



The Justice Desk's "how to" guide for international volunteers

WELCOME TO SOUTH AFRICA!

The Justice Desk warmly welcomes you to South Africa! We are incredibly excited for your time with us and have no doubt that this time will be powerful and life changing, both for South Africa and for you. South Africa is a diverse and unique nation. We have 11 official languages reflecting the diversity of our nation. However, English is widely used. We are situated at the Southern Tip of Africa and with 3000 km of coastline, it is where the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean meet. South Africa has a population of 54 million people, with 66% of the population below the age of 35 years. South Africa has three capitals; Pretoria (administrative), Bloemfontein (judicial) and Cape Town (legislative). South Africa is a developing country with an emerging market. Despite this, South Africa is a deeply unequal country. Some parts of South Africa have first world infrastructure and services while other parts lack basic infrastructure. South Africa is infamously known for Apartheid, a form of oppressive governance that segregated and oppressed racial groups of colour. Although Apartheid came to an end in 1994, there are many long lasting effects. Unemployment, a poor education system and poverty persists among black and coloured racial groups. There is a large population group in the Western Cape called 'Coloured' people. This is not a derogatory term but is recognized as a racial group with a unique history, culture and traditions. Coloured persons have a mix of black African, Indian, White and Cape Malay heritage. South Africa is known for its natural beauty. Capetonian's are proud and protective of the beauty on display. Upon arrival, you will be able to see our Mountains, Oceans and Fynbos. Enjoy the scenery and be sure to take many photos!





Visa

Each country has a different system for accessing visas. We would recommend coming on a volunteer visa. If this is not available to you, you could try for a tourist visa. Do NOT apply for a worker's visa or an intern's visa, as these are the most difficult visas to attain, and you will not be receiving payment at The Justice Desk.

Where and how to find a place to stay

We would suggest living in a suburb that is safe and close to our offices.

These are the communities of: Claremont, Newlands and Rondebosch. Some of our staff live in these areas and could potentially assist with some lifting. These suburbs are family areas, and are close to the local university.

If you want to live in a very dynamic neighbourhood, we would suggest Observatory. A lot of students, exchange students and interns from all over the world live in this area. However, it is quite far away from the office.

We would recommend renting a room in a student apartment while in South Africa. This allows you to build relationships with your roommates, and you won't be living alone.

The best way to find a place is to join the 'Huis Huis' group on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/huis.huis.ss/about/>

If you can't find something, you could always use AirBnB until you find something:

<https://www.airbnb.com>

Transport

There are different forms of transport in Cape Town.

- Car: Having a car in Cape Town makes your daily-life so much easier. Some interns have rented a car, however, this can be quite expensive. For an idea of prices, go to: <http://www.rentacheapie.co.za/>
- Taxi: To go to the office you can also take taxis, it is quite slow but cheap (R44 back and forth from Observatory) compared to Uber (around R200 back and forth from Observatory). You just have to call out to them on the Main Road and then change over to a second taxi in Wynberg to the 'military base' which is close to the office.
- MyCiti bus: This bus goes around the city, but not to our offices.
- Trains: For safety and reliability, we do not recommend taking the train.



Budget

The exchange rate for €1 varies between R13 and R16 which can make a big difference in your budget. Coming from abroad, South Africa can seem cheap so international volunteers are tempted to spend more. Here is an idea of some costs:

- Rent: about R5500 per month (380 euros)
- Daily life (food, spending money etc.): about R5000 per month (343 euros)

Security

South Africa is a developing nation with high levels of poverty, inequality and unequal power dynamics. As a result, crime is prevalent and it is therefore something that you need to be aware of when coming to South Africa. We will do our best to ensure that you are not in any harm's way. However, one of the best forms of crime prevention is being alert and aware. When you are at your accommodation, make sure that your doors are locked at all times. If you decide to leave windows open, ensure that nothing can be grabbed through the window. When you are out, be cautious about walking with phones and cameras in view. This is particularly true in quiet areas. When you are in tourist spots, such as Table Mountain or the Waterfront, it is generally safe but guard your possessions. Ensure that your bags close securely, as Cape Town's pick-pocketers are the best in the world! Do not put down your phone or camera and look away. Please do not walk around by yourself, especially at night.

Tipping

When you eat at restaurants, it is expected that waiters / waitresses will be tipped a minimum of 12% of your bill. It is sometimes appropriate to tip tour guides, especially on Safari. If you have questions, feel free to ask one of the Justice Desk staff members.

South African People

Never be surprised if someone you don't know talks to you in the street, at restaurants etc... South African people are a lot friendlier than what you are used to! When a South African asks you how you're doing, they expect an answer! :)