



Doulos
DISCOVERY SCHOOL

STARTUP EXPENSES

Airline Tickets: As you get ready to leave the U.S. (3 months out), we suggest that you look at flights from your departing city to Santiago, Dominican Republic (STI). Looking now will help you get an idea of how much you will spend (look at dates around when you would arrive in mid-July). The estimated cost should be anywhere between \$400-\$1000 per person for a one-way flight here. Please keep in mind that you will have baggage fees as well. The first bag is generally \$20-40 (some airlines like Delta have FREE bags for international flights). Your second bag will most likely cost \$35.00+. You can be reimbursed for your travel expenses from your Doulos fundraising account (see [Expensing Guidelines](#) for more info).

Bringing Things You Currently Own: You should consider bringing some of the things you currently own! This is especially something to consider with used kitchen appliances and smaller electronics. Things like toasters, air fryers, griddles, blenders, mixers, food processors, small sound systems, iPads, computers, and coffee makers are more expensive and less quality when bought here.

Recent new staff have shipped, via MFI (Missionary Flights International), many of these items instead of selling them for little to nothing in the U.S. You can also bring these things down in your luggage. If you choose to use MFI, the cost to ship items is \$1.85/ lb but could be worth it depending on the item (i.e. you can sell your air fryer at a garage sale in the U.S. for \$10 when they cost \$100+ to buy here in the D.R. You're better off financially to ship it to yourself than buy new here).

First Month Living Expenses: It is encouraged that you complete all pay-related requirements within a few days of your arrival in the D.R. (with Jonathan Vasquez). A time to do this will be built into your new staff training schedule. It's important to note that you should plan to receive your first paycheck at the end of August (typically August 20th). Because you will not be paid until approximately one month after you arrive, you should plan to have/ bring with you enough money to cover your first month's expenses.

Car/ Moto: Depending on where you choose to live after your homestay, a car or motorcycle may be desired. If you plan to purchase a car, you should raise an additional \$15,000 (costs can range from \$10,000-\$20,000) for that purchase (vehicles are generally more expensive in the DR). Be sure to keep in mind the additional costs of owning a vehicle and account for \$200/month in gas (\$6/ gallon) and upkeep. Plan on \$1,200-\$2,000 upfront to purchase a motorcycle and \$50/month in gas and upkeep. Also, **helmets are required by law AND by Doulos** for entry into the school parking lot.

Housing upon arrival: Up to 6 weeks of housing will be paid upon your arrival. Often single staff will stay in an approved Dominican homestay. Housing will also be provided to families in our SLT (Service Learning Teams) house located within walking distance of Doulos. Because of those accommodations upon your arrival you will not need to purchase many/any of the below items immediately upon arrival.

Long-term housing: We encourage new staff to try to connect with returning staff for long-term housing opportunities. Shared housing is great for building community and sharing expenses. Many of the following items might already be available in an established household.

Startup Expense	Cost in USD(\$)
Double Bed/Queen Bed	\$400-\$600
Single Bed	\$400
Dressers/Shelves	\$200-\$500 (per bedroom)
Sofa and Chairs	\$1500
Kitchen Table and Chairs	\$300-\$700
Refrigerator	\$750-\$1500
Stove and Gas Tank	\$500-\$800
Washing Machine (US style)	\$600
Washing Machine (DR style)	\$300
Dryer (US style)	\$600
Fan	\$60
Kitchen Wares (plates, pans, etc.)	\$200-\$400
Miscellaneous	\$1500
Shipping items (via MFI)*	\$200-\$1000
<u>Optional:</u>	
Inverter (for continual home power)	\$1200-\$2000
Gas Grill	\$250-\$400
Lawn mower/ hedge trimmer ¹	\$150-\$400
Car/ SUV	\$10000-\$20000
Motorcycle	\$1200-\$2000

This start-up budget is an estimate based on things found in a typical Dominican house. It reflects the full price of items purchased new. For common room items such as a stove, you may be sharing the cost of purchase with roommate(s).

¹ These items will allow you to avoid the bi-weekly/ monthly fees associated with paying someone to cut your lawn or trim your hedges/ trees. Depending on your housing situation and yard size, this could allow you to avoid an additional \$20-60 each time you receive services.

At times you can also purchase items from different missionaries who are departing. There is a Facebook group called “Jarabacoa Mission Network” on which items are often being sold. We highly recommend you join this group. If there is something you are interested in, you can email **Mandy Langenfeld** to get more information on whether or not it is worth purchasing.

All major furniture appliances and household items purchased can be expensed to your Doulos fundraising account. Since items can be resold in the future it is required by the IRS that items be taxed when the expense is put through. Account for 15% tax for each item you wish to expense.

Post-Field Expenses:

We highly recommend that every new missionary set aside \$1500 per person for a weeklong debrief at a debriefing center of your choice. This expense is for after your time here at Doulos has been completed and you’re transitioning back to life in the U.S. This may seem far down the road but should be considered as you budget for the long term. After talking to dozens of missionaries from all different countries and organizations (including several former Doulos staff!), we know this experience is very important to help you during re-entry to the United States. As hard as it is to leave home and move to another country, it is often equally or even harder to move back.