Northwestern University

Health, Safety and Security
Checklist for International Travel Activities Involving Registered Student Organizations
(Undergraduate Students)

Step 1: Assess Health, Safety and Security Risks of Proposed Travel Location

☐ Northwestern University regulates undergraduate student travel to countries under a U.S. Department of State (DOS) Travel Warning. If an RSO would like to participate in activities located in a country with a Travel Warning, the Office of Student Engagement (OSE) requires substantial convincing that:
   a) the value of the experience warrants the potential exposure to additional risk;
   b) and b) no similar experiences are available in countries not under a Travel Warning.

Should approval be given to consider program activities in countries with a Travel Warning, students are required to follow the University Undergraduate International Travel Policy and Procedures, which requires a written request and in-person presentation to the Study Abroad Risk and Assessment Committee (SARAC) for review. Recommendations for approval are then made to the Provost, who makes the final decision.

SARAC meetings typically occur once a month from October through June. Upon receiving the initial approval from OSE to pursue travel in a country under a U.S. Department of State Travel Warning, groups planning to make Travel Permission Request must contact Julie Anne Friend, Associate Director for International Safety and Security (ADISS), as soon as possible to seek guidance on the preparation of a proposal and to be placed on an upcoming SARAC meeting agenda.

☐ Gather and review basic information regarding destination health, safety and risk from sources such as:
   ☐ U.S. Department of State Department (see Specific Country Information Sheets)
   ☐ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (see Travelers’ Health Destinations)
   ☐ International SOS Travel Risks Profile
      1. Using Firefox or Internet Explorer (some features do not work with Safari), go to ISOS International
      2. Log on to the Members’ Website (top right hand side of the homepage) by entering Northwestern's group account number (11BCAS000003)
      3. Select desired Destination and Travel Safety in the drop-down menu and then select "Travel Advice"
   ☐ Obtain Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) Crime and Safety Report from the Associate Director for International Safety and Security (ADISS)
   ☐ Review and/or obtain local media or anecdotal information on local crime, safety, health and dietary considerations, including any specialized risks for minorities groups (race, religion, ethnicity, etc.), individuals with disabilities and LGBTQ students.
Confer with CSI staff to review Health, Safety and Security needs and other operational needs that may be particular to this location. CSI staff may require student group leaders also consult with the ADISS.

Step 2: On-site Vendor Evaluation

Purpose: To assess whether overseas vendors/partners can provide high quality services in a safe manner. (If working with the same vendor year after year, summarize years of service, duties, and level of satisfaction).

☐ Gather name and contact information of host institution, program provider, or travel vendor, and names, titles, and contact information of responsible personnel of those bodies.

☐ Obtain and employ the Rubric for Assessing International Community Partner Development (available from a CSI staff member) for documenting responses to the following checklist items in this section.

☐ Check vendors/partners references. These references should be student groups or volunteer organizations that also work with the on-site organization. Inquire:

☐ When service was provided (most recent date of excursion)
☐ What services were offered (transportation, accommodations, tour arrangements, translation/guide, meals, etc.)
☐ Quality of service provided (were the vehicles in good condition, was the driver competent, were the accommodations clean and in a safe location, etc.)
☐ Were there participants with special needs (such as physical disabilities and if so, were they reasonably accommodated)
☐ Whether or not the cost was reasonable/appropriate

☐ Inquire with vendors/partners about health, safety and security planning and response:
  ☐ Information about health, safety and security at the destination(s)
  ☐ An emergency and evacuation plan, including fire safety
  ☐ A 24-hour communication plan
  ☐ Staff to accompany students, including security staff (if applicable)
  ☐ Information on ground transportation safety (quality of vehicles, driver qualifications and training, vetting of routes, driver restrictions (such as no nighttime road travel or limits on driving hours)
  ☐ Information regarding the licensing and insurance of any transportation vendors, accommodations, or other sub-contractors
  ☐ Accessibility of accommodations, transportation or activities for persons with disabilities
  ☐ Pre-departure information for students and parents
  ☐ A pre-departure orientation
☐ Summarize findings in written report. Ideally, the group should vet at least two proposed vendors to compare services, costs and quality.

**Step 3: Educational Programming/Regulatory Steps/Procedures**

☐ If the program is proposed by a student group, make sure that:
  - ☐ The group is a Registered Student Organization at NU
  - ☐ The trip is approved by The Office of Student Engagement
  - ☐ If the destination country is under a [U.S Department of State (DOS) Travel Warning](https://travel.state.gov) that the Travel Permission Application Process has been completed (see follow the University Undergraduate International Travel Policy and Procedures)

☐ At least ten prior to departure:
  - ☐ Receive and review risk identification and management plans, including a list of related resources available on site related to health, safety and banking, from the host organization or travel vendor and review with your student group advisor (if such documents are not available, write your own using the template and sample document titled “International Travel Risk Management and Response Plans”)
  - ☐ Direct all participants to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Travelers’ Health](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel) guidelines to review information on required or recommendation vaccinations
    - Students who will require special services to accommodate health needs (such as refrigeration for insulin, for example) should be strongly recommended to disclose this to trip leaders so inquires/arrangements can be made
  - ☐ Instruct all students to participate in NU’s electronic training seminar for independent international travel titled, “You Are Your Own Risk Manager” (This will be an on-line blackboard module by Nov 2013) (This requirement must be completed at least 15 days prior to departure).

☐ At least eight weeks prior to departure:
  - ☐ Review/Confirm appropriate emergency response plans as began above
  - ☐ Collect, organize and distribute all relevant health and safety information to participants at a pre-departure orientation
  - ☐ Remind all participants ensure that they have sufficient amounts of prescription medication before departing and the need to retain medication in original containers to easily pass through customs/immigration

☐ At least six weeks prior to departure, collect necessary waivers and forms, including:
  - ☐ Waiver and release of liability
  - ☐ Two emergency contacts information from each participant (name, address, relation, home or work phone, cell phone, email)

☐ At least four weeks prior to departure, confirm all travelers enrollment/registry with:
  - ☐ HTH Worldwide (medical insurance/assistance program)
STEP (U.S. Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program)

International SOS (travel tracker/security information service)

At least two weeks prior to departure, submit to CSI staff:
☐ Complete flight and daily itinerary, including addresses and phone numbers of all accommodations and volunteer sites
☐ Passport details for all travelers (number, expiration date and birthdate)
☐ Overseas contact information (complete residential address, email, cell, etc.) and participants’ emergency contact information

☐ At the same time:
☐ Develop a system of 24-hour contact numbers and a phone/text tree clarifying a chain of command and responsibilities of participants, faculty members, officers or advisors during an emergency. Provide a copy to CSI. Continue to update the phone/text tree when on-site.

☐ On-arrival:
☐ Check-in with designated CSI staff to report safe arrival
☐ Instruct participates to check-in with family (parent, guardian, grandparent, etc.)
☐ Test phone/text tree
☐ Assess the suitability, reliability, and safety of transportation on-site
☐ Assess housing for participants to ensure that housing is safe, secure, comfortable and convenient
☐ Where students are doing internships, fieldwork or volunteer activities ensure that working conditions are safe and healthy
☐ Assess the program site’s accessibility for physically disabled students

☐ Throughout the trip:
☐ Remind participants to check in with friends and family regularly
☐ Update CSI staff of any changes in phone tree, itinerary, accommodations, etc.
☐ Report any incidents (illness, injuries, altercations, disagreements, etc.) to CSI staff as soon as possible, no matter how minor

Upon return to campus:
☐ Have de-brief meeting with participants within 4 weeks of return date
☐ Distribute evaluation, record oral feedback, suggested changes for the future, etc.
☐ Submit written 1-2 page trip report no more than 8 weeks from return date