the intern coordinator and appropriate ministry leaders. Schedules will vary based on roles, rotation of responsibilities, and individual projects.





AIRPORT & ARRIVAL INFORMATION

The Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is our closest airport. There is a MARTA train station inside the domestic terminal where you will purchase train tickets. The MARTA station closest to the Friendship Center is called Kensington Station, and with prior arrangements, our staff can pick up your team there. Our site has two 15-passenger vans that can be used during the week for local transportation, but any group is welcome to drive their own vehicles.

Whether flying or driving, please know that our short-term trips begin at 4 p.m. on your arrival day. If your group arrives earlier, Atlanta offers many great parks and museums you may want to visit.

COMMUNICATIONS

We love it when our teams are fully present, whether during active service or team time. For this reason, we have a limited cell phone use policy during your time at Envision Atlanta. Ideally, phones are left in the bedrooms and not a part of the rhythm of the day. Group leaders and staff may serve as a photographer for the team, taking care not to take pictures that include the faces of children or any refugees. It is for their safety and protection that we make this request.

Packing List

- Comfortable walking/work shoes (closed-toed)
- Work gloves
- Work clothes that can get dirty (no shorts, leggings, or tank tops)
- Ministry clothes (no shorts, leggings, or tank tops)
- Church clothes (no shorts, leggings, or tank tops)
- Toiletries
- Sheets for a twin mattress or a sleeping bag (unless bedding is rented)
- Medications or prescriptions
- Shower towel
- Sunscreen
- Spending money and cash for offering at the ethnic church service
- Reusable water bottle
- Bible, journal, and pen
- Backpack and/or bag
- Phone and charger as needed

DRESS CODE

While you serve with Envision Atlanta, it is important to be mindful of cultural sensitivity, modesty, and safety. We ask you to be prepared by packing clothes that are not overly revealing and/or tight. Please make sure your knees and shoulders are covered by wearing shirts with sleeves and long pants (or skirts for girls). Tank tops and shorts are not acceptable out in the community, but you may bring them for times in the team house. You will assist us with several projects, so bring clothes that can get dirty and closed-toed shoes. Lastly, please be prepared for activities like camp and sports clinics with the proper athletic wear.





Ministry

Envision Atlanta exists in the midst of Clarkston, Georgia, a city that has become the new home to thousands of refugees. Since the 1980s, Clarkston has been the initial refugee resettlement location for the Atlanta metro area. The city's approximately 30 apartment complexes house people from all over the world who speak different languages, follow various religions, and represent a variety of cultures. It is a unique city with a set of unique joys and challenges—a city full of stories yet to be listened to, stories that you will get to hear. Envision Atlanta desires to serve its neighbors through friendship and hospitality and ultimately seeks to proclaim the Kingdom of God in Clarkston for His glory.

When you come to the Atlanta site, you will be joining the staff in ways that serve our neighbors and deepen existing relationships. We desire to explain God's heart for refugees and to equip you and your team with ways to love your neighbors back home. You will have opportunities to encourage the local ethnic churches, listen to stories, play with children, work at Envision Acres Farm, and pray through different apartment complexes. It is our prayer that during your time in Clarkston, our collaboration may bless our neighbors personally and spiritually and excite you for God's ongoing work in your city.

Here are the current ministries of the site that you might have an opportunity to experience:

- **TESOL:** One of the greatest needs of the resettled people in Clarkston is to learn English. We recognize this need and have established an English as a Second Language (ESL) initiative. We currently do one-on-ones, in-home English classes, and group classes at various facilities. By offering ESL, we hope to not only teach English but also meet another of their greatest felt needs—a friendship in a land not their own.
- **After School:** The After-School Ministry seeks to develop students by investing in volunteer tutors, short-term teams, and interns who come alongside them to meet their holistic needs. While the primary felt need our program seeks to meet is the academic support and development of our students, we are mindful that the holistic needs of our students include physical, mental, emotional, relational, and spiritual needs as well.
- **Envision Acres Farm:** Envision Acres Farm is a fully functioning farm that exists to educate, employ, and empower our local refugee community while developing and training missional leaders creatively through agriculture.
- **Gospel Outreach:** The Gospel Outreach ministry intentionally reaches the Clarkston community with the gospel through prayer-walking, evangelism, and discipleship. The purpose is twofold, seeing the gospel proclaimed among the nations and training believers to be confident in sharing the good news.

Schedule

TEAMS

A more specific schedule for your time in Clarkston will be communicated closer to your arrival. Partnerships, outreaches, and needs are in constant flux throughout the year. Summer teams will often spend more time with children through different day camps, while spring/fall teams might be asked to come with a specific project or focus, such as teaching English or training a group of women in specific skills. Below you will see a general description of what a day at Envision Atlanta could look like:

8:00 a.m.	Wake up, breakfast, personal devotion time
9:00 a.m.	Worship and group devotional
10:00 a.m.	Work site, ministry site, training
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Work site, ministry site, training
5:00 p.m.	Clean up
6:00 p.m.	Dinner
7:00 p.m.	Evening meeting and debrief
8:00 p.m.	Downtime
10:00 p.m.	Quiet hours begin
11:00 p.m.	Lights out



Cultural Sensitivity

Clarkston is a multicultural environment. As such, it is home to a unique collection of worldviews. One can experience this externally—a host of ethnic restaurants and stores, a mosque on one side of the street, a Buddhist temple on the other, and clothes displaying diverse colors and fabrics. Ethiopians are neighbors with Syrians, Congolese with Afghans—the list goes on. It all moves along in relative harmony, but as one begins to enter the lives of the refugees in Clarkston, they experience the internal displays of varying worldviews. Behavior expectations, interpersonal interactions, and value systems are all affected by religion, people group, country of origin, and more. It is often here where conflict finds its roots and expresses itself.

Since Envision Atlanta exists amongst and works with all these worldviews, we seek to honor and love all our neighbors. It is important that we remain sensitive, being willing to listen and adapt. It takes time and trust to be able to share the hope of Jesus. Our site seeks to approach this with dependence upon the Holy Spirit, and we pray the same will be true of your team. Upon your arrival, we will provide training and instructions that will prepare you to enter into cross-cultural experiences, and we ask that you join us in the seriousness of the task: being willing to learn. You will interact with people who look, speak, and behave differently; they will also most likely believe something that does not align with the truths of Scripture. In all of this, please remember that they are made in the image of God and deserve to be treated with love and respect. We will attempt to work through any problems that may arise during your trip but reserve the right to send home any team member who is not committed to upholding the standards of Envision Atlanta.

We are very excited that you are coming to join the work that God is doing amongst the nations in Clarkston. We at Envision Atlanta are here to help and guide you in any way possible. We commit to the best of our abilities to lead by example, demonstrating a life dependent on the Word and the Holy Spirit.



Contact Info



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