

## **Emergency Response Protocol for International Education Programs Sponsored by the University of Oklahoma**

The safety and well-being of students, faculty and staff who are involved with or participating in OU study abroad programs is of the highest importance, and all reasonable actions will be taken to manage risks and response to emergencies while acknowledging that no single plan can address all contingencies.

The following procedures shall serve as guidelines for the University's response to crises affecting participants abroad. Faculty or units that manage education abroad programs independently of the EA Office will follow this emergency response protocol. All emergencies on all OU study abroad programs should immediately be brought to the attention of the College of International Studies Risk Management Team via the 24/7 emergency phone, [helpabroad@ou.edu](mailto:helpabroad@ou.edu), or through the AlertTraveler app.

### **Role of the Office of Education Abroad**

The Office of Education Abroad (EA), under the Associate Provost for Global Engagement, is charged with the responsibility of coordinating the management of real or perceived emergencies involving students, faculty and staff participating on OU-sanctioned, credit-bearing study abroad programs. A study abroad 24/7 Emergency Assistance Line will be monitored by the CIS Risk Management Team. Once the team is informed of the situation, a crisis coordinator may be assigned who will regularly update the team and other relevant parties about the evolving situation. It is preferable that communication with the EA staff be conducted via the 24/7 emergency phone number, but if not possible, communication can be via text or e-mail.

### **Emergencies Abroad**

#### *Medical Assistance*

In the event of a medical emergency, students should go immediately to the nearest physician or hospital and then contact OU's study abroad 24/7 Emergency Assistance Line and the On Call International Global Response Center to open an insurance case.

**OU's Study Abroad 24/7 Emergency Assistance Line: +001 (405) 630-5392**

**On Call International 24/7 Global Response Center: 001 (877) 714-8179** (this number may be reached via a collect call from an international location)

If you are not able to place a phone call, please email [helpabroad@ou.edu](mailto:helpabroad@ou.edu).

#### *Security Assistance*

In the event that a student has been a victim of crime, harassment, discrimination, terrorism, natural disaster, etc. students (or their companions) should notify the local faculty leaders, on-site staff and/or resident directors.

## **General Guidelines for Emergencies Abroad for Faculty Leaders**

1. The first priority is to do whatever is necessary and reasonable to ensure and safeguard the safety and well-being of program participants. Remain calm while obtaining any emergency care for affected participants. Do your best to diffuse any growing anxieties that may be occurring among participants. If at all possible, remain with the affected participant or participants.
2. Immediately contact the Director of International Risk Management at +001 (405) 630-5392. If no one can be reached at that number, please call the Public Safety emergency number: +001 (405) 325-1911 or non-emergency number +001 (405) 325-2864 as appropriate. Make every effort to reach the EA staff by telephone, rather than e-mail (but if emailing please email [helpabroad@ou.edu](mailto:helpabroad@ou.edu)). There are many issues to discuss during a crisis. All other steps as advised by an EA staff member should be followed.
3. If the situation warrants, notify the local police about the situation. Then follow through with the procedures the police may require of you or the participant(s).
4. Keep an EA staff member informed on a regular basis, through telephone and/or e-mail messages, about the evolution of the emergency and/or crisis.
5. Once EA is informed of the emergency and consults with you and other appropriate persons, you may be sent a written course of action/response plan that you and the participants will be expected to follow.
6. During a political crisis, social unrest, or some other emergency or crisis in which foreigners in general or U.S. citizens in particular may be at risk, give instructions to students to avoid demonstrations, confrontations, or situations where they could be in danger. They should avoid behavior that could call attention to themselves or identify them as Americans (such as speaking in English); and also avoid places where foreigners, Americans, or American military are known to meet. Instruct them to remove signs, avoid using luggage tags, and clothing that might identify them as Americans.
7. In the event of an ongoing medical event, program leaders should be prepared to remain with the affected participant(s) until released from responsibility by the Associate Provost for Global Engagement. Each case will be evaluated for the need for a program leader to remain and alternative arrangements explored whenever possible should the situation disrupt the program leader or group travel plans.
8. Upon resolution and closure of the crisis, submit an incident report to EA. The incident report will include:
  - Person/unit in charge
  - Location of emergency/crisis
  - Detailed description of incident
  - Participants involved

- Staff involved in the emergency response
- Steps taken to respond to crisis
- Recommendations for a future program in the same location and any additional comments

### **Risk Management Team Contacts**

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Education Abroad Main Line: 405-325-1693