



# THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, DC



# **Pre-Departure Orientation** for AU sponsored international travel

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Office of Risk Management

Global Safety Program

American University

Last Updated Spring 2025

# About the Office of Global Safety

The Global Safety Program fosters the learning experience beyond the classroom by supporting the health, safety, and security of students, faculty, and staff while traveling abroad. We accomplish this by following three organizing principles:

- **Education:** Providing individualized health, safety, and security information, training and resources to travelers about to the area being visited abroad.
- **Assessment and Response:** Providing Health, Safety, and Security Assessments. Monitoring the global environment for critical incidents and/or emergencies; coordinating communication and response when needed 24/7/365
- **Protection:** Securing adequate insurance coverage for AU community members while traveling internationally.



# Global Safety Team

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## Matthew Verderosa

- Director of Global Safety and Compliance



## Kevin Taub

- Associate Director of Risk Management and Global Safety



## Contact Us

Website: [www.american.edu/finance/risk/globalsafety.cfm](http://www.american.edu/finance/risk/globalsafety.cfm)

Office Location: Don Myers Building Terrace Level

Phone: +1-202-885-2722

Email: [Globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:Globalsafety@american.edu)

# Travel Risk Review

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- ✓ Travel Risk is assessed for traveler safety based on travel destination; planned activities; and risk mitigation.
- ✓ Global Safety may recommend or require risk mitigation depending on Travel Risk.
- ✓ Risk review provides an opportunity for the Global Safety team to discuss risk areas with travelers and create plans that strengthen program and traveler resiliency.
- ✓ Emergency contact and itinerary information provides Global Safety with the ability to contact travelers and their emergency contacts in the event of a critical incident abroad. It also helps with AU, State Department, and travel insurance carrier notifications.

# Resources

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## Resources and Benchmarking

- On-site and DC-based program staff
- Local Community Partners
- Global Safety and Risk Management
- American University Police Department
- Chubb International Insurance
- AXA Travel Assistance Program
- AU Center for Well-Being Programs and Psychological Services
- AU Student Health Center
- U.S. Department of State
- PULSE – International Safety and Security Professionals in Higher Education

# Resources

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## Your Support Network – When to Call

**For Emergency Response:** First contact local first responders and local program staff

**For Emergency Notification 24/7:** American University Police Department at +1-202-885-3636 (AUPD is prepared to receive calls involving international incidents)

**For Emergency and Travel Assistance:** AXA Travel Assistance Program can facilitate medical referrals, security intelligence, emergency evacuation, or guarantee of medical payment. +1-630-694-9764

**For Guidance during business hours and incident follow-up:** Global Safety at +1-202-885-2722 or email [globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:globalsafety@american.edu) and your program sponsor

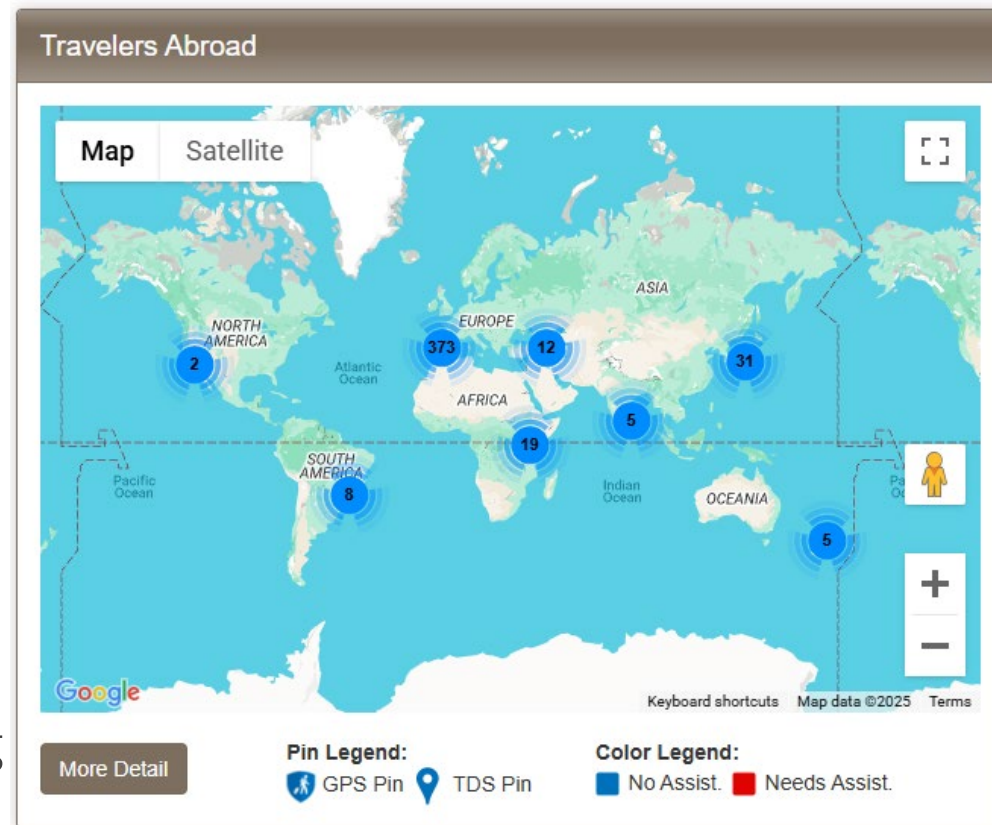


# Resources

## Travel Registry

The TerraDotta system is a central database of international traveler information such as itinerary, emergency contacts, and purpose of travel.

By providing travel information, AU travelers and program leaders supply the University with the details necessary to provide resources and ensure safety during international travel.





# Resources

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## AlertTraveler Application

- Provides you with country and city intelligence to help you make informed decisions while traveling
- Safety and security alerts to let you know of any events that could potentially impact your travel
- An instant check-in option for communication with university administrators

## Registering for AlertTraveler

- Download the AlertTraveler app (IOS or Android)
  - Register for AlertTraveler through the Terra Dotta portal

Questions? Contact [Globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:Globalsafety@american.edu)



**Alert**Traveler



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# Resources

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## Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

- Receive important information from the Embassy about safety conditions in your destination country, helping you make informed decisions about your travel plans
- Help the U.S. Embassy contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency
- Help family and friends get in touch with you in the event of an emergency
- <https://step.state.gov/step/>



# Chubb International Insurance

When on approved university travel abroad, travelers are automatically enrolled in the Chubb international insurance program.

## Coverages **include:**

- Medical treatment for urgent medical needs e.g. sudden onset illness, injuries, or conditions that first manifest or become worse during travel
- Emergency Medical Services
- Security Evacuation
- Emergency Medical Evacuation / Repatriation
- Emergency Family Reunion
- Quarantine Benefit
- Accidental Death and Dismemberment
- Personal Deviation not to exceed 7 days
- Travel Assistance Services
  - Guarantee of Payment for Medical
  - Medical referrals, medical monitoring when hospitalized, pre-trip medical planning (continuity of care), etc...

Insurance coverages **do not** extend to the following circumstances:

- Routine or non-emergency medical care (e.g. physical exams, planned or elective surgeries)
- Loss of tuition or program fees; expenses for travel delays; lost or damaged luggage
- Travel longer than 365 days
- Travel outside of host country, Early arrival or late departure (beyond 7 days)
- Individuals traveling in the United States or their country of permanent residence
- Maintenance care of or medication for pre-existing conditions. Symptoms of pre-existing conditions must generally manifest or become worse during travel.
- Non-AU travelers (i.e. participants not currently enrolled at the university, family members, PSA contractors)
- Personal travel

\*Review the Summary of Benefits for coverages and limitations



# Chubb International Insurance

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- Global Safety can generate insurance certification letters sometimes needed for immigration purposes, if needed please email [globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:globalsafety@american.edu).
- Travelers must assess their personal medical needs and consider purchasing supplemental insurance for medical needs or maintenance of pre-existing conditions while abroad.
- Travelers must maintain domestic health insurance
- For more information about International Emergency Insurance please visit the AU [International Travel Insurance Webpage](#)
  1. [Summary of Benefits - Faculty and Staff](#)
  2. [Summary of Benefits - Students](#)
  3. [Summary of Travel Assistance Program and ID Card](#)

CHUBB®





# AXA Travel Assistance Program

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Faculty, staff, and students working or traveling abroad on university business have access to emergency medical, travel, and personal security assistance 24/7 anywhere in the world.

When you call AXA Travel Assistance Program at +1-630-694-9764 or email [medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us](mailto:medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us) and reference ID# GLMN00173587R, a staff member will **Open a Case** and can:

- Refer you to a reputable medical facility or mental health counselor that, if necessary, speaks English.
- Provide security intelligence or give advice regarding travel plans
- Arrange an emergency medical, security, or political unrest evacuation
- Provide guarantees of payment and arrange direct billing with medical facilities so you avoid out of pocket expenses (must contact AXA for direct billing approval).

\*Notify Global Safety by emailing [globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:globalsafety@american.edu) if you have any questions or need assistance contacting AXA.



# AXA Travel Assistance Program

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## Opening a Case

- When travelers contact AXA Assistance, AXA will open a case and provide a case number.
- When contacting AXA for case updates or further guidance, travelers must provide the case number and identifying information such as their name, date of birth, and location.
- Travelers can open a case by calling AXA at +1-630-694-9764 or by email at [medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us](mailto:medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us)

\*Notify Global Safety by emailing [globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:globalsafety@american.edu) if you have any questions or need assistance contacting AXA.



# Contacting Chubb

Benefits can be accessed by contacting AXA Travel Assistance Provider or by contacting Chubb and filing a claim for reimbursement after medical care.

For customer service, eligibility verification, plan information, or to file a claim:

- Call 1-800-336-0627 (from inside the U.S.) or +1-302-476-6194 (from outside the U.S.)
- Email [aceaandhclaims@chubb.com](mailto:aceaandhclaims@chubb.com)
- You may be asked to provide the following:
  - Organization Name: American University
  - Policy Number: GLMN00173587R
  - Your information, including affiliation to AU:
    - Student Traveler participating in Educational Activities
    - Faculty or Staff Traveler participating in Business Travel
- Claims must be filed within 90 days of occurrence
- View the [Medical Claim Form](#)

\*Notify Global Safety by emailing [globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:globalsafety@american.edu) if you have any questions or need assistance filing a claim.

# Paying for Assistance Services

## A Note About Direct Billing Payment and Reimbursements

- When receiving medical treatment abroad, it is likely you will be expected to pay in full at the time of service. If you will seek reimbursement from an insurance carrier for treatment, remember to obtain translated, itemized receipts, and/or descriptions of the treatment you received.
- If you worked through AU's Travel Assistant Program (AXA), and direct billing was set-up with the hospital or medical provider, you will likely not be expected to pay out of pocket. The TAP (AXA) will advise on what benefits are available to cover expenses under the insurance policy.





# Entry & Exit

## Passports

- ✓ Each traveler will need a valid passport for international travel prior to departure and may be needed to purchase plane tickets.
- ✓ Passports should have at least six months of validity when traveling internationally.
- ✓ Keep a photocopy of your passport.
- ✓ Store your passport in a safe place or keep it on your person if required by law at your destination



# Entry & Exit

## Visas and Travel Authorizations

- ✓ Each traveler is responsible for researching and complying with all entry requirements for their destination country and any countries they may transit through.
- ✓ Some countries require pre-authorization even for American citizens (i.e. United Kingdom Electronic Travel Authorization).
- ✓ International students on student visas should contact their International Student Advisor at International Student & Scholar Services to ensure they have what they need to return to the United States.



# Emergencies or Difficult Situations

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**Seek safety.** Travelers should go to a safe location. Sometimes staying in place is the safest thing to do

Every situation is different. It is important that you seek safety, then **alert** your on-site program contact or group leader

**Notify** your family or travel sponsor

**Monitor** travel alerts and local media

**Keep** your phone charged

**Follow** group leader guidance and directions of local first responders

**Let AU Global Safety Know** - call AUPD and they will contact a member of the Global Safety Team.



# Emergencies or Difficult Situations

## Routine Emergencies

- These are usually not as severe as a disaster or crisis. These may include minor sickness or injury (cold, flu, toothache, food poisoning, sprain, etc...), lost passport, or minor theft (wallet/purse).
- If you are the victim of a crime while traveling abroad, AU can provide guidance on replacing lost or stolen documents, credit cards, passports and identification. We can also offer counseling resources to help victims cope with resulting trauma.
- Contact on-site program staff first for assistance and/or guidance, then email your program advisor or global safety if you need additional support or resources.
- Travelers can email [globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:globalsafety@american.edu) for guidance where immediate response is not needed.

## Major Emergencies

- These are less common, but require more extensive response to address the emergency. These may include arrests or detentions; inpatient hospitalizations; sexual assault or misconduct; being a victim of violent crime; significant injury or accident; being located near a natural disaster, civil unrest, or an act of terrorism.
- In the event of an emergency, travelers should contact AUPD's 24/7 number at +1-202-885-3636.
- See emergency contacts on the following slide...



# Emergency Contacts

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Local First Responders (*know the local version of 911, review Crisis 24 Country Report for local equivalents*)

American University Police Department at +1-202-885-3636

- AUPD is prepared to receive calls involving international incidents. Operators will gather information and relay it to Global Safety.

AXA Travel Assistance Program at +1-630-694-9764

U.S. Office of Overseas Citizen Services at +1-202-501-4444

- DOS staffs this number 24/7 and consular officers are prepared to help U.S. Citizens and persons with emergencies.

Non-U.S. persons should contact the local mission of their home government for emergency assistance

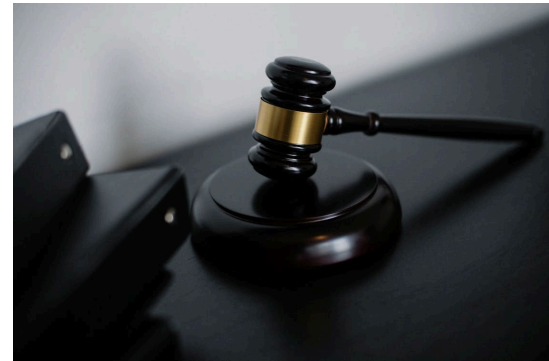
# Other Incidents

## Arrest and Detention

AU travelers must familiarize themselves with and obey laws of the countries they visit. Those who break laws abroad may face severe penalties, including jail sentences. Laws and penalties can be vastly different than in the United States.

## Before you depart

- Learn which laws might be different from laws in the United States. State Department provides some information for each country in [Country Information Pages](#).
- For specific inquiries about a country's laws, contact that country's nearest embassy or consulate in the United States before you travel.



## And while you are abroad

- If arrested or detained, ask to contact your on-site program coordinator or call AUPD at +1-202-885-3636.
- Request that a consular officer from the U.S. embassy or embassy of your home country be notified.
- If you are found in violation of a law, there is little to nothing consular officers or AU can do.

# Other Incidents

## Lost or Stolen Passports

- US citizens should report a stolen or lost passport to the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate as soon as possible. You must follow the specific instructions of citizen services at the Embassy or Consulate to replace the passport. In some cases, you may need a police incident or report number as a part of the process.
- Students of other nationalities must contact the embassy or consulate of their country for information about the availability of victim assistance and the procedure to replace a lost or stolen passport.

## Well-Being Checks from Your Program and American University

- AU monitors intelligence and receives information from various sources. Local and regional alerts meeting specific security thresholds will prompt the Office of Global Safety to contact travelers identified as being near the area.
- Respond to any well-being checks as soon as possible, regardless of whether you are in the area.
- The University needs to ensure all travelers are okay. Lack of response will prompt us to take additional steps such as reaching out to your local program or personal emergency contacts.

# Mental Health

## Psychological Wellness Resources

**Plan.** Consider speaking with your personal provider, abroad advisor or program coordinator, and the AU Center for Well-Being. This team can help create a plan for your needs during your time abroad.

**Medications?** If you are currently taking medication and working with a provider, talk with your provider to create a plan to ensure continuity of care. Make sure you have enough of your medication to cover the full length of your stay or a plan to get refills abroad.

Note that some medications are not legal abroad. The Psychiatric Health Practitioner at AU's Student Health Center offers consultations to help research whether your medication is allowed at your destination and plan for medication needs while abroad.

AU's Travel Assistance Program can offer guidance about the legality medications for future travel abroad. Be prepared to provide information such as the travel destination, type of medication, dose, frequency, and what it is prescribed for. The TAP will research your individual circumstances and provide feedback directly to you in approximately 10 days.

**Continuation of care.** If you take a certain type of psychiatric medication that is not legal at the destination or only a certain amount can be taken with you, the TAP's medical team can help. In consultation with you and your primary care provider, the TAP can pre-arrange for a local medical provider to either prescribe the needed medication or recommend alternatives if the medication is not legal at the destination



# Mental Health

## Psychological Wellness Resources (students)

### Mantra Health

In partnership with Workplace Options (WPO), Mantra Health ensures students studying abroad have access to vital mental health support tailored to their unique circumstances.

- **Around-The-Clock Crisis Support** Students studying abroad can access WPO's 24/7/365 crisis line at no cost. Whether they're navigating a true crisis or seeking help for day-to-day distress, master's level clinicians (or the local equivalent) are always available to provide immediate support.
  - Unlimited Access: Students can call as often as needed
- **Therapy Services**
  - 24/7 Access to Clinicians: Get immediate support from a master's level clinician (or local equivalent) via phone, email, video, or chat – available anytime, anywhere
  - Personalized Counseling: Receive up to six therapy sessions per issue, every year. Sessions are offered in-person, over the phone, or through video, based on your preference.
  - Multilingual Resources: Therapy and resources are available in over 27 languages
- **To Access Mantra Health**
  - Log into <https://mantrahealth.helpwhereyouare.com> using code: American
  - Call their international number at +1-919-827-0381 or via WhatsApp at 1-984-920-6875
  - See QR Code for more information



# Mental Health

Psychological Wellness Resources (all travelers)

## **AXA Travel Assistance Provider**

Contact the AXA and ask for a counselor referral. Be prepared to provide information including your location, background, and counseling needs. It is helpful to specify whether you would like a provider who can meet in person or prefer a virtual session. AXA will open a case and assist with locating and scheduling an appointment with a local counselor.

To contact the Travel Assistance Program (TAP) contact AXA Assistance by phone at +1-855-327-1414 or by email at [medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us](mailto:medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us) and reference American University policy number GLMN00173587R.



# Travel Tips: General

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**Pack Smart:** leave expensive items; clean out wallet or purse before departure; ensure all bags are secure; pack medical kit; keep prescriptions in their original container; make two copies of travel documents; pack activity and weather appropriate clothing.

**Communication:** Establish a plan for communicating (WhatsApp, email, phone); check in with family; check to see if your cell provider plan will work abroad. Familiarize yourself with international dialing; ensure family can contact you.

**Photography:** know customs regarding photographing people – always ask permission. Do not photograph military, border, or police locations.

**Money:** consider how you will access money; alert your bank and credit card provider of travel; bring “new” crisp US currency if appropriate; use ATMs inside buildings; check for skimmers. Keep emergency cash on hand.

# Travel Tips: Safety

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## Fire

- Know where emergency exits are located and check whether exits are passable.
- Make an escape plan.
- Know how to call the local fire department.
- Make sure that there is a working smoke detector in or near your bedroom and test it. If there is no smoke detector, discuss the situation with your local program coordinator and consider purchasing and installing one yourself.
- Look for fire hazards.
- Do not overload electrical outlets.
- Do not smoke inside.
- Inspect windows and doors and make sure that they are easy to open.
- If you feel that your accommodations are not safe, let someone know.

**Water:** exercise extreme caution swimming and participating in water sports; heed all warning signs and flags; wear a life jacket. Be advised: there may be no lifeguards or rescue infrastructure.

**Natural Disaster:** plan ahead – research your destination and familiarize yourself with threats, warning systems, and response procedures. Monitor news and alerts for severe weather.

# Travel Tips: Health

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**Vaccinations:** Be up-to-date on routine immunizations. Some countries have additional vaccination requirements or recommendations – consult CDC guidelines for destination-specific information and review with your doctor.

**Prescriptions:** plan ahead and take enough medication for the duration of travel. Some prescribed and OTC medications are illegal in some foreign countries. Request additional medication if needed. Check with your doctor before traveling.

**Preventing Insect Bites:** hot, humid environments are breeding grounds for mosquito- borne illness including Chikungunya, Dengue Fever, Malaria, and Zika. Use insect repellant and cover skin.

**Dietary Requirements:** discuss with program advisor or community partner. If related to medical condition, discuss travel plans with physician.



# Physical Health

## Before you depart:

- Review health guidelines for your host country at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Familiarize yourself with medical emergency and routine care facilities at your destination.
- Talk to your doctor or travel medicine specialist to see if they can provide pre-travel advice, vaccines, and medicines.

## While Traveling:

- Pay careful attention to what you drink and eat, especially at the beginning of the program as your body is still adjusting to a new environment.
- Travelers to some destinations will need to take precautions to avoid contaminated water. Some simple steps include, avoid street food, eat only peeled fruits and vegetables, drink only bottled, sealed water and avoid ice. Always check with local program coordinators for more detailed advice.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially before eating.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Be sure to get enough sleep on a regular basis.
- If you feel sick, do not delay in seeking medical care and asking for help from local program coordinators.
- If you are in an area where mosquitoes spread viruses and parasites that can cause diseases like chikungunya, dengue, Zika, and malaria, take precautions to minimize your exposure.

# Sexual Health Abroad

- Laws, cultural norms and risks related to sexual activity may vary widely
- Learn about the cultural norms, expectations, social customs and practices – especially those related to dating and romantic customs – of the host country.
- Educate yourself about gender relations, verbal or body language and social cues around dating, which may be considerably different from the United States.
- Prevalence of STI's and other transmittable diseases may be higher in your destination.
- Review advice for travelers provided by the CDC [here](#).

# Sexual Misconduct

## Reporting Sexual Misconduct While Abroad

If you are the victim of sexual assault or sexual misconduct while studying abroad there are various resources available to you. Please remember that not all of them are confidential and some people that you might want to confide in have a responsibility to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator.

### Don't know where to start?

- Contact AU Victim Advocacy Services by visiting <https://www.american.edu/student-affairs/counseling/victim-advocacy.cfm>
- Contact the Office of Equity and Title IX by visiting <https://www.american.edu/equity-titleix/>
- Consult additional resources for Americans Abroad at Pathways to Safety International ([pathwaystosafety.org](http://pathwaystosafety.org))

# Crime

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- Be vigilant, as pickpocketing, mugging, and “snatch and grab” theft of mobile phones, watches and jewelry can occur. (Keep a close eye out for motorbikes)
- Do not leave bags unattended in restaurants, pubs, hotel lobbies, and parked cars. (Keep an eye on belongings when on public transportation)
- Be alert to other criminal schemes, such as impostors posing as undercover police officers and “fining” tourists for minor offenses.
- Avoid using ATMs that look temporary in structure or location or are located in isolated areas – they may not be legitimate. Use ATMs located inside a bank branch.
- Carry only a minimal amount of cash, credit cards, and necessary personal identification.
- Be cautious and aware of your surroundings.
- Let someone know where you are going.
- Travel in groups when possible.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry and watches.
- Consider whether it is safe to be out after dark.



# Attending Large Events

Attending a large event like a sports match, festival, or concert abroad can be a unique and exciting experience. If you attend large events, pay close attention to your surroundings. Not properly managed, large events can turn deadly when crowds surge.

## Before the Event

- Research the event location, including how you will get there and how you will get back
- Tell someone in your program who is not attending the event the details about the event.

## At the Event

- Make sure security personnel are present, including police or security, and medical responders.
- Walk around the venue to identify the best entry and exit points; also, consider and visualize different exit opportunities in the event of an emergency.
- Report all suspicious behavior to security staff at the venue.

## Crowd Crush Danger signs

- If the crowd is moving, then suddenly slows
- Trust your gut – you will start to feel confined like you are losing autonomy

## Tips to react

- When a crowd stops moving, focus on staying on your feet
- Keep your arms up to avoid them being pinned at your side
- Protect your chest and conserve oxygen
- Move with the crowd rather than against it
- It is better to be on the periphery or in the back of a crowd than in the front or middle
- It is best to move diagonally through the crowd





# Lodging

## Questions to ask when evaluating accommodations

### Room Layout

- ✓ What is the general condition of the accommodation site?
- ✓ Are there evacuation plans? How many exits are there?
- ✓ What floor is the room on?
- ✓ Does the room have Wi-Fi internet access? Is it secure?

### Building Access

- ✓ Can guests access the building?
- ✓ Is there 24/7 security in the building?
- ✓ Is there a curfew when the main entrance is locked?

### Fire Safety

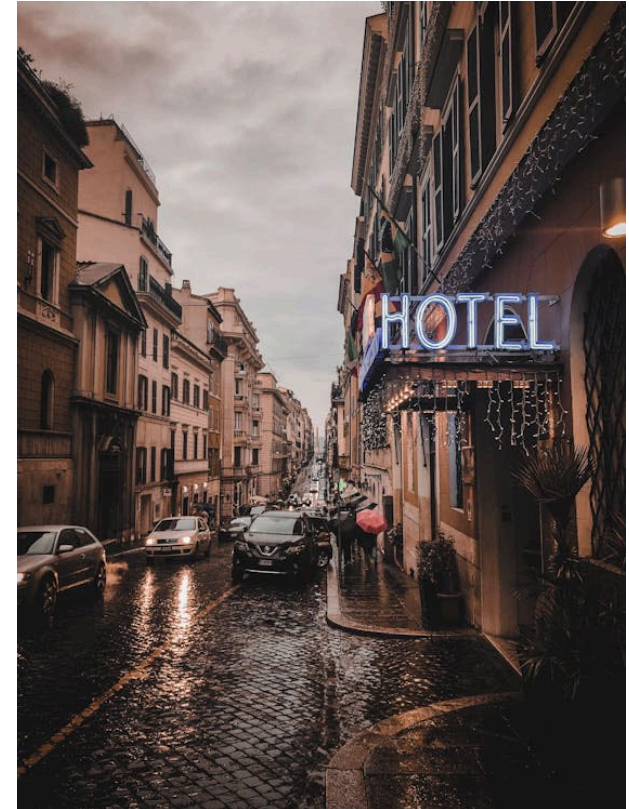
- ✓ What fire safety measures are available?
- ✓ Are there visible fire hazards?
- ✓ Are there smoke alarms?
- ✓ Are there automatic fire sprinklers?

### Neighborhood

- ✓ What is the general safety environment in the neighborhood?
- ✓ Are there any “no go” areas in the neighborhood?
- ✓ What is the area like during the day? At night?

### Security Measures

- ✓ Do doors have locks/deadbolts? Are safes or lockers available for storing valuables like passports?
- ✓ Do first floor rooms have window bars or safety gates?
- ✓ What type of lighting is in place outside the building? In the lobby, stairwell, and hallways?



# Demonstrations

**Demonstrations** occur frequently abroad (as they do here in Washington D.C.). They may take place in response to political or economic issues, on politically significant holidays, and during international events.

- Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly become violent.
- Avoid areas around protests and demonstrations.
- Check local media for updates and traffic advisories.
- Protest activity, particularly labor actions, are becoming more common and can disrupt transportation service. Consider multiple routes to travel where you need to go.

## Advice

Avoid the protest as a routine security precaution and to mitigate associated disruptions. Heed instructions from security services and leave the area at the first sign of a confrontation. Check for disruptions and allow extra time for travel in the affected area.

## If you find yourself in the middle of a violent protest or gathering

- Avoid the source of the disturbance;
- Identify an escape route and leave the area immediately;
- If you cannot leave the area, seek shelter in large public buildings such as hotels, churches, hospitals, or museums;
- Find a safe location and communicate status to your program and emergency contact.
- Be careful around security forces, heavy responses can trigger violence.



# Terrorism

Terrorism can occur at any time or place, but certain locations present a higher threat of terrorist attacks. While there are no absolute protections against terrorism, the following could reduce vulnerability to acts of terrorism:

- Remain alert and exercise vigilance in public places;
- As you enter a venue, identify potential exits and plan what you would do if an incident occurs;
- Do not loiter in transportation venues;
- Have your cell phone charged and with you;
- Remain calm and focus on your plan of action if an incident occurs;
- If in a public place without shelter, depart the scene in the opposite direction of the threat;
- If you hear a commotion, do not look out the window or “investigate.” Stay away from windows;
- If gunfire erupts, drop to the floor, and stay low; try to get behind concrete or steel;
- Remain sheltered in a secure location until you are certain the danger has passed;
- Check in as soon as possible. Keep in mind that cellular communication networks might be out of service due to volume of traffic;
- Do not leave the secure location without notifying someone of your plan.

Extremists are increasingly targeting venues such as high-profile public events including sporting events; political demonstrations; holiday events; parades; night clubs; hotels; restaurants; places of worship; schools; parks; shopping malls and markets; public transportation systems.

Travelers may notice additional security personnel on patrol due to increased security abroad, this is especially noticeable around holidays and large events. Government buildings and transportation hubs may add metal detectors or bag inspections. While this can contribute to anxiety, they are meant to help travelers feel safe.



# Traffic and Transportation

Road safety is not something that travelers necessarily think about in planning their experiences abroad, but in fact, traffic accidents are a leading cause of death of Americans abroad, particularly for college students. Many fatal crashes occur in industrialized countries.

## **ASIRT suggests that travelers:**

- Select the safest form of transportation for each country
- Avoid late-night road travel in countries with poor safety records
- Understand how seasonal hazards affect road conditions
- Know the dates of local holidays (when road accident rates rise)

## **Additional suggestions for pedestrians are:**

- Be aware of traffic patterns in your area
- Be especially alert at intersections
- Wear reflective clothing if jogging at dusk or dawn
- Do not walk where you cannot easily be seen
- Remember that most road fatalities are pedestrians
- Avoid hitchhiking



## **Additional suggestions for passengers are:**

- Avoid riding with a driver who appears intoxicated, irrational, or over-tired
- Always ride in the back seat of a taxi cab
- Wear seat belts whenever possible

**Review State Department Country Information Pages for destination specific transportation insights.**



# Cyber Security

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- You are at risk when connected to a public hotspot. Use updated 5G/4G/3G technology Wi-Fi devices. This allows you to create a hotspot or connect your laptop to a cellular network, which contributes to device security.
- Consult your wireless provider to understand the costs associated with service abroad. Understand international charges, you may want to restrict data usage to limit costs.
- Disable Bluetooth whenever possible to minimize risk of unwanted connection to your device.
- Avoid using public charging stations for your devices.
- Use two-factor authentication when possible.
- Use strong passwords. These are more difficult to hack or compromise. Consider using pattern- based or fingerprint-based passcodes.
- Update your device and ensure anti-malware and virus protection is up to date.
- Install device locator software on laptops, tablets and phones.
- Use the AU VPN to connect to AU networks.
- Understand Export Control Laws. For example, Your destination country may regulate the use of encryption. Check country- specific information before arriving with an encrypted device.
- Consider removing Personal Identifiable Information (PII) from devices. Consider using an alternative device specifically for international travel limiting information and data contained on daily-use devices.



# University Support and Policies Abroad

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Travelers are reminded that university policies and support services remain in effect during your travel abroad.

Examples include:

- The International Travel Policy addresses allowable expenses and other logistical considerations for travelers.
- Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policies: Please contact the Office of Equity & Title IX for more information or to file a report.
- Clery Compliance: Please contact [clerycompliance@american.edu](mailto:clerycompliance@american.edu) for questions relating to Clery compliance abroad.
- Rules of conduct including the Student Conduct Code, Faculty Manual, and Staff Personnel Policy Manual
- American University also provides free and confidential advocacy services to all students even when they are abroad. You are encouraged to contact the Center for Well-Being Victim Advocacy Services for more information.
- The Export Controls Policy



# Destination Specific Information

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Travelers must familiarize themselves with conditions at their destination before departure. Some resources include:

**Crisis 24 Country Reports:** Visit <https://crisis24horizon.com/americanuniversity> and use your AU email to access country reports.

**State Department Travel Advisories:**

- <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

**State Department General International Travel Guidance:**

- <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

**OSAC Country Security Reports**

- <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Browse/Report?subContentTypes=Country%20Security%20Report>

**CDC Destination Guidance:**

- <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

Please contact the Office of Global Safety if you have any questions about your destination. We are available for consultation.

# General Information

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Here is a list of additional resources for international travelers.

**State Department** guidance related to crisis and disasters, emergencies, and different types of travelers.

- <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

**OSAC Traveler Toolkit** guidance related to off-road safety, tips for socializing abroad, situational awareness, etc...

- <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Browse/Report?contentCategories=Traveler%20Toolkkit>

**United Kingdom Foreign Ministry Travel Advice**

- <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-adviceV.UK>

**Government of Canada Advice for Different Types of Travelers**

- <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/advice-for-travellers>

Please contact the Office of Global Safety if you have any questions about your destination. We are available for consultation.

# Reminders

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1. Register for STEP (<https://step.state.gov/>)
2. Download and activate AlertTraveler
3. Contact [Globalsafety@american.edu](mailto:Globalsafety@american.edu) with any questions
4. Have a safe trip!

# Questions?

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