



Travel Abroad Safety Orientation Program

Students Traveling Abroad

While you are abroad, you must take the same safety precautions as you would at home. Do not take the attitude that you are protected and safe because you are anonymous and no one knows you. Do not travel with valuables that you are not prepared to lose. Use common sense, avoid confrontations, and try to blend in as much as possible. Try to familiarize yourself with the area, ask the locals where the safe parts of town are and, if you feel insecure about certain places, do not go there. Do not expose yourself to unnecessary, dangerous situations.

It will be difficult to hide the fact that you are a foreigner. This may make you vulnerable to crime. While you cannot control everything that happens to you at home or abroad, you can sway the odds. The following are some suggestions to consider when traveling abroad:

Passport and Visa

Make sure you have a signed, valid passport and visa, if required. Before you leave, fill in the emergency information page of your passport.

Share Your Itinerary

Leave copies of your itinerary, passport date page and visa with family or friends at home so you can be contacted in case of an emergency.

Emergency Contacts

Always keep your emergency contact numbers with you and include UMPD at 207.581.4040.

Locate and Register with the U.S. Consulate Office

Be familiar with the location and contact information for your local U.S. consulate offices. They can help you in emergencies. Let others know where you are. Register with the nearest American embassy or consulate. A full listing of consulate offices, addresses and contact information can be found on the U.S. State Department website.

U.S. State Department Consular Information Sheets and Travel Warnings

You should avoid traveling to any location that is presently dangerous (areas for which a travel warning has been issued by the State Department.) No matter where you are traveling, it is a good idea to review the State Department's Consular information sheets for the appropriate countries.

Let Others Know Where You Are

Remain in contact with your resident director of the foreign student office at your university and your parents. Let them know your whereabouts and welfare so they can update others if necessary.

Credit Cards/Travelers Checks/Cash

Before traveling, notify your credit card company and inform them you are traveling abroad. Make a note of the credit limit on each credit card that you bring. Record and take with you toll free phone numbers for each of your credit cards. Do not get caught with credit deception! In other countries, innocent Americans have been arrested for credit card mistakes.

Instead of cash, carry traveler's checks. Record all the numbers and keep them separately from the traveler's checks in case they are stolen.

Do not flash cash, credit cards, or travelers' checks in front of anyone at any time, including the people you are traveling with.

Medication

Make sure you have enough prescription medication to last your entire trip. Keep meds in their original labeled containers to avoid problems when passing customs. If you have questions about traveling with medications, please call the airport ahead of time and ask what the requirements are for carrying medications, needles, etc.

Insurance Coverage

Find out if your personal property insurance covers you for loss of theft abroad. Check to see if your health insurance covers you while you are abroad. If your insurance provider does not cover you abroad, consider purchasing worldwide travel insurance from HTH Inc.

Tickets and Cell Phones

Keep careful tabs of plane, train, or bus tickets. They are as valuable as cash. Have a cell phone and possibly a phone card for emergencies in case your cell phone is not working or you lose your cell phone.

Airports

No firearms or weapons will be allowed such as, edged weapons, pepper spray, etc.

Do not stand out. While "safety in numbers" is a good rule to follow, traveling as an identifiable group of U.S. students will attract attention and possibly cause problems.

Do not wear identification on your person, such as name tags, or college sweatshirts or logos.

When placing your name on luggage tags, use a business address, instead of a home address. After your arrival, remove your luggage tags.

Do not borrow suitcases to ensure all items in the suitcases belong to you only. Travel light whenever possible. Never agree to watch other people's luggage or belongings for people you do not know. If possible, lock your luggage after a TSA inspection.

Clothing

Take only what you need. Dress conservatively. A flashy wardrobe or one that is too casual can mark you as a tourist. Wearing expensive clothing or jewelry can make you a target for crime. Keep all valuables on your person in a discreet place, stow in a money pouch, belt, or pouch that hangs around your neck, under clothing. Never leave valuables unattended.

Hotels/Motels

Try to avoid arriving late at night in cities in which you are not familiar with, take along a reliable guidebook that will list your resources of hotels/motels and hostels.

Always keep your door locked.

Guard your key/keycard.

Use auxiliary locking devices.

Do not answer the door without knowing who is there. If a person claims to be an employee, call and verify with the management.

Watch weather reports and travel advisories before heading out for activities.

Elevators and Parking

Do not get on an elevator if you are uncomfortable. Trust your instinct. If a suspicious person enters the elevator, get off on the next floor.

When parking, look around the lot or garage. Park near well-lit walkways whenever possible.

Personal Safety Once You Have Arrived

Be street wise.

Try to avoid late night traveling and always travel with at least one other person.

Stay in well-lit, heavily traveled streets. Avoid alleys. Stay in the middle of the sidewalks. Avoid walking close to streets and buildings.

Walk against traffic to observe oncoming vehicles.

Never sleep on a train or a bus if traveling alone.

Only use licensed taxi cabs. Drivers display phone numbers and identification.

Watch the local news and stay out of target areas, especially places frequented by U.S. Americans. Avoid using U.S. logos on your belongings, especially collegiate wear and athletic wear.

If you are carrying a purse, make sure it is zipped or latched. Wear it close to the body. If the straps are long place the strap across your torso.

Be aware of pick pockets and other criminal activities. They prey on individuals that look lost or are not paying attention to their surroundings.

If possible, speak the local language.

Avoid impairing your judgment due to use of drugs or excessive use of alcohol.

Be aware of your surroundings.

Never hitchhike!

Do not be free with information about students you are traveling with and do not give out information or daily itinerary/field trip schedule.

Find out where the local hospital, police station and U.S. Embassy or Consulate are located.

Find out what the local emergency numbers are.

Know the local laws.

Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.

Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions and promptly express any health or safety concerns with the program staff or group leader.

Always report suspicious activities to group leaders. Act accordingly if anything might indicate threats or actual terrorist attack on the premises or during student activities. Follow directions.

Be aware you are responsible for your own actions and decisions.

If you become a victim of a crime, report it to the group leader immediately.

Make an agreement with fellow travelers that you will look out for each other and practice peer responsibility.

Did You Know?

- Traffic and swimming accidents are the leading causes of death among travelers.
- Swim only in well maintained, chlorinated pools or in unpolluted rivers or in parts of the ocean.
- AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (i.e., Hepatitis B) are a global problem.
- Always use clean water for brushing your teeth and drinking.