



# TRAVEL CAUTION & ADVISORY

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## SOUTH AFRICA

LEVEL 2

EXERCISE INCREASED CAUTION

RELEASE FOR PUBLIC USE

UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION (UNCLAS)

27 MAY 2025

# TRAVEL ADVISORY | South Africa

## SUMMARY

*Updated to reflect information on driving at night and addition of the terrorism risk indicator.*

Exercise increased caution in South Africa due to crime (C), terrorism (T), civil unrest (U), and kidnapping (K).

### Assistance for U.S. Citizens

#### U.S. Consulate General Johannesburg

1 Sandton Drive (opposite Sandton City Mall)  
Johannesburg 2196  
South Africa

- Telephone: +(27)(11) 290-3000 (from South Africa 011-290-3000)
- Emergency: +(27) 79-111-1684 / 079-111-1684 (from within South Africa)
- Fax: +(27)(11) 884-0396 / 011-884-0396 (from within South Africa)
- Email: [ACSJohannesburg@state.gov](mailto:ACSJohannesburg@state.gov)
- Website: <https://za.usembassy.gov/>

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**Country Summary:** Violent crime is common and includes robbery, rape, carjacking and mugging. There are also "smash-and-grab" attacks on vehicles. Violent crime is more common in the downtown areas of big cities, especially after dark. Kidnapping is a threat in South Africa. Kidnappers target U.S. citizens and other foreign travelers to steal money. Captors often force victims to withdraw cash or give online account passwords before they are let go. Though rare, some kidnappings involve demanding ransom from families.

There is risk of terrorist violence, including terrorist attacks and other activity, in South Africa. Visit the U.S. Department of State's [country reports on terrorism](#) to learn more.

Demonstrations, protests, and strikes occur frequently. They can:

- Start suddenly
- Interrupt traffic, transportation, and other services
- Turn violent

Due to the risks, U.S. government employees working in South Africa must obtain special authorization to travel to many informal settlements (townships) in and around Cape Town. U.S. mission staff must use fully armored vehicles when visiting and visiting hours are limited to 10:00 -15:00 weekdays only.

#### **If you decide to travel to South Africa:**

- Avoid walking alone, especially after dark.
- Avoid demonstrations and crowds.
- Do not display signs of wealth, such as expensive watches or jewelry.
- Drive with doors locked and windows closed.
- Follow local authority instructions.
- Always carry a copy of your U.S. passport and visa (if applicable). Keep original documents in a secure location.
- Avoid visiting informal settlements (townships) unless you are with someone familiar with the area.
- Avoid driving outside of metropolitan areas at night, due to road hazards such as animals, broken down vehicles, and the potential to become a victim of crime.
- Stay aware of your surroundings.
- Stay alert in tourist spots.
- Have evacuation plans that do not rely on U.S. government assistance.
- Keep travel documents up to date and easily accessible.

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

U.S. citizens should always exercise caution when traveling abroad. Use these general tips to stay safe:

- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive messages and alerts from the U.S. Embassy. It makes it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Review the [Country Security Report](#) for South Africa.
- Prepare a contingency plan for emergency situations. Review the [Traveler's Checklist](#).

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- Visit the CDC page for the [latest Travel Health Information](#) related to your travel and return to the United States.
- We highly recommend that you buy insurance before you travel. Check with your [travel insurance provider](#) about evacuation assistance, medical insurance, and trip cancellation coverage.

Reported by:

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United States of America