



VIRLANIE FOUNDATION
INC.

Volunteer Handbook

2019

Message for the volunteers

by Dominique Lemay – President and Founder

Firstly, I would like to personally thank you for your commitment to the street children in Manila.

My team and I are very grateful to welcome you as a volunteer in Virlanie Foundation.

Every year, Virlanie Foundation takes care of more than 200 children through our residential programs and helps nearly 300 children through our various outreach and support programs.

Since the establishment of Virlanie Foundation in 1992, we have hosted more than a thousand volunteers who have worked closely with the Philippine team to help sustain the foundation and give back more smiles to street children in the Philippines. Indeed, the volunteers' presence is very essential to the foundation and provide essential contributions to the development and sustainability of Virlanie.

This guide will help you to be well prepared.

Your mission will also be a one-of-a-kind personal experience that can be a turning point of your future career.

Finally, I hope you will enjoy the discovery of a very different culture and geography, of a world that, despite the existing poverty, will surprise you with its beauty.

Before you leave, please spend time reading about the Philippines (history, culture, etc.) to better understand the country.

Thank you again for your commitment to the street children.

Hope to see you very soon in Manila!

All the best,



Passport and Visa



To travel, you will need a **passport valid for, at least, 6 months after your return date**. Don't forget to check the validity before booking your flight!

For the visa, all the european citizens can stay 29 days on the Filipino territory without a visa, but insuing a 59 days visa before departure is cheaper (30€).

On place, you can either renew your visa (*4 400php for 1 month/5 700 for 2 months + 2550 for the mandatory I-Card on the 1st renewal*) or have a way-and- back trip out of the country.

Note : Book your flight dates according to your visa validity to avoid paying 1 month extension for few days only!

Note : Volunteering is not work! Apply for a tourist visa and, not to confuse the immigration, don't mention that you will "work" for an association!

Safety



For safety, register with your embassy !



Travel insurance

It is necessary to travel with an insurance, contact your insurance for an international cover. Your credit card can also cover you for a while. Ask your bank.

Note that some insurances are proposing special contracts for volunteering missions like the **Cap Volontariat contract of Chapka Assurance**.



Health

There are no **mandatory vaccines** for the Philippines so,

just be up-to-date with your regular vaccines and hepatitis.

Antimalarial treatment is not required!

You can bring your pharmaceutical kit with you but be aware that you can easily find medicines on place.

Don't forget to send your medical certificate to the volunteer coordinator before your arrival!

Budget

The cost of living in the Philippines is really low compared to western countries.



You should foresee a budget of around **250 euros/290 dollars**

per month to live and travel here with no worries (excluding the cost of visa renewal).

GOOD TO KNOW

The currency of the Philippines is the Filipino peso (php- ₱).
In October 2017, **1€ ≈ 60₱ ≈ 1\$**

Meal: 100-150 php
Jeepney ride: 10 php
Tricycle ride: 20 php
Bottle of water: 32 php

Before arriving, get an international credit card for withdrawal and payment.

Don't forget to notify your bank that you are going to the Philippines!

You can easily withdraw money on place but ATM takes 200php per withdraw so don't hesitate to withdraw the maximum amount (10 000php). As we are paying almost everything with cash in the Philippines, it's the best option.



Prepare your luggage



What to bring with you?

- Climate in the Philippines is hot and humid so prefer lightweight clothes, cotton... Avoid synthetic.
- A formal dress for events.
- A sweater for air-conditioned places (especially buses).
- Earplugs (if you cannot sleep in a noisy environment).
- An adaptor for your electronic devices (you can find cheaper ones on place).
- Beach and snorkeling equipment (the Philippines are one of the best place to snorkel!).
- Trekking shoes if you want to go to the mountains.
- A raincoat (if rainy season)
- Bed sheets are provided but you can bring yours if you prefer.

Important: Bring your insurance contract and important numbers.

Don't overload yourself, you can find everything on place!



If you do want to bring **in kind donations**, look at the **need list** on Virlanie's website.

NOTICE

DRESS CODE

Even if you are free to dress as you like on your free time, please note that **Virlanie Foundation is a working place** so these outfits are not allowed:

- Transparent clothes, thin straps or bareback tops, tops revealing bras...
- Plunging necklines, miniskirts and minishorts
- Swimming shorts and beachwear's
- Sweatpants
- Stained or damaged clothes
- Flip flops (allowed in the homes but not in the main office)

HYGIENE

Hygiene is really important for the Filipinos. Showering once a day, at least, and changing clothes every day are the basics!

Your arrival at the airport

Before your departure, book your flight ticket in coordination with the volunteer coordinator to make you will be welcomed at the airport. Once your flight booked, let the volunteer coordinator know about your arrival schedule. The easiest way is to directly **forward your flight ticket confirmation to the volunteer coordinator.**

To facilitate your pick-up, try to arrive on **week days** (for traffic reason, avoid Fridays) **before 4pm.**



Instructions to meet you at the airport...

Terminal 3: After taking your luggage, take the exit on your right, the volunteer coordinator will wait for you there, **in the hall.**

Terminal 1: Leave the hall and turn directly on the right to the taxi line in front of the smoking area (don't cross to the arrival extension). The volunteer coordinator will wait for you at the **taxi line desk, out of the main hall.**

If no one can welcome you, these are the recommendation to reach the Foundation

Regular/white cabs are cheaper than the airport/yellow taxi. You will find them in the departure zone.

Ask for the **meter** instead of negotiating.

Ask the driver: Makati City, Vito Cruz extension (Pablo O Campo on the map), Shopwise (near Chino Roces, Pasong Tamo).

Arrived at Shopwise, find **Yague Street** (cf map below). Landmark : Makati Coliseum

Travel range: 30 to 50 minutes.

Fare: 300-350 php

Your arrival in the Foundation

Immersion

Upon your arrival, you will be welcomed in your immersion home where you will spend your 1st month. Before your departure, **read carefully the immersion rules** the volunteer coordinator sent to you.

Orientation

On your 1st day, you will be oriented by the volunteer coordinator with an **intercultural presentation** and a **visit of the Foundation.** You will be accompanied to change or withdraw money, buy a local sim card...

Policies

Virlanie Foundation is working closely with the Filipino Department of Social Welfare and we all must respect non-disclosure policies. **Are prohibited:**

- Posting of photos/videos of children on social medias, for custody protection's reasons.
- Communicating with children who has been adopted, if it is not officially coordinated with the Department of Social Welfare.
- Engaging with our children/beneficiaries on facebook or other social media channels.

Follow up

The volunteer coordinator is your referent for everything related to your mission so don't hesitate to solicit her whenever you need. You will have a **monthly one on one interview** with the volunteer coordinator to assure the follow up and the smooth running of your mission.

WELCOME!



Immersion

The immersion period is a **one-of-a-kind experience**, you will live for 1 month with the children of the Foundation and the local staff. *It's time to discover the Filipino culture and sense of hospitality!*



Volunteer House

After your immersion, you will be accommodated in the volunteer house (photo above), in colocation with the other volunteers of Virlanie. *Respect your housemates and take a proper care of the place, it's the basics of the life in community!*



France Volontaire

France Volontaire is a French organization which aims to facilitate international volunteering missions. They can advise, accompany and orient the volunteers before and during their missions. *One branch is here in the Philippines! You can meet them on place or contact them at: ev.philippines@france-volontaires.org*



January 1, Tuesday – New Year's Day

February 5, Tuesday – Chinese New Year

February 25, Monday – People power revolution

April 9, Tuesday – Araw ng Kagitingan

April 18, Thursday – Maundy Thursday

April 19, Friday – Good Friday

April 20, Saturday – Black Saturday

April 21, Sunday – Araw ng Kagitingan

May 1, Wednesday – Labor Day

June 12, Wednesday – Independence Day

June 24, 2018, Monday – Manila Day

August 21, Wednesday – Ninoy Aquino Day

August 26, Monday – National Heroes' Day
Bonifacio Day

November 1, Friday – All Saints' Day

November 2, Saturday – All Souls' Day

November 30, 2018, Saturday – Bonifacio Day

December 24, Tuesday – Christmas Eve

December 25, Wednesday – Christmas Day

December 30, Monday – Rizal Day

December 31, Tuesday – New Year's Eve

– Possibility of Additional Holidays during the year –

In addition of the national regular holidays, all the volunteers benefit with **2 days of holidays per month of mission**. Inform the Volunteer



Coordinator and your program supervisor of your dates at least 2 weeks ahead.

BON VOYAGE!

For any concern or more information, contact your volunteer coordinator at: verin.oceane@virlanie.org
