

Friends of Colegio Moriah
Detailed Dress Code
Updated 8/2014

Rationale

Although dress codes and clothing guidelines may seem restrictive and oppressive, the FOCM feels that detailing appropriate dress and enforcing our dress code policy is necessary for an effective ministry in the Dominican Republic. Although various types of dress and appearance are widely accepted in the United States, there are strong cultural connotations to a person's appearance in the Dominican Republic. We need to be respectful of the cultural nuances of our appearance, even if we don't entirely agree with them, so that we can best reach the Dominicans and Haitians living in the Dominican Republic.

This mentality stems from Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 8 (please read before proceeding). In this passage Paul talks about eating food, specifically meat, that has been offered to idols. Paul explains that although the people in the church of Corinth may 'know' that there is nothing wrong with eating this food, they need to be careful about eating it. Paul cautions that those who lack the understanding that the Corinthian Christians have may get caught up in the action, causing them to stray farther from Christ. Paul goes beyond the specific action and hits at the underlying connotations of what is being done. He reminds the Corinthians, and us, that we have a responsibility to build up and watch out for those around us. His teaching culminates in verse 13 when he states that he "will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble". Accordingly, we must be cognizant of the ways in which we may cause our Dominican and Haitian brothers and sisters to stumble. The FOCM board has identified dress and appearance as one of these ways.

Additionally, the FOCM board cares for the safety of all team members traveling to Colegio Moriah. Some of the apparel guidelines below are directly related to maintaining the safety of team members.

General Clothing Guidelines

Short version- Modesty is the rule. If you ever have a question about a certain piece of clothing, err on the side of modesty. Clothing should not be tight and must cover cracks, midriffs, cleavage, etc..

Tops- Short sleeve t-shirts are recommended. No spaghetti strap shirts are permitted and all tank tops must have straps at least 2 inches wide. No t-shirt graphics and/or print should be offensive or contrary to the mission of FOCM and it's associates.

Bottoms- In many cases long pants are recommended in the interest of safety (less skin exposure to mosquitoes, reduced chance of scrapes and cuts, etc.). Shorts and skirts

are also allowed, provided they are approximately knee length (bermuda length shorts are acceptable). No short-shorts, cut offs, or booty shorts/skirts are permitted when working with or representing FOCM. Bottoms should cover one's backside completely when bending down. Athletic shorts, capris, yoga pants, etc. should be of appropriate length and loose fitting. Please refrain from wearing bottoms with graphics and/or writing on the butt.

Footwear- Some type of footwear should be worn at all times when working or walking around, even in the Colegio Moriah compound. All travelers should bring sturdy, closed toed shoes to avoid injuries. Since there is often broken glass, trash, sharp objects, etc. on the ground, travelers should wear sturdy shoes (no flip flops) when traveling to area bateys or leaving the Colegio Moriah compound to reduce the risk of injury.

Additionally, keep in mind that the DR is very close to the equator. Travelers are encouraged to wear light, airy, and breathable clothing. Furthermore, all travelers are encouraged to bring and wear proper sun protection and insect repellent (hats/visors, sunglasses, sunscreen, bug spray).

Specific Clothing Guidelines

- **Church** - Sunday Service is considered a formal gathering in the Dominican Republic. While it is considered normal in the US to wear jeans to a Sunday Service, this is seen as disrespectful in the DR. Mens' hats should be removed when entering the church for service or other gatherings.
 - Males should always wear long pants to church. Both khakis and dress pants are acceptable. T-shirts are not appropriate for Sunday services. Males should wear a shirt with a collar (polo are okay) and should consider wearing a tie with button down shirts. Suit jackets are neither expected nor necessary.
 - Females should wear dresses or skirts to church. Blouses, not t-shirts, should be worn with skirts. All church clothing should abide by the modesty policy outlined in the general clothing guidelines.

- **School** - All teachers, as well as students, in the DR wear uniforms to work. Teachers wear button down shirts (color specific to the school) and black skirts (woman) or pants (men). While FOCM does not require or expect its travelers to dress in this fashion, we do ask that when visiting or teaching at the school travelers dress respectfully. All hats should be removed when entering the classroom.
 - Males should wear either khakis and dress pants with a collared shirt.
 - Females should wear dresses or skirts with a blouse.

- **Construction** - Shorts or jeans/work pants are appropriate for construction. Sturdy, closed-toed shoes should be worn at all times. Shirts should **ALWAYS** be left on.

- **Medical** - Team members should always wear sturdy, closed toed shoes into the field.
 - Medical personnel should wear scrubs when in the field.
 - Non-medical personnel accompanying medical teams should abide by the general clothing guidelines.
- **Beach Trips** - Bathing suits must be modest (no bikinis, monokinis or speedos). Anyone wearing an overly revealing suit will be asked to cover up. Travelers should consider wearing t-shirts and/or gym shorts overtop of swim wear.
 - Females should wear one piece suits or tankini-style suits that cover the midriff region.
 - Males should wear swim trunks that are knee or bermuda length. Shirts do not have to be left on when at the beach.

Piercings and Tattoos

Travelers should keep all visible tattoos covered for the duration of their trip. Additionally, all piercings, excepting ear piercings, should be removed or replaced with clear plugs for the duration of the trip. Likewise, all gauges should be removed.