



Send Relief
Puerto Rico





Contact Information

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Meeting Needs, Changing Lives

Send Relief works with churches and volunteers to meet needs and change lives in communities within the U.S. and around the world.

By offering help and hope to the most vulnerable in collaboration with missionaries, local ministries and churches, your gifts and efforts through Send Relief have a long-term impact.

With Send Relief's help, churches and partners like you receive resources and training to be the hands and feet of Jesus to communities in crisis, refugees, human trafficking survivors, those affected by natural disasters and vulnerable children and families.



Ministry Centers

Send Relief ministry centers deliver compassion ministry within local communities while providing mission trips and training opportunities for churches all over the country. The goal of ministry centers is twofold: serve communities well and encourage others to do the same.

All over North America, Send Relief ministry centers actively assess community needs, develop ministry strategies, deliver ministry and provide opportunities for others to go on mission.

Community Snapshot

As an unincorporated territory of the United States, Puerto Rico's official languages are Spanish and English. A bicultural territory, people often speak a mixture of both, "Spanglish," given the influence of the U.S. on the island.

- The aftermath of Hurricane Maria in September 2017 placed **12,000 people** in shelters all across Puerto Rico.
- After the earthquake in early 2020, **5,000 residents** remained in homeless shelters even after Puerto Rico restored power.
- After Hurricane Maria (2017) there were **950 earthquakes and aftershocks** throughout the area. This has caused even more issues for those already going through hardships. Moreover, these aftershocks caused 10,000 people to evacuate from their homes and seek shelter.
- American Bar reports that the Puerto Rican housing market has faced a prolonged crisis since the 2006 economic crisis that depreciated values within the market; the island lost around **45,880 households** due to increased migration to the mainland.
- About **48%** of Puerto Rico's population live under the poverty line with an income of less than **\$19,000** per year per household.
- Economic growth fell by 10% between 2004 and 2018, with an unemployment rate above 8% and a declining population compounding this deficiency.
- As of January 2020, Puerto Rico had an estimated **2,451** people experiencing homelessness on any given day.
- In 2014, the U.S. Census estimated that **58%** of Puerto Rico's children live below the federal poverty level—much higher than the overall rate of **22%** of children living below the poverty line throughout the United States.
- The U.S. Department of Education during the 2018-2019 school year showed that an estimated **4,717** public school students in Puerto Rico experienced homelessness over the course of the year.
- FEMA's Temporary Sheltering Assistance program also reported that it housed **more than 7,000 families in over 1,000 hotels** in 41 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico.

Sources: American Bar Association, U.S. Census, Department of Education, Borgen Project

Puerto Rico Ministry Center Guaynabo Snapshot

Ministries

Strengthen Communities

- Emergency Feeding

Crisis Response

- Disaster Relief & Rebuild
- Equipping: Local Church Training

Protect Children & Families



Puerto Rico Ministry Center Guaynabo Partnerships

The Puerto Rico Send Relief Ministry Center provides meal distribution, construction projects. Volunteers help rebuild and repair residual storm damage as well as damage from recent earthquakes.

- Send Relief's Puerto Rico Ministry Center exists to minister and care for people in need.
- The local churches identify tangible needs in their community that will allow them to help rebuild and provide encouragement and meet spiritual needs.
- They have replaced metal roofs, sealed concrete roofs, replaced windows, doors and other light construction projects for the elderly.
- Send Relief continues to infuse energy and resources into church planting efforts and enhance its compassion ministry work.

Jonathan Santiago, Puerto Rico's Ministry Center director, said, "The facility creates a permanent

presence in Puerto Rico. It's not just for relief efforts but community engagement on behalf of Southern Baptists. We run logistics from a centralized location, which will help facilitate ministry on the island."

- Families are learning to cope with other stressful factors.
- Low-income neighborhoods have vulnerable communities with many socioeconomic needs and increased crime.

"We are always being stretched," Jonathan explains. "Circumstances and realities of those we serve help keep us depending on God. We cannot do this work on our own and our desire to help is not enough; we need the Holy Spirit to lead us."

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—Jonathan Santiago



History of the Puerto Rico Ministry Center

The Puerto Rico Ministry Center was established when Send Relief responded to the destruction caused by Hurricane Maria in September 2017, a Category 4 storm that — according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency — set the island’s infrastructure back eight years.

In the aftermath of the hurricane, Send Relief sent volunteers to help homeowners rebuild. The Ministry Center expands Send Relief’s ability to serve and equip mission teams who travel to the island to meet needs and change lives by serving communities in Jesus’ name.

“Puerto Rico has a very religious culture with a strong Catholic background,” Jonathan says. “Most everyone claims to know about God, making it difficult to share the gospel because most people believe that they are already Christians.”

Their main challenge is the need to re-evangelize communities. The last two or three generations have not experienced the teaching of sound doctrine and as a result, the church is marked by an impoverished Christian practice.

The Puerto Rico Ministry Center partners with local churches and church plants to find ministry opportunities and identify needs. They also partner with nonprofits; federal, local and state government; emergency management offices and churches both local and long distance. They hope a new generation of pastors and leaders will embrace partnering with the local church for good resources and a genuine revival!

“Pray that God will give growth and fruit to this labor,” says Jonathan.





Vision

The Puerto Rico Ministry Center's vision for the future is to remain diligent in serving the people of Puerto Rico.

From meal distribution, replacing metal roofs, sealing concrete roofs, replacing windows, doors and other light construction projects for the elderly, the Ministry Center will continue to help rebuild and repair residual storm damage as well as damage from recent earthquakes.

"Any other projects that local churches identify in their community that will allow us to meet tangible needs, we will make every effort to help rebuild and provide encouragement and meet tangible and spiritual needs," Jonathan explains.

The Puerto Rico Ministry Center is praying and working toward opening a food pantry to serve hundreds of families every month. They also hope to start an outreach program to reach homeless and trafficked victims.

Puerto Rico Ministries

Future Ministry Plans

- Strengthen Communities
- Construction Projects - Rebuilding Hope
- Outreach Program
- Food Pantry

Get Involved

One of the most powerful ways to show the most vulnerable the love of Christ is by taking steps toward them. By helping churches be the hands and feet of Jesus, Send Relief supports and provides opportunities for those who desire to respond directly to these needs in lasting, meaningful ways while sharing the hope of the gospel.

Give

Your gift provides critical, immediate help to families and communities that need it most. Give today to provide practical care and share the love of Jesus.

[Click here or scan the QR code to give](#)



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Serve

Participate in various compassion opportunities by taking a mission trip and vision tour to a ministry center around North America. Mission trips can include apartment outreach, food pantry ministry, after-school programs, sports ministry, canvassing, prayer walking, homeless ministry, physical labor, serving at-risk families and university campus ministry. The trip also includes aspects of training and equipping so you can learn how to connect and serve the international and refugee communities in your cities.

[Click here to sign up](#)





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