

NAFSA Health and Safety Guidelines

The following guidelines were prepared by NAFSA, an organization devoted to international education. They are intentionally general and are not meant to account for all possible health, safety, and security issues, but they do offer excellent advice.

Study abroad participants should

- Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations.
- Read and carefully consider all materials issued by the sponsor that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country.
- Conduct their own research on the country or countries they plan to visit, with particular emphasis on health and safety concerns, as well as the social, cultural, and political situations.
- Consider their physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program, and make available to the sponsor accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
- Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance coverage and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
- Inform parents/guardians/families and any others who may need to know about their participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, and keep them informed of their whereabouts and activities.
- Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.
- Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals before and/or during the program.
- Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
- Obey host-country laws.
- Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well being of others, and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
- Avoid illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
- Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of their whereabouts and well being.
- Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and legal system services in the host country.