

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q) I'm coming to India from abroad; what do I need to do before arriving and what should I bring?

Ans) Vaccinations and Medicines: Contact your local travel clinic for information on vaccinations and medicines that should be brought to India.

Visas: According to recent government changes, foreign nationals entering India to volunteer with a registered NGO must obtain an [employment visa](#) for more six months. However, Different visas are required for different nationalities and also depend on what kind of travel/research/volunteerism you intend to carry out during your time in India. Please see the Indian Consulate website for your home country for more details.

Money: Visa and MasterCard are accepted by most ATMs. You may also bring your home country's currency to be exchanged once you arrive. Travelers' checks are accepted by most banks but the conversion process may take some time. Check with your bank for more details.

Travel Insurance: All volunteers must purchase [travel health insurance](#) that covers their time at Manav Sadhna. You must submit a copy before your arrival.

Arrival Dates: We officially initiate volunteers on Wednesday of each week and ask volunteers to try to plan their arrival between Monday and Tuesday.

Q) What do I do once I arrive?

Ans) Airport Pick-up: Someone from the Manav Sadhna family will pick you up from the airport and see you to the volunteer house.

Orientation: We officially initiate volunteers on every Wednesday, when we begin our three day orientation process, which welcomes volunteers and gets you situated and familiarized with Manav Sadhna. At the end of the three days, we finalize where and how you will be serving.

Register with Police: All foreign nationals who have a visa and plan to stay for more than 180 days must [register at the local Foreigner's Registration Office \(FRO\)](#) within 14 days of their arrival in India. Manav Sadhna will arrange for the registration with the local FRO upon your arrival in Ahmedabad.

Q) Do I extend my visa?

Ans) Yes, you can extend your visa with the proper application and submission of fees at the FRO (Foreign Registratin Office). Our coordinators will help you to extend the visa.

Q) Do volunteers get accommodation?

Ans) All volunteers serving for a minimum of one month will be placed in one of our volunteer houses. We have separate houses for women and men. If couple's wish to stay together, they must organize their own accommodation. The volunteer residences have shared rooms with simple furniture, bathrooms and a functional kitchen. Bedding is provided.

The women's volunteer houses are based in the Gandhi Ashram, walking distance from Manav Sadhna. The men's volunteer house is situated at RTO Circle and is a 10 minute walk to the Ashram. There is a grocery store, general store, vegetable market, several pharmacies, several restaurants, a cyber café and a few hotels all within walking distance of the homes.

Q) How many people stay in the volunteer houses?

Ans) We have two women's volunteer houses with a capacity of 5 people each. The men's volunteer house can accommodate up to 4 individuals.

Q) Are meals provided?

Ans) We provide volunteers a vegetarian Gujarati meal everyday for lunch from Monday-Saturday. Volunteers are responsible for breakfast, dinner and Sunday lunch. We encourage volunteers to cook as all of the volunteer accommodations are stocked with a functional kitchen and a fridge. In addition to the several restaurants and eateries in the vicinity, there is a small family-run restaurant called Parikalp that makes a simple Gujarati vegetarian thali for a nominal price.

Q) Do I have to pay anything to volunteer?

Ans) Manav Sadhna does not charge volunteers for housing, or lunch. We do ask volunteers to contribute to the monthly electricity bill incurred at the volunteer house where you reside and to cover the cost of your laundry and housecleaning services.

Q) What is the distance between Manav Sadhna and the project sites?

Ans) Most of Manav Sadhna's work takes place in the field. Our centers include: Ramapir No Tekra (walking distance from the Gandhi Ashram); Ram Rahim Tekra (a 30 minute bus ride from Manav Sadhna); the Naroda Ashramshala and Loving Community (accessible by public transportation). Our anganwadis and street schools are either walking distance or a short rickshaw ride away. Where possible, especially for long distances, we organize transportation. However, we may not always have available transportation and ask volunteers to be adaptable and resourceful when necessary.

Q) Is local transportation available?

Ans) Manav Sadhna is a 10 minute walk from the BRTS (Bus Rapid Transportation System) station, which conveniently connects a lot of the city. A major bus station is also a 10 minute walk away, from where volunteers can find buses connecting them to most major parts of the city. Private rickshaws are also easily accessible.

Q) Can Manav Sadhna help me acquire a SIM Card for my cell phone?

Ans) Our volunteer coordinators will help you organize a SIM card. You have to bring the cell phone with you or purchase from here. You will be issue a letter from Manav Sadhna to get the sim card. The card is given on our name for validity of 3 months. Required 2 passport copy photos, copy of your passport and visas and letter from Manav Sadhna.

Q) Can you tell me more about healthcare and medical facilities? Do I need Travel Insurance?

Ans) Most visitors to India will deal with a bout of something or another as your immune system adapts to the new environment. It is important to be careful about the water you drink and to eat hygienic foods to avoid most sicknesses. However, in the case you do fall sick, please let us know so that we can take you to visit a doctor. If you prefer a second opinion from another doctor or other facilities, we can guide you on where to go. Volunteers are responsible for covering their medical expenses. All volunteers must purchase travel health insurance that covers the duration of your time at Manav Sadhna.

Q) Is Ahmedabad safe?

Ans) Overall Ahmedabad is a very safe and friendly city, even for single women. We do ask, however, that you practice the same mindfulness that you would in any city and don't go out alone at night or wander into dark alleyways by yourself and avoid uncomfortable situations. Also, while in the field, it is important to observe the cultural norms in how you dress and act to avoid disrespecting anyone or instigating any distress. For women, stares and catcalls are normal; however, if you ignore them, they do not generally evolve into anything more significant.

Despite the city's reputation for communal disharmony, the city has not witnessed any major riots in the last decade. However, we do ask that you register with your Consulate in the case of any natural disaster or strife in the city.

Q) Can my children volunteer?

Ans) We accept volunteer applications from youth 15 years and older. If you are interested in volunteering with your children, please send us volunteer@manavsadhna.org and we can explore the possibility.

Q) What are the volunteer opportunities at Manav Sadhna?

Ans) You can read more about volunteer opportunities here.

Q) Can I volunteer part time?

Ans) We generally encourage volunteers to serve full time at Manav Sadhna, however you can direct an email at volunteer@manavsadhna.org with your requirements and we can explore the possibility.

Q). How can I apply to volunteer?

Ans) Send an email to volunteer@manavsadhna.org requesting a volunteer application form. Once you have filled it out and submitted it, our volunteer coordinators will look at the available spaces of the dates requested. Based on availability, we send you a confirmation email or then ask you to apply for different dates.

Q) Does Manav Sadhna have internet service?

Ans) Yes, it has wireless, Wireless connection available between 10 to 6. There is no internet service available at the volunteer's home. You can ask to the volunteer coordinators for the prepaid internet dongles.

Q) Where do volunteers come from?

Ans) Manav Sadhna is proud to have an ever-growing global family. Volunteers come from all corners of the world, with most people coming from the US, UK, NZ, Australia, Western Europe and Singapore and local volunteers and interns from the various universities.