



Policies & Procedures for International Travel Emergencies: Manual for Team Leaders

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Emergency Contact List

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US Embassies

US Embassy of the United States of America
502 Benson St, Monrovia, Liberia
Contact: +231-77-677-7000
Emergency Assistance Contact: 1 (888) 407-4747 (toll-free in the United States and Canada)
or 1 (202) 501-4444

US Consulates

Hon. Cynthia L. Blandford
Honorary Consul General Republic of Liberia - GA
225 Peachtree Street, N.E.
Suite 515
Peachtree Center South Tower
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
cblandford@LiberianConsulateGA.com
<http://www.LiberianConsulateGA.com>
Office: +1 404 565 1154

Hon. Rudolph E. Sherman Jr.
Honorary Consul General Republic of Liberia - NY
Office: +1 212 687 1025 Ext. 101
reshermanjr@liberiaconsulate-ny.com

Embassy of the Republic of Liberia
5201 16th Street N. W.
Washington D. C. 20011
Office: +1 202 723 0437
Fax: +1 202 723 0436

Medical Facilities

Apex Optics Ltd.
2nd Street, Tubman Blvd,
Sinkor, Monrovia
Office: +231(0)77 744 9999
Emergency: +231(0)77 091 1911
monrovia@apex-optics.com
<http://apex-optics.com>

Aspen Medical Clinic (Urgent Care)
Between 19th and 20th streets, Tubman Blvd
Sinkor, Monrovia
Office: +231 (0)77 002 9511
receptionami@ami.health
<https://www.ami.health>

Kingdom Care Medical Center (General Medicine)
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Paynesville
Office: + 231 (0)88 851 7863
Kingdomcaremedicalcenter@gmail.com

Firestone Medical Center (General Medicine)
Du-side, Div. 10,
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Hope for Women International (General Medicine & OB/GYN)
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hopeforwomeninternational@gmail.com

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info@jahmalemedical.org
<https://jahmalemedical.org>

John F. Kennedy Memorial Medical Center (All Specializations – Main Hospital)
21st Street, Tubman Blvd
Sinkor, Monrovia
Office: +231 (0)77 099 3993
fahnloe@gmail.com
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Medlink Clinic (Emergency Medicine/Orthopedics)
Randall Street
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medlinkclinic@gmail.com

SOS Medical Center (General Medicine)
Congo Town
Monrovia
Office: + 231 (0)77 055 1551
sos-no@sosliberia.org
<https://www.sosliberia.org>

St. Joseph Catholic Hospital (General Medicine)
Dr. Peter Lansana Dawoh – Hospital Director
Dr. Jerry Brown – Administrator
Congo Town
Monrovia
Office: +231 (0)88 673 6888 (main)
+231 (0)77 563 7493; +231 (0)88 824 8772 (Director)
+231 (0)88 079 2571/+231 (0)55 550 6131 (Administrator)
brpeterlansanadawoh@gmail.com
<https://www.sjcatholichospital.com>

Sanvee Memorial Clinic (Urology)
Paynesville
Office: + 231 (0)88 655 0617

ELWA Hospital (General Medicine)
Jason Traxall – Medical Director
Paynesville
Office: + 231 (0)77 054 61607
<https://www.elwaministries.com/elwa-hospital-2/>

Duside Hospital
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Charif Pharmacy
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Dentists

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Dental and Face Caring Services
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Dr. Simon Stretton-Downes (General Dentistry)
Trinity Dental Clinic
ELWA Hospital
Paynesville
Office: + 231 (0)88 691 1546
dental.manager@elwaministries.org

Travel Insurance

Customer Service: iNext
Have plan option questions, or want to request changes to your plan?
You can call us toll-free at: **855-578-6398**

Claims: Co-ordinated Benefit Plans
Have claims questions, or need to report a claim?
You can call us toll-free at: **866-723-3063 / or 727-412-7378**

24-Hour Emergency Services: Generali Global Assistance
In case of Emergencies while on your Trip, please call Generali Global Assistance (“GGA”).
GGA provides medical, legal and travel assistance services available 24 hours a day/365 day
a year. A complete list of these services is included in your certificate/policy.

To contact Generali Global Assistance, please call:
Within U.S.A. & Canada: 866-506-5304
Outside U.S.A. & Canada: 240-330-1548

Contingency Plan

We at Planting A Seed International (PASI) hope and pray that any contingency plan will not need to be used. However, we are not immune to crises that can affect individuals or the group as a whole. Therefore, a clear contingency plan must be in place and approved prior to the team's departure.

This contingency plan must be formulated and clear to all those participating in the program. Those in the chain of command must be aware that they are responsible for the team once the leader is unavailable. They must be informed of their duties and what to do in the event of a crisis. This includes a list of who to contact in the emergency and what to do within the program itself. Also, all other team members must be informed of the chain of command and be informed of who will be the leaders in the event of a crisis.

Things to Consider in a Contingency Plan

Basic Procedures

1. Get immediate situation under control
2. Contact local sponsor and/or authorities for immediate advice
3. Make sure "this document"; student info forms and local emergency contact info are in your immediate possession
4. Reach out to points of contact on the emergency contact list as well as those at your home institution.

Responsibilities of Participating

Lead Faculty

- Contact Family
- Notify Need-to-know group

Responsibilities of Program Directors

- Maintain Communication with Participating Institutions
- Maintain Communication with Family of Participants
- Maintain Communication with US Embassy
- Monitor Crisis Situation

Chain of Command

If something happens to the Co-Directors, making it impossible to continue leading the team, there must be a clear chain of command set up. The chain of command should be formulated in the list as shown below:

- Co-Directors
- Lead Field Coordinator
- Participating Lead Faculty

Other Details

- A. Crises may be either group-oriented or individual-oriented. Be prepared to respond to those crises that affect the whole group (for example, rioting that may require a group evacuation) and those that affect one or a few individuals within the group (for example, a sexual assault or a family emergency back home).
- B. Consider the levels of crises and what “trigger points” would indicate moving from one level to another. Also plan on what actions are required at each level. For example, rumors of a riot in your area maybe a trigger point to move to the first crisis level and require your group to check in with you before leaving a designated area.
- C. Make a detailed list of contact information to keep with you at all times. Emergency contacts are provided above. Beyond that, consider embassies, local authorities, mission agencies and friends that may reside in the area.
- D. Remember to keep personal information confidential—on a “need to know” basis.

Health Planning

It is important to put health care on your travel checklist if you plan to travel to Liberia West Africa. Anyone can get sick while studying abroad; it happens at home all the time. Planning ahead will help you alleviate worry.

Travel Checklist

1. **Immunizations:** Attached to this health care packet is a list of required immunizations. Many of the immunizations are available through your local travel clinic or campus student health clinic.
2. **Insurance:** All students and faculty participating in our service abroad programs will be provided with travel insurance provided through i-Next. Travel policy and details will be provided to participants before departure.
3. **Special Needs:** People traveling to rural, underdeveloped areas need to be aware of their own personal health risks such as susceptibility to infection or medications that should be avoided. Identify potential additional health risks unique to the area in which the program operates. Check with your health care provider if you have special health needs.
4. **Health Problems:** If you have a medical problem such as diabetes or food allergies, bring along a health record that includes your health care provider’s name and address and a summary of your medical history. Also bring an adequate supply of medications and a list of the medications’ generic names in case you need a prescription filled. It is strongly recommended that you inform the International Programs Office and your onsite program director of any existing health problems. In an emergency situation it is crucial that this information is available.
5. **Emergency Care:** Contact your primary care physician before departure from the United States and determine whom they advise you to visit locally for medical needs.
6. **Medical/Dental Examinations:** Before leaving the U.S., it is suggested to have a complete physical examination with your personal health care provider. Inform your health care provider of your travel plans before your appointment so that your

provider can give you current health information and medication recommendations for your destination. Dental care abroad is not recommended. Have your teeth cleaned, examined, and if necessary, repaired before your departure. If you wear eyeglasses take along an extra pair. If you wear contact lenses you should take a pair of eyeglasses along in the event that you lose or damage a contact or if your eyes are irritated by dust, pollution, etc.

7. **Medical Kit.** Pack a First Aid kit containing bandages, disinfectant, and a digital thermometer, as well as nonprescription items such as aspirin, ibuprofen and/or acetaminophen, Pepto-Bismol (and other diarrhea medicine), sun screen, insect repellent (25% or more “deet”), sterile cleaning pads or moist towelettes for cleaning wounds, and electrolyte powder.

Leader’s Travel Abroad Checklist

Travel abroad leaders should also develop checklists of issues and concerns that are regularly assessed before each overseas departure. This assessment should include the following areas:

Leader’s Checklist

Safety

1. Have you recently consulted the appropriate sources of information concerning the current political climate, travel advice, personal safety, pickpocket, and asault and rape occurrences in the country of destination?
2. If there are political risks, and you have chosen to go forward with the trip, have you disclosed those risks to trip participants?
3. Have you required participants to sign releases or assumption of risk agreements regarding these risks?

Health

1. Have you consulted the appropriate sources of information concerning the health risks in the country of destination?
2. Have you disclosed these risks to trip participants?
3. Have you required participants to sign releases or assumption of risk agreements regarding these risks?
4. Have you taken all reasonable and lawful steps to assure that those who plan to go on your international studies trip have had the opportunity to disclose all special medical needs that they may have?
5. If special medications, medical treatments, or accommodations for disabilities will be required, have you taken all reasonable steps to assure that those special requirements will be available or in place in the country of destination?
6. If you have concerns about providing for special needs, have you taken appropriate steps to preclude or discourage participation by those whose needs cannot be met, or at least to secure their written acknowledgement that these needs cannot be met, but that they nonetheless wish to participate?

Contingency Plan

1. Have you developed a contingency plan in the event of a crisis?
2. At minimum, does everyone who will be involved with your program know whom to contact in the event of an emergency, and do those contact persons know what to do if they receive such information?
3. If your program depends on cooperation with a foreign entity or institution, do the key persons associated with that foreign entity or institution know with whom they should communicate in the event of a crisis or emergency?

Insurance

1. Have you confirmed that all participants in your program have adequate insurance?
2. Have you taken any steps to “look behind” assurances from your program participants that their coverage is adequate, such as requiring that copies of their policies be furnished for review by your risk managers or counsel?
3. Are you certain that all participants have adequate coverage in all areas where coverage may be needed? Make sure that, even if coverage is in place, it will offer the protection you seek. Everything is not always as it seems, and not all policies offer overseas coverage.

Legal Liability

1. Have you conferred with your general counsel’s office or legal counsel concerning the legal aspects of your trip, including the applicability of various domestic laws to your activities in the country of destination?
2. Have you asked your counsel to review or draft all documents that program participants will sign that waive or release you from liability and/or forms that purport to require those participants to assume risks as a prerequisite to going overseas?

Program Termination

1. Have you clearly informed all students who will be participating in the program that the institution reserves the right to terminate their participation at any time if, in the opinion of the leadership, students are not benefiting from the program, or are interfering with the ability of others to benefit?
2. Have you clearly informed all students that circumstances may arise which would make it necessary to suspend or terminate the program and bring everyone back to the United States?
3. Do you have a policy that provides how refunds will be handled in the event of the suspension or termination of your program?
4. Has that policy been adequately communicated to program participants in your catalogue, program agreements, or other program documentation?

Travel Arrangements

1. Have you taken all reasonable steps to assure that all travel arrangements have been made and that those arrangements are as safe as can be reasonably expected in the country of destination?
2. Have you clearly informed all program participants that, even though certain travel arrangements have been made and disclosed to them, circumstances could arise that would make changes to those arrangements unavoidable?

Culture

1. If the drinking laws in your country of destination are different from those in the United States, have you clearly made your expectations about the students' behavior known, and the consequences for violating those expectations? (Students are expected to adhere to their institution's code of conduct when participating in this experience.)
2. Recognize potential areas of misunderstanding such as: public display of affection, dress code, anti-American sentiment, proper and improper gestures, and other social expressions.

Independent Travel

1. What is your policy regarding independent travel while your students are overseas, and have you communicated that policy?
2. If you will not seek to impose restrictions on independent travel during free time, have you disclosed all known risks that such independent travel may entail?
3. Have you identified high-crime areas, areas of political instability, areas of particularly dangerous natural conditions or roadways, and other risks that independently traveling students would do well to avoid?

Academic Considerations

1. Are you comfortable with the academic benefits derived from the program are clearly described in your program materials?
2. Have participating students been informed of what curriculum will be offered overseas, and what academic credits they stand to earn?

Disciplinary Assessment

1. Have you taken reasonable steps to assure that those who have problematic disciplinary or personal records not be allowed to participate in the program?

Safety Tips for Students and Faculty

Safety for Women

1. Tourist areas are magnets for criminals. Avoid looking like a tourist loaded with jewelry, bags, cameras, and other valuable equipment.
2. Pickpockets often work in pairs using distraction as their basic strategy. Be aware of bumping in crowded areas.
3. If you carry a handbag, keep it close to your body. Do not carry valuables in your handbag.

Safety Starts with Your Demeanor

1. Always know exactly where you are going and act accordingly.
2. Dress conservatively, giving consideration to local customs and dress codes.
3. Maintain a calm, mature approach to all situations.
4. Be alert to the possibility of confrontation with individuals or groups.

Safety When Traveling

1. Look confident. Dress sensibly, with valuables out of sight.
2. Use hard-sided, lockable luggage and label so that your name and address are not easily seen.
3. Carry a list of emergency names, addresses, and phone numbers.
4. Carry a photocopy of your passport and keep the copy in a separate, safe place.
5. Carry a personal alarm and phone card. Stay near other people; hold your handbag in front of you; do not carry your wallet in your back pocket.

When on Foot

1. Always walk with at least three or four companions—never alone.
2. Be aware of your surroundings. Consult a local street map before setting out and take it with you.
3. Seek reliable advice on areas considered safe for walking.
4. Avoid walking too close to shrubbery, dark doorways, and other places of concealment.
5. Use routes through well-lit city centers.
6. Maintain a low profile; avoid disputes and commotion in the streets.
7. Never hitchhike or accept a ride from a stranger.
8. If a driver pulls alongside you to ask for directions, do not approach the vehicle.
9. Carry a small amount of cash in your wallet, enough to appease a mugger. Divide the rest of your money between 3 or 4 pockets.
10. If someone suspicious is behind or ahead of you, cross the street. If necessary, cross back and forth several times. If still being followed, use whatever means necessary to draw attention to yourself. Remember, it is better to suffer embarrassment from being overcautious than to be the victim of an attack.

Safety for Women

1. Adopt a low profile. Dress and behave conservatively. Do not display jewelry, cash, keys, or other valuables.
2. Follow your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable about a location or person, leave immediately.
3. Do not hesitate to call attention to yourself if you are in danger: scream, shout, and run.
4. Find out about local customs, how you are expected to dress and behave and potential threats and areas to avoid.
5. Rehearse actions you would take in the case of a confrontation.
 - Talk your way out of it
 - Give in to the demands made of you
 - Shout for help
 - Flee
 - Fight

Developing Situational Awareness

An awareness of your surroundings, neighbors, and potential threats is the first step in reducing your vulnerability. These tips will help you in developing a continuous and conscious awareness of the area you are visiting. Avoid being predictable in your daily routine.

Know the Region's History

- A. The identity and ethnicity of opposing groups
- B. Religious dynamics and traditions
- C. Attitude towards foreigners
- D. Political situation
- E. Identity and strength of authority (particularly military)
- F. Geographical characteristics

Know the Region's Culture

- A. Politeness – What are the basic rules of politeness and decency?
- B. Greetings – How and when should you say “hello”?
- C. Respect – Who should be shown respect and how?
- D. Body language – What gestures are rude? Is eye/body contact acceptable?
- E. Physical contact – What is expected- shaking and holding hands, kissing, embracing?
- F. Space – What is personal or public space?
- G. Appearance – What is the appropriate dress code?
- H. Gender – What are the attitudes about gender? What are ways of showing respect?
- I. Age – Are elders respected? Are there different ways of greeting young and old?
- J. Time – How punctual are you to be? What does “now” mean?
- K. Decision-making – Are decisions made by individuals, by group, or seemingly no one?
- L. Emotions – Are emotional expressions acceptable?

M. Social Practices – Is waiting in line the norm? How should you call for attention?

Surviving Attacks, Clashes, & Abductions

General Guidelines:

1. Do not try to intimidate or be aggressive. Instead, maintain a polite, open, and confident demeanor.
2. Keep your hands visible.
3. Move slowly with precise gestures
4. Respond to requests, but do not offer more than what is requested.
5. Keep your emotions in check.

Robbery & Armed Assault (when directly threatened by an armed person):

1. Never take physical risks for property or money.
2. Remain calm and maintain personal composure.
3. Do not be aggressive. Do not try to escape.
4. Do what you are told within reason.

Shootings & Crossfire:

If you hear gunfire when on foot:

1. Take immediate cover on the ground.
2. Determine the direction of the firing. Are you and/or your companions a target of the firing?
3. If possible, improve your protection by crawling into a ditch/hole, behind a wall, or inside a building.
4. Leave the scene only after the firing has ceased.

If you hear gunfire while in a building:

5. Keep clear of windows and doors.
6. Take shelter in the best-protected areas such as the bathroom, basement, etc.

Bombings

If you are caught in the midst of a bombing:

1. Take immediate cover on the ground. Lie flat; face down with your eyes closed.
2. Protect your eardrums by covering your ears with your hands and keeping your mouth open slightly to balance the pressure from the blasts.
3. If possible, improve your protection from fragmentation of the shells by taking cover in a ditch/hole or the ground floor of a building with solid concrete walls.
4. *Never take shelter under a vehicle.*
5. Leave the area only after the shelling has ceased.

Civil Disturbances & Natural Disasters

If you hear sirens, explosions, or gunfire:

1. Stay where you are if at all possible
2. Make your office or home look “closed” and/or “quiet.” If there is potential for a riot, stay at home. Statistically this is the safest place to stay in the event of civil disturbances
3. Immediately take cover under a heavy object such as a table or stand in an interior doorway. Keep curtains closed and stay away from windows or open areas. Use good judgment in determining when it is safe again to move.

Kidnapping and Hostage Situations

Basic Rules for Survival

1. Be cautious of heroics. This may lead to death at the hands of a nervous or an inexperienced member of the kidnapping group.
2. Remain calm, composed, and cooperative.
3. Focus on pleasant scenes (e.g. Recall favorite Bible passages, or prayers. You might try to recollect the plots of books or movies.) Mental activity is extremely important
4. Establish a routine, and institute a healthy exercise regimen. Avoid excessive exercise that would lead your captors to believe that you are training for a “breakout.”
5. Build rapport by drawing attention to your own and others’ human needs like hunger and thirst.
6. Be reluctant to give up your identification or clothes. Loss of such personal belongings is demoralizing. Hostage takers can use them for bargaining. Try not to accept an exchange of clothes with hostage takers. This could put you in greater danger in case of an attempted rescue.
7. Be conscious of your body language as well as your speech. Do not say or do anything to arouse the hostility or suspicion of your captors.
8. Encourage your captors to let authorities know of your whereabouts and condition.

If several people are kidnapped together, consider appointing one person to speak on behalf of the group with the captors.