



TRAVEL CAUTION & ADVISORY

SOMALIA

LEVEL 4
DO NOT TRAVEL
RELEASE FOR PUBLIC USE

UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION (UNCLAS)

23 JULY 2024

TRAVEL ADVISORY | Somalia

SUMMARY

Updated with changes to security information.

Do not travel to Somalia due to crime, terrorism, civil unrest, health issues, kidnapping, piracy, and lack of availability of routine consular services.

23 JULY 2024

Country Summary: Violent crime, such as kidnapping and murder, is common throughout Somalia. Illegal roadblocks are widespread.

The U.S. government has extremely limited ability to help U.S. citizens in Somalia because there is no permanent consular officer in Somalia, including the Somaliland region. **If a traveler's passport is lost, stolen, or expires, or the traveler becomes destitute** the U.S. government may be unable to assist.

Some schools and other facilities act as "rehabilitation" centers and "de-westernization" camps. These facilities exist throughout Somalia with little or no licensing and oversight. Reports of physical abuse are common. People also report being held against their will in these facilities.

There are frequent reports of U.S. citizens who have their passports taken by family members, leaving them unable to depart Somalia. This often occurs when U.S. citizens travel to Somalia to visit family or attend an event. Some adult U.S. citizens are then unable to leave the international airport without explicit consent from their family.

Terrorists continue to plot kidnappings, bombings, and other attacks in Somalia. They may attack with little or no warning, targeting airports, seaports, and government buildings. Terrorists also target hotels, restaurants, shopping areas, and other places that attract large crowds and tourists. Government, military, and other convoys, including those carrying tourists are also targets. Methods of attack can include car bombs, suicide bombers, individual attackers, and rocket fire, among others. While some areas have experienced less severe terrorist activity, such as the Somaliland region, terrorist attacks involving the indiscriminate use of explosive devices and other weapons can take place anywhere in Somalia at any time without warning. The U.S. Embassy imposes strict limits on employee movement in Mogadishu based on the critical threat environment.

Civil unrest, including protests and demonstrations, occurs throughout Somalia and can sometimes be violent.

Medical facilities in Somalia have limited capacity and are often absent in rural areas.

Pirates are active in the waters off the Horn of Africa, especially off the coast of Puntland.

Due to risks to civil aviation operating within or in the vicinity of Somalia, the Federal Aviation Administration has issued a Special Federal Aviation Regulation. For more information, U.S. citizens should consult the [Federal Aviation Administration's Prohibitions, Restrictions, and Notices](#).

Read the [country information page](#) for additional information on travel to Somalia.

If you decide to travel to Somalia:

- Review your personal security plan and visit our page on [Travel to High-Risk Areas](#).
- Make a plan to exit Somalia if the situation gets worse. Identify multiple options for leaving Somalia and know the entry requirements for U.S. citizens in to neighboring countries.

23 JULY 2024

- Avoid sailing near the coast of Somalia and review the [Live Piracy Report](#) published by the International Maritime Bureau.
- Draft a will and designate appropriate insurance beneficiaries and/or power of attorney.
- Discuss a plan with loved ones regarding care/custody of children, pets, property, belongings, non-liquid assets (collections, artwork, etc.), funeral wishes, etc.
- Share important documents, login information, and points of contact with loved ones so that they can manage your affairs if you are unable to return as planned to the United States. [Find a suggested list of such documents here.](#)
- Make your own personal security plan with your employer or host organization (if you are traveling on business) or consider consulting with a professional security organization.
- Develop a communication plan with family and/or your employer or host organization (if you are traveling on business), so that they can monitor your safety and location as you travel through high-risk areas. This plan should specify whom you would contact first, and how that person should share the information.
- Identify key sources of possible assistance for you and your family in case of emergency, such as your employer (if traveling on business), and local friends/family as well as friends/family outside Somalia.
- Appoint one family member to be the point of contact with hostage-takers and media.
- Appoint a family member to be the contact for the U.S. and host country government agencies, and members of Congress if you are taken hostage or detained.
- Discuss a proof of life protocol with your loved ones, so that if you are taken hostage, your loved ones can know specific questions (and answers) to ask the hostage-takers to be sure that you are alive (and to rule out a scam).
- Leave DNA samples with your medical provider in case it is necessary for your family to access them.
- Erase any sensitive photos, comments, or other materials from your social media pages, cameras, laptops, and other electronic devices. These could be considered controversial or provocative by local groups.
- Leave your expensive/sentimental belongings behind.
- Enroll your trip in the State Department's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#).
- Follow the Department of State on [Facebook](#) and [X](#).
- Review the [Country Security Report](#) for Somalia.
- Prepare a contingency plan for emergency situations. Review the [Traveler's Checklist](#).
- Visit the CDC page for the latest [Travel Health Information](#) related to your travel.

Reported by:

Department of State
United States of America