

BMAA DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS (BMADM)

Your Guide to Missionary Service

65/35 Support

Revised 2015

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How do I get to the field?

The Baptist Missionary Association Department of Missions (BMADM) has what we like to call the missionary candidate “pipeline.” The pipeline puts you in contact with the department personnel and gets the conversation started about missions.

Through your discussions with directors, pastors, and leaders in your life, and, of course, the leading of the Holy Spirit, we are praying that during this time, direction and clarity will come to you about how to minister in our world today.

Timeline: Now that you are in the missionary candidate “pipeline”, you may have questions about what the process looks like. Here is a basic timeline:

1. Assessment--This is an evaluation of your potential strengths and weaknesses in missionary service. Assessment is not a “yes” or “no” but an aid to know you better and assist in your preparation for the field.
2. Application--You will submit a formal application providing necessary personal and family information, ministry background, and also a written statement of your calling and vision. The application will also include personal references and authorization for a credit check.
3. Interview--Upon completion of the assessment and application process, you will be presented to the Advisory Committee, a personnel board, for their consideration.
4. Commissioning--Upon recommendation by the Advisory Committee, you will be submitted to BMA America for approval and commissioning at the annual meeting which is held each year in April.
5. Missionary Status--The term *missionary status* refers to when you become an employee of the BMADM after approval by BMA America in its annual meeting. At that time Deputation can begin.
6. Deputation--Deputation refers to a period of time, a few months pre-field, that you can use for training, resourcing your ministry, sharing your vision and the necessary preparations for the move to your destination country.
7. PFPO--This is an acronym for Pre-Field Preparation and Orientation. It is a time of preparation for life and ministry on the field. PFPO covers five major areas: Interpersonal Skills, Family Life and Development, Culture and Language Acquisition, Personal Spiritual Development, and Church Planting and Strategies.

When do I start work?

Beginning Your Missionary Status: As a general rule, you will need at least 75% of your part of the base salary and benefits in commitments in order to go on missionary status. You will need to demonstrate this by means of a spread sheet

listing real donations, both one-time and recurring, and potential donors. By potential donors we mean those who have indicated by verbal or written means their intent to support your ministry. In addition, you will need at least three months of support on hand in your ministry account before beginning your status as a BMAA missionary.

In our experience with those already on the field, a good portion of that commitment toward your 65% will come from a sending church. Characteristics of a sending church include the following: missionary's home church, a source of financial support, and a church that is highly engaged in communication, mentoring and pastoral care for the missionary. So you can see the importance of having a church like that on board.

Please note that these minimum standards must be met to begin your missionary status. Before you move to the field, you should be able to demonstrate the ability to raise the entire 65% of your necessary funding. There must be some reasonable expectation that you will be able to support yourself. This is for your benefit as well as those who support your missionary vision. The Department of Missions will also have a great deal invested in you when we consider the 35% of your base salary and benefits, plus training, assessment, language school, etc. We want you to go to the mission field, but not prematurely.

What are my salary and basic benefits? BMA America has set a base salary of \$39,669.60 annually (\$3,305.80 monthly) plus benefits for all American missionaries.

Benefits include:

- ½ Social Security: If the missionary does not contribute to Social Security he or she does not receive this benefit.
- 401K contribution that is 5% of base salary: This is a payroll deduction, tax deferred, and managed by Minister's Resource Services.
- Health coverage with AETNA Global for the family with no cost for dependents

The salary and basic benefits package totals approximately \$58,000 depending on the variables like the exact amount of the insurance premium. The BMADM will provide 35% of the salary and benefits package from its general operating fund. The remainder will be paid from the missionary's support funds. Once elected, approved and given missionary status, the 35% funding from the Department of Missions will begin. Your deputation should be focused on financing your vision, which includes salary and benefits plus ministry funds and special projects.

Are there other expenses I will need to plan for?

Here are some things you will be fully responsible for:

1. **Passage to the Field** - The missionary will raise his/her passage to the field. The estimated costs will be included in the proposed budget that is presented during pre-field preparations.
2. **COLA** - A **Cost Of Living Adjustment** will be allowed, up to a maximum 50% of the base salary. The missionary will be responsible for raising this optional benefit. The estimated cost will be included in the proposed budget presented during pre-field preparations. It may be adjusted as changes dictate. If at any time the balance of the missionary's ministry support funds drops to a critical level, this benefit may be the first to be reduced or dropped. The amount of the adjustment may fluctuate according to the published government index.

Here are things that will be jointly funded by you and the BMADM:

1. **Children's Education** - The BMADM will pay a stipend up to but not exceeding \$1000 per child per school year, and the missionary will be allowed to raise the remainder of the costs of tuition, enrollment fees, and books. This provision is made for pre-K and K - 12 but does not include childcare, which is the personal, financial responsibility of the missionary family. The estimated costs will be included in the proposed budget presented during pre-field preparations. It may be adjusted from year to year as changes dictate.
2. **Deputation Expenses** - The missionary will be reimbursed for amounts up to a maximum \$1000 stipend from the BMADM. All other deputation expenses will be paid from the missionary's Ministry Support funds.

Here are a few things that the BMADM will provide for you:

1. **Language School** - The BMADM will pay the costs of an approved course of language study. This provision does not include children or dependents. The cost of language study may also include the necessary round-trip airfare in the case of a language school that is not in your destination country.
2. **Relocation Allowance** - A one-time allowance for purchase of furniture, appliances and household items up to but not exceeding \$4000 will be paid by the BMADM upon arrival in the destination country. This allowance does not include vehicles, office equipment, clothes or other personal items. The allowance will be paid upon presentation of official invoices or quotes. With

approval, additional purchases may be drawn from the missionary's Ministry Support funds.

- 3. Residence and Legal Expenses** - The BMADM will pay for legal expenses related to the missionary's residency in the destination country. That involves initial entry and application and also periodic renewals. It is the missionary's responsibility to determine and fulfill the residency requirements and seek counsel and approval from the BMADM concerning the available options and expenses.

So I'm on the field! What now?

Support Fund: The BMADM is the clearinghouse for all funds given to finance your missionary salary, benefits and work. An account will be set up in your name, and all donations will be credited to that account unless otherwise designated for a special purpose. All requests for funds should be addressed to Tina Cummins.

Language School: Your missionary status, deputation and move to the field will need to be coordinated, when applicable, with going to language school. For example, if you were to go to language school to study Spanish in Costa Rica you may start in September, January, or May of any year. In order to meet the September 2014 date, you will need to go on missionary status in May or June, obviously having met the funding requirements. Likewise, a timeline would need to be determined for the schools of choice in other countries.

Missionary Reports: Annual reports are required via the bmamissions.org website. These reports will be due January 31. Habitual negligence on the part of any missionary regarding annual reports shall be considered cause to ask for review by the Advisory Committee. All missionaries shall be ready to make any special report to the Director of Missions, the Advisory Committee, the Missionary Committee or the association when such reports are requested.

Security Protocols: Missionaries should have completed security training during their time in Pre-Field Preparation and Orientation. Once on the field, the missionary is required to complete a Security Contingency Plan. In case of an emergency, this is a plan that the missionary has made and will execute. This allows the Missions Office to have an idea of how to expect the missionary to act when a crisis arises.

Authorized Absences from the Field:

- 1. Medical leave:** When a missionary has to be off the field due to illness (either his own or a member of his family), his salary will be continued for three months; after that he will be considered to be on leave of absence without pay. The Advisory Committee must approve an extension of a medical leave.
- 2. Ministry Work Involving Other Nations:** A missionary may be invited to go to another nation to minister, help train, assist, or search out the feasibility of starting a mission work in that area.

3. **Invitations to Preach in Other Nations:** A missionary may be invited to preach in the States or in another nation. However, these appointments need to be limited and must be approved by the Operational Director and the Executive Director.
4. **Extreme Natural Disasters, National Uprisings and War:** Should natural disasters occur, the missionary must confer with the Crisis Management Team to determine the best course of action to be taken for the safety and well-being of the family.
5. **Requested Leave of Absence by the Missionary:** A missionary may request a leave of absence. He or she may retain tenure, hospitalization insurance and retirement benefits during a leave of absence, providing the Department of Missions is reimbursed for the cost of these benefits by the missionary and/or his church during the leave of absence.

What is a Furlough?

Missionaries may refer to visits back home as furloughs. They take a defined break from their work to visit churches, reconnect with donors and family, settle affairs, or reenergize. Most usages of the word include the idea that you can't just leave without permission.

How do I request a furlough?

Dates of the beginning and end of all furloughs must be submitted in writing. Furloughs may be adjusted, with written approval of the directors, to coincide with school schedules of children. Furloughs, if possible, should be staggered on any field where two or more Americans are serving so as to have only one representing that field in the States at that time.

The following are furlough plans available for BMAA Missionaries:

1. One year on the field--Two months in U.S., all passage paid by missionary
2. Two years on the field--Four months in U.S., half passage paid by the missionary
3. Three years on the field--Six months in the U.S., half passage paid by the missionary
4. Four years on the field--One year in the U.S., half passage paid by the missionary

What do I do when I get there?

Upon arrival in the States, a missionary is to come to the BMA Global Ministry Center for meetings and to give a ministry update. You will probably meet with the business department to bring financial records up to date and to take care of necessary matters pertaining to furlough finances. You may receive updates on materials or information to share with churches during your travel. All missionaries are required to leave a schedule of their furlough activities with the Missions Office.

The missionary/missionary family is expected to take part in debriefing each furlough. This debriefing will take place at the Global Ministry Center in Conway at

the expense of the BMADM. The missionary/missionary family is strongly encouraged to participate in a week-long debriefing at the conclusion of their missionary service. This debriefing will take place in Colorado at the expense of the BMADM.

Is there anything else I should know about furloughs?

1. With the approval of the Missions Office, American international missionaries may attend school while in the States on furlough.
2. At the conclusion of a furlough, the missionary is required to come to the office to go over future plans, finances, and other pertinent items.
3. Baggage on return trips must conform to airline stipulations. The missionary will pay any additional expense for excess baggage.

Do I ever get a break?

Vacation: Missionaries are allowed paid vacation time as follows:

- Two weeks per year after being on the field one year
- Three weeks per year after being on the field ten years.
- Four weeks per year after being on the field twenty years.

Vacation time for all missionaries shall not accrue but must be taken in the year it is earned. The missionary must give notification when scheduling a vacation before leaving the field.

Missionary Care Ministry: Missionary Care is the ongoing preparation, equipping and ministry to missionary personnel so you may be fruitful in life and ministry.

Equipping and ministry to the missionary includes but is not limited to:

- Providing up-to-date resources for spiritual, emotional, physical, and psychological health
- Providing webinars and outsourced conferences covering security, counseling, and debriefing
- Facilitating conferences held on the field to encourage, strengthen and refuel missionary personnel
- Managing the availability of Christian counseling for marriage, family, emotional, and security crisis issues
- Providing re-entry counseling for missionaries re-entering their home culture

“Missionary Care has been directly responsible for prolonging the ministry of several BMAA missionaries in recent years. This proactive effort toward strengthening the spiritual, physical, emotional, and family life of our missionaries is Bible-based ministry at its best. Our Missionary Care team serves as the ‘missionary medics’ to those who are serving on the front lines around the world.” – John David Smith, Executive Director

Severance and Longevity:

- Beginning at age sixty-five, or the age of full social security benefits, all missionaries are required to be reviewed by the Advisory Committee. (Note: This does not require an in-person interview. This could be accomplished by written reports, director's visit, field visit by Advisory Committee or conference call.)
- A missionary will receive a one-month base salary for every five years of service, with the maximum allowable being six months. (Any additional years above the five-year increments will be pro-rated, but the amount cannot exceed the approved maximum.)
- Should a missionary die while an employee of the BMAA Department of Missions, the spouse shall be entitled to any honorarium the missionary would have been entitled. If the spouse is not eligible for full benefits under social security, he or she can choose to extend his or her health insurance with the Department of Missions under federal COBRA regulations. We will pay one half of the present BMAA monthly insurance premiums for twelve months.

Resignation:

- A missionary who plans to resign must inform the Directors of Missions at least sixty days prior to leaving the field. Passage for resigning missionaries will be paid at the same ratio set for furlough, except when resignation is due to poor health.
- When an American international missionary leaves the field and his or her employment by the BMAA is terminated, all equipment belonging to the association will be administered by the BMADM.
- A container of up to twenty feet long will be provided for shipping personal effects back to the states. No money will be paid in lieu of shipping costs.
- Should a missionary decide that he is resigning at the end of his furlough, he must submit his resignation sixty days before the end of his furlough.

Re-entry: This is defined as the "time when cross-cultural Christian workers return to their home country, whether for retirement, because of leaving the field, or due to furlough" (*Encountering Missionary Life and Work* by Tom Steffen). We want to help in every way possible in your transition back to your home country. Missionary Care will be a vital aspect in this stage, coming along side you and helping that transition to be as smooth as possible. We will want you to attend a debriefing and renewal conference to help process what has taken place in your time on the field. This should be done several months after arriving back in the States.

Problems on the field?

Dismissal of a missionary is a serious matter which requires much prayer, investigation and evaluation of the circumstances, situations and actions involved.

- The person bringing the accusation or complaint concerning a missionary must submit in writing the accusation and be willing to sign the statements.
- The missionary will be apprised as to the accusation or complaint made against him or her and will be given the opportunity to address the charges before the Executive Director and the Operations Director.
- The directors will decide what course of action will be taken concerning the investigation, attempting to maintain the innocence of the missionary until a full investigation has been made.
- A sub-committee of the Advisory Committee will hear the accusation, the missionary, and the findings and present a plan of action for discipline, restoration and/or dismissal then make a decision concerning the missionary involved.
- Should the missionary be dismissed, the accusations and the action of the committee will be recorded. The churches of the BMAA will be informed that the person has been dismissed from employment with the BMAA Department of Missions.
- Should the missionary be disciplined, the action of the committee will be recorded and the stipulations of discipline will be carried out by the directors.
- The termination of the missionary will be immediate and without pay. The Department of Missions will provide shipping costs to bring the missionary's personal property back to the States.
- Grounds for discipline of a missionary may include the following:
 - Doctrinal issues
 - Moral conduct issues
 - Being a hindrance to the work on the mission field

Contact Information:

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