

International Travel Policy for Students at Health Sciences

All graduate students who conduct international travel that is sponsored, organized, supported, or recognized by West Virginia University must complete the following required Procedures and have them approved. Notice there are separate Procedures for:

- I. International Travel to a Location Outside of the Continental U.S. - pages 1-2**
- II. International Travel to a Country on U.S. State Department Travel Warning List – pages 2-6.**

I. International Travel to a Location Outside of the Continental U.S.

All graduate students traveling to a foreign country for purposes related to scientific presentations, workshops, or similar activities must follow the procedures listed below. International travel for Health Sciences-related purposes is considered as travel to any location outside of the continental United States. This includes travel to Alaska, Hawaii, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Canada.

Procedures:

1. The request must be approved by the graduate director and submitted to the Dean no later than one month prior to the expected travel.
2. Submit a formal written request that includes the traveler's name, destination, dates of travel, and purpose of the travel.
3. State whether grants funds, other university funds, or outside sources (including personal funds) are covering the expenses.
4. If the event will be Industry Funded the Industry-Funded Checklist must also be completed.
5. Complete export control paperwork – below
6. It is encouraged that graduate students engaging in international travel obtain health and medical evacuation insurance coverage. The Global Health Program Office can assist with health insurance and other procedures for international travel.

Export Control Paperwork:

1. Complete the following forms - http://oric.research.wvu.edu/export_control/forms
 - a. Best Practices Form
 - b. Export Control Form for International Travel
2. Submit:
 - a. These forms,
 - b. Abstract for presentation (if business travel),
 - c. Scientific Society confirmation of your presentation (if business travel),
 - d. Curriculum Vitae to:

Ashley Boateng, MPA, CRA
Program Coordinator
Global Engagement Office
Chancellor's Suite 1000
Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center South

II. International Travel to a Country on U.S. State Department Travel Warning List

Please read the following from the Office of the Associate Provost and International Affairs. The form for acknowledgement of risk and waiver and release agreement is at the end of this draft document.

A. Introduction

West Virginia University (“WVU”) encourages students, faculty, and staff to participate in international activities and promotes the development of opportunities for international study and research. To this end, WVU attempts to balance the value of participation in international activities against their potential risks. WVU has developed this Procedure for international activities in countries for which the U.S. Department of State (“DOS”) has issued Travel Warnings, countries for which the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) has issued Travel Notices, as well as countries for which there is a reasonable concern for the health and security of travelers even if they are not specifically identified on either list. Students, faculty, and staff will need to consult this Procedure for specific details before making arrangements for travel to countries where there are DOS Travel Notices and Warnings, severe health risks, recognized dangers, or generalized instability.

The Associate Provost for International Affairs is responsible for this Procedure, including review of requests for exceptions to this Procedure and recommendations. However, final authority and approval for activities covered by this Procedure rests with either the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or, for those students, staff, and faculty in HSC-based programs, the Health Sciences Center (“HSC”) Chancellor.

This Procedure serves as an addition to all other relevant WVU policies and procedures related to travel and can be revised as operational necessity requires. Additional information and forms can be found on the WVU Office of International Programs Travel Site.

B. What activities are covered by this Procedure?

This Procedure applies to all travel sponsored, organized, supported, or recognized by WVU. Travel is sponsored, organized, supported, or recognized by WVU when any of the following occurs:

- It is funded by WVU, whether through public or private funds;
- It is part of a WVU international program— a program organized and administered by WVU;
- It is part of a program or trip administered by another institution or organization under an agreement with WVU;
- Students receive WVU academic credit for courses taken during the travel;
- It is organized by WVU, such as trips organized and led by members of the faculty, acting in their official capacity; or
- Any programs organized by groups formally affiliated with WVU such as parents’ club, alumni organization, etc.

Personal travel is not included in the scope of this Procedure. This includes travel that is outside of WVU institutional auspices, such as vacation-related travel, including when such travel is undertaken prior to, during, or after an activity under WVU auspices.

C. Travel Warnings and Notices

1. Travel Warnings are issued when long-term, protracted conditions make a country dangerous or unstable and lead the DOS to recommend that Americans consider the risk or avoid travel to that country. This list is updated regularly and is available at:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) Travel Notices are issued for locations in which extreme health hazards may be present. Travelers should be aware of the CDC’s three categories of Travel Notices. These are:
 - Outbreak Notice: Issued when there is an outbreak of a contagious disease in a limited geographic area.
 - Travel Health Precaution: Issued when a disease outbreak of a greater scope is occurring in a more widespread geographic area.
 - Travel Health Warning: Issued when there is a widespread, serious outbreak of a disease of public health concern. At this warning level, the CDC recommends against non-essential travel to the area.

A current listing can be found at:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices.htm>

3. WVU shall not require any student, faculty, or staff member to participate in an international activity that is sponsored, organized, supported, or recognized by WVU in a country for which the DOS has issued a Travel Warning or Notice that restricts or otherwise urges U.S. citizens to defer travel.

If a Travel Warning or Notice is issued while a student, faculty, or staff is already in the subject country, the Associate Provost for International Affairs will review and assess the situation and make appropriate recommendations and decisions based on concerns for the safety and security of the participants. The Associate Provost for International Affairs may recommend immediate departure and/or suspension of the program if appropriate.

The Associate Provost for International Affairs reserves the right to recommend to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or HSC Chancellor cancellation or suspension of any program at any time in his/her sole discretion if it is determined that there is unnecessary or significant risk to participants.

D. Student Travel

WVU generally does not authorize student travel to areas under a DOS or CDC Travel Warning or Notice. However, a student may request an exception through the following steps:

1. The student wishing to travel to a destination for which there is a Travel Warning or Notice must review the Travel Warning and Consular information sheet or Travel Notice in consultation with a study abroad or faculty advisor.

2. The student must carefully consider the risks described in the Travel Warning and the Consular Information Sheets or Travel Notice. The student must weigh those risks against the value of the educational opportunity and make his/her own determination about whether to continue with the planned research or activity. The student should also take into consideration that if he/she should encounter difficulty abroad, WVU and even the U.S. Department of State may be unable to assist.
3. A written request for an exception must be submitted by the student explaining why travel to the country is essential to his/her research or graduation plan.
4. A written letter of support must be submitted by the student's faculty advisor, stating how the advisor believes any risk involved in travel to this location would be mitigated and confirming that the travel is essential to the student's academic program. This letter must also be endorsed by the Department Chair.
5. The written request and letter of support must be submitted to the Associate Provost for International Affairs who, together with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or, for students in HSC programs, the HSC Chancellor, will review all requests from students wishing to travel to regions under a Travel Warning or Notice on a case by case basis.
6. Upon approval by the Associate Provost for International Affairs, the student may use approved WVU funding in accordance with Financial Aid guidelines, including any external funding administered through and disbursed by WVU, for approved study, training, or presentation.
7. If approved, the student must sign a notification of risks and release form, acknowledging the existence of the Travel Warning or Notice and his/her decision to continue with the planned activity despite that Warning or Notice, releasing WVU from all liability, including but not limited to, death, injuries, or losses suffered while participating in the activity. If a student is under age 18, his/her parent or guardian must also sign this release.
8. All students who are United States citizens travelling to countries under a Travel Warning or Notice are required to sign up for the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program at <https://step.state.gov/step/>

**WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK AND WAIVER
AND RELEASE AGREEMENT
FOR STUDENTS TO
STUDY AND TRAVEL TO LOCATIONS UNDER
U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT TRAVEL WARNINGS**

Before traveling to **[insert location]** (hereinafter "Location") on **[date to return date]** you must read, understand, and sign this form. This form tells of some, but not all, of the risks you will face by choosing to travel to a Location that has been placed under a U.S. Department of State Travel Warning. By signing this form you are releasing West Virginia University, the Board of Governors of West Virginia University ("WVU"), and any and all employees from all responsibility and liability for any injuries you might suffer as a result of your decision. Specifically, you agree as follows:

I acknowledge that there is a travel warning in effect for the Location to which I intend to travel, which means that in the opinion of the U.S. State Department, the ordinary risks of foreign travel are greatly heightened for travel to this Location. I have read the travel warning for this Location at <http://travel.state.gov> and have carefully considered the risks of travel to this Location at this time. I confirm that despite these risks, I have made a decision to proceed with the travel.

I understand that there are risks associated with all international travel. I further acknowledge and understand that travel to Location at this time exposes me to risks of a greater likelihood and magnitude than those normally associated with international travel. These risks include those described in the State Department Travel Warning, and are not limited to, risks associated with ground, water, or air transportation; adverse weather conditions; communicable disease; medical care; substandard building construction and maintenance; civil unrest; terrorism; war; and negligent or criminal acts of third parties. I understand that should any of these adverse circumstances occur, the result could include bodily injury, death, or property damage. I understand that West Virginia University cannot guarantee my safety, and I accept full responsibility for my health, safety, and property during the trip.

I acknowledge and understand that my choice is wholly voluntary, that the University offers other options for education abroad, and that **I am not required to travel to this location in order to satisfy any academic or other requirements for West Virginia University.**

In light of the above, I understand the risks associated with my choice to travel and hereby WAIVE any claim I may have at any time based on my travel to Location. Specifically, I hereby RELEASE, INDEMNIFY, AND HOLD HARMLESS the State of West Virginia; West Virginia University, including any component of the University, and its Board of Governors, officers, employees, students and agents; medical personnel, whether provided by WVU or not; and the heirs, predecessors, successors, and assigns of all of the persons and organizations listed here. I fully release all of these persons and organizations from any liability whatsoever. My waiver of rights includes giving up any claim that I may have, and any claim that any other person may have based on my choice to travel, including, but not limited to, parents, spouses, children and other relatives; my estate, personal representative or guardian; and insurers. My waiver releases all of the persons and organizations listed here from all liability, claims, demands, causes of actions, losses or damages, whether known or unknown, for bodily or personal injury or death, or damage

to or loss of property, or any other injury, damage or loss of any kind, resulting from, arising out of, or in any way related to my choice to travel, including any claim based on actual or alleged negligence, gross negligence, intentional, or reckless behavior.

This agreement is binding on myself, my heirs, my assigns, and personal representatives. I acknowledge that I am at least 18 years old, or, if I am not at least 18 years old, I understand that my parent or guardian must also sign this form where indicated to demonstrate his/her own agreement and understanding of the risks of travel to this Location.

x _____

Signature of Student

Date

If Participant is under 18 years of age:

I (a) am the parent or legal guardian of the above Student, (b) have read and understand the foregoing Acknowledgement of Risk and Waiver and Release Agreement, and (c) agree, for myself and for the Student, to be bound by its terms.

x _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date