

Volunteer Information Guide

2009
Sizanani Home Trust



Sizanani Home Trust

Sizanani Home Trust forms part of Sizanani Village, which incorporates an HIV/AIDS programme, school for learners with special educational needs, conference center, recreation park, etc. Each organization functions independently, but is housed on the same site.

Sizanani Home Trust accommodates 70 children and young adults with moderate to profound mental and physical disabilities. Their ages range from 4-34. The children are accommodated in 3 independent dormitories, according to their age and level of independence. Childcare workers take care of the daily needs of the children, with nurses, and general assistants supporting them. The staff currently consists of about 30 childcare workers, 20 general assistants working in the laundry, kitchen and cleaning and 8 professionals.

Two conductive education practitioners have also been contracted to train caregivers how to develop children in order to reach their full potential. For the past 2 years, a great emphasis has been placed on moving away from a pure nursing care approach, and to establish a developmental mindset amongst caregivers. Many of the children have severe to profound disabilities and require 24-hour care. These children cannot walk, talk or feed themselves, and many of them have severe deformities that limit their independent movement. Some of our more able children attend the Sizanani school for learners with special educational needs.

A few of the young adults at Sizanani have recently begun participating in a vocational training program with the objective of increasing their independence, learning responsibility, and gaining a basic understanding of finances. Vocational work placements include the kitchen and laundry, doing gardening and other maintenance around the Home, as well as part-time work at the Cuddle Company of Sizanani, which produces soft toys.

The Home has also recently opened two daycare centres, in the townships of Rethabiseng (20 km from Sizanani) and Zithobeni (10 km from Sizanani). Each centre caters to 15 children with mild to severe physical and/or intellectual disabilities.

Vision of Sizanani Home Trust

Our vision is to be the best service provider in the comprehensive care, development and empowerment of people with physical and intellectual disabilities in South Africa; within the context of a Catholic mission, focusing on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

Mission of Sizanani Home Trust

Our mission is to provide outstanding residential and community-based care for people with severe and profound intellectual and physical disabilities in order to improve their quality of life and ensure their optimal development, through the extensive training and empowerment of employees, families and surrounding communities.

Accommodation

Volunteers at Sizanani live and work on the same premises. Accommodation is in a group home where you share communal living areas including a kitchen and lounge. Every effort will be made to provide volunteers with their own bedroom and bathroom, but this is not always possible. Bedding, towels, and furniture will be provided.

Volunteers share a washing machine and hang their clothes on a line to dry. Cleaning supplies are provided. Lunch will be provided Monday through Friday—this is local food and is not always vegetarian. Some other basic foodstuffs like pasta and soup are also provided. Volunteers are responsible for all other meals. The tap water at Sizanani is safe for drinking.

Necessary Items

Clothes

- Clothes for daily work – cover knees and shoulders
- Clothes for maintenance projects – old T-shirts and trousers
- Clothes for free time
- Comfortable shoes
- Flip flops and/or sandals
- Swim suit
- Waterproof jacket

Other items

- Passport
- Immunization record
- Copies of important documents
- Camera
- Sunglasses
- First aid kit
- Sewing kit
- Flashlight

Most toiletries and basic medications are available within the local area. Clothing and all other items are available within the shopping centers of the larger cities.

Safety

Sizanani is a gated and fenced compound with a guard on duty 24 hours a day. Sizanani does its best to ensure the health and safety of all volunteers. However, volunteers are responsible for their own safety and must be aware of the potential dangers around them. The area around Sizanani is generally safe, but volunteers must not take this for granted when traveling throughout the country. Volunteers should consult with management when they are unsure of the safety of a particular area.

Healthcare

Good basic healthcare is available in the local area. There is also local emergency care, but the care is not always of the highest standard. Better emergency care is available in Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Insurance

Sizanani does not have a medical scheme, and volunteers are required to make their own private arrangements.

Inoculations/Vaccinations

Sizanani is not in a malaria area; however, volunteers may wish to bring malaria pills if they plan on traveling to malaria areas, such as Botswana and Kruger National Park.

Volunteers should consult with their health care provider prior to departing regarding necessary vaccines. However, the Center for Disease Control recommends the following: measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT), poliovirus, typhoid, rabies, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B. Sizanani will reimburse the cost of vaccinations for Hepatitis A and B only.

Visas

Volunteers are responsible for applying for their own visa in their country of origin. Sizanani will do its utmost to provide necessary documents and information and will reimburse the costs of the visa. Volunteers should consult their local embassy or consulate for specific information.

Holiday

Volunteers are expected to work a 40-hour, five-day week with Saturday and Sunday as well as statutory public holidays off. One day per week may be spent doing community work on behalf of Sizanani Village Trust. This may include painting, gardening and general maintenance. Volunteers earn 2 leave days per month, and these can be accumulated over the course of their stay.

Climate

Summer is from approximately September to April. Temperatures during the day range from 25° to 30° Celsius (77° to 86° Fahrenheit). Light comfortable clothing is recommended with sweaters for evening. It is also the rainy season and frequent thundershowers occur in the afternoon. Winter is from approximately May to August. The weather is usually pleasant and sunny during the day with temperatures ranging from 15° to 25° Celsius (59° to 77° Fahrenheit). The morning and the evenings can get quite cold with temperatures dropping as low as 0° Celsius (32° Fahrenheit). Most South African buildings do not have heating systems, and it is, therefore, recommended that volunteers bring a warm jacket and sweater.

Local Area

Sizanani is located in the province of Gauteng and is approximately 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) from the town of Bronkhorstspuit. The town has a number of supermarkets, shops and restaurants and can provide volunteers with all of the basic necessities. Surrounding

Bronkhorstspuit are various Township or informal settlement areas—Zithobeni, Rethabiseng and Ekangala. Bronkhorstspuit is approximately 60 km (37.2 mi) from Pretoria and approximately 90 km (55.8 mi) from Johannesburg. Both are major cities with many attractions and large shopping centers.

Attractions

Sizanani is close to a number of cultural and tourist attractions suitable for weekend and day trips. Some include: Kruger National Park – 3 hour drive, Johannesburg – 1 hour drive, Pretoria – 45 minutes drive, Cradle of Humankind – 1.5 hour drive, Sun City – 3 hour drive.

Transportation

Volunteers will be provided with transport to Bronkhorstspuit approximately two times per week for grocery shopping. For all other trips volunteers will need to provide their own transportation. Public transport is available, but it is not the most reliable or safest method and is not recommended by Sizanani. Therefore, volunteers will need to either purchase or rent a car for trips.