



# International Travel Policy

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ADDRESSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

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## Introduction

The University supports and encourages International Travel by its faculty, students and staff while promoting safety and security measures that minimize risk to the traveler and the institution.

## Definitions

**Faculty/ Staff:** All full and part-time members of the faculty, including adjunct faculty, and staff employed by the University.

**International Travel:** Any travel outside of U.S. national borders, including U.S territories.

**International Travel Review Committee:** The University established an International Travel Review Committee (“The Committee” or “ITRC”) to evaluate the safety and security risks associated with International Travel. The Committee is responsible for reviewing all proposed restricted student travel. When making its decision, the Committee considers information from multiple sources including governmental reports, the University’s travel and security assistance providers, the University’s insurance carriers and other expert sources in providing relevant operational, legal and risk management advice to travelers.

**Permissible Travel:** International Travel to a country, region, or location that is not subject to a U.S. Department of State Rating Level 3 (“Reconsider Travel”) or Level 4 (“Do not Travel”).

**Restricted Travel:** International Travel to a country, region, or location that is subject to a U.S. Department of State Rating Level 3 (“Reconsider Travel”) or Level 4 (“Do not Travel”).

**Restricted Country:** Any country subject to a U.S. Department of State rating Level 3 (“Reconsider Travel”) or Level 4 (“Do not Travel”) or any country that has a region or area that is subject to a U.S. Department of State rating Level 3 (“Reconsider Travel”) or Level 4 (“Do not Travel”).

**Student:** Any undergraduate or graduate student who is enrolled in a degree program, credit bearing non-degree program, professional certificate or executive education program at the University.

**Travel Advisory:** The U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory system. Travel Advisories apply up to four standard levels of advice, give a description of the risks, and serve as the criteria for when an additional review of student travel is required.

The levels are:

- **Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions:** This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is some risk in any international travel. Conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States and may change at any time.

- **Level 2 - Exercise Increased Caution:** Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.
- **Level 3 - Reconsider Travel:** Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.
- **Level 4 – Do Not Travel:** This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the U.S. government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. The Department of State advises that U.S. citizens not travel to the country or leave as soon as it is safe to do so. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Travel Advisories can be accessed at:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>

**Tufts Affiliates:** Any individual involved in Tufts business, including Faculty and Staff (as defined above), Students (as defined above), as well independent contractors and other individuals with an official relationship with the University.

**Tufts Travel Registry:** The electronic registry travelers use to register their travel and trip details. This includes information such as trip dates, destination, emergency contact information, and itinerary and sponsoring department on campus.

**Unit:** Department, institute, program, organization, or school at Tufts facilitating or funding the International Travel.

**University-related international travel:** travel undertaken when an individual is acting in an academic or professional capacity relevant to the person’s area of responsibility, activities (including co-curricular and extracurricular), course of research, teaching, or study at Tufts or is undertaken with or organized by any Tufts organization, division, department, or office, even when that travel is not for an academic or professional purpose

## Scope of Policy

The Tufts International Travel Policy applies to all university-supported (by funds or equipment) or university-related International Travel, including but not limited to International Travel for research, educational, co-curricular, or administrative purposes (with or without student participation), international study, exchange programs, and student group travel (of any duration and whether offered for credit or not). This policy applies regardless of whether the International Travel is undertaken by faculty, staff, or students, and regardless of whether organized by schools, departments, faculty, staff, student organizations, or students individually.

For the purpose of this policy, as mentioned above, International Travel is defined as university-

related when the travel is undertaken because an individual is acting in an academic or professional capacity relevant to the person's area of responsibility, activities (including co-curricular and extracurricular), course of research, teaching, or study at Tufts or is undertaken with or organized by any Tufts organization, division, department, or office, even when that travel is not for an academic or professional purpose.

## Registration of International Travel

The University's Travel Registry is a confidential and secure database for maintaining key travel information for all Tufts Affiliates conducting International Travel. The Travel Registry is the official and authoritative source of traveler information that forms the basis for the University's emergency response protocols and communications strategy when responding to an emergency or critical incident abroad.

### Students

All students (graduate and undergraduate) participating in International Travel, as defined by this policy, are **required** to register their travel itinerary and emergency contact information utilizing the Tufts Travel Registry. Any travel changes prior to or during the travel must be updated as soon as reasonably possible.

### Faculty

All faculty members traveling with one or more student(s) are **required** to register their travel itinerary and emergency contact information utilizing the Tufts Travel Registry. Any travel changes prior to or during the travel must be updated as soon as reasonably possible. Registration for Faculty traveling alone is **strongly recommended**. Faculty members may book travel arrangements with a university preferred travel provider but should still utilize the Tufts Travel Registry to ensure their travel has been properly registered should an emergency occur.

### Staff

All staff members are **required** to register their travel itinerary and emergency contact information utilizing the Tufts Travel Registry. When traveling with one or more student(s), staff must also register their travel itinerary and emergency contact. Any travel changes prior to or during the travel must be updated as soon as reasonably possible.

## Travel Review for Restricted Travel

The University requires that all proposed Restricted International Travel be reviewed and approved by the University's ITRC if the student is receiving credit or funding or the travel is organized through a Tufts Unit. Students who are planning International Travel to a restricted country must request and obtain advance permission from the University through the ITRC. University funding or credit is contingent upon approval of the travel by the ITRC. No university funds will be released, and no university credit will be given prior to ITRC approval.

### Unit Applications

In cases where a unit is organizing an activity, the unit or faculty or staff member in charge is

responsible for ensuring that all participants have prior approval from the International Travel Review Committee. The faculty or staff member in charge may apply on behalf of all participants.

### Faculty/Staff

Faculty and staff who are planning to travel with students to a restricted country must request and obtain advance permission from the International Travel Review Committee. Faculty and staff planning travel without students to a restricted country should follow their department guidelines. Units cannot require an unwilling employee to travel on University business to a country that is subject to a U.S. Department of State Rating Level 3 (“Reconsider Travel”) and Level 4 (“Do not travel”). Faculty members intending to travel internationally are responsible for checking their destinations for any Travel Advisories in advance of travel.

### Travel Review Procedures

Students who are planning restricted international travel must request and obtain advance permission from the University. Students traveling on university-organized programs, such as Tufts Programs Abroad, the Global Health Placement at the Medical School, or the Global Service-Learning Program at the Dental School should follow their program’s guidelines on complying with this policy. Students are required to contact the respective school contacts for these programs and submit necessary materials in accordance with their requirements and deadlines.

Students and units applying for Travel Review are required to submit materials to the University’s International Travel Review Committee no later than four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled departure and in accordance with published submission deadlines. Airfare and flights should not be booked prior to receiving ITRC travel approval. The Committee will announce meetings for travel review and the respective deadlines prior to the start of each semester and post on the Global Operations website.

### Material for Travel Review

1. Purpose of Travel: Explain why travel to the location is essential to academic studies, research or work.
2. Proposed Travel Itinerary: Details of lodging arrangements, transportation to and from the location within the region and day-to-day transportation and activities and living arrangements.
3. Risk Mitigation Plan: Outline of risks as identified in the DOS Travel Advisory or [Tufts’ Global Assistance Provider’s](#) security information and mitigation procedures.
4. Security Briefing: Summary of a briefing with a [Global Assistance Provider](#) security analyst for the destination.
5. Communication: Comprehensive list of emergency contacts, both US-based and in-country, local contacts, and emergency communication plan.
6. Signed Waiver and Indemnification: Electronic signature on the Agreement, Assumption of Risk and General Release.

7. Additional materials: Any additional materials that would be useful for the ITRC to have as background in making a decision, such as any prior relationships that have been established with a site or host institution or maps of the region.

### Outcome of Review Process

Upon reviewing the submitted materials, the Committee may require applicants to take additional steps or alter their travel plans in order to obtain approval. Tufts may withdraw sponsorship should students fail to follow these recommendations. Should a Travel Review result in a denial of the travel request, a summary of reasons supporting the decision will be offered to the applicant or the applying unit.

### Sudden Change of Condition

The University reserves the right to suspend an ongoing or previously approved international activity for student, staff or faculty member if a significant health, safety, or security concern is raised regarding that experience. In making the assessment, the University will consider the risk management plan for the student, staff, or faculty involved in the activity and the balance between the value of the academic or professional experience in that specific location versus the risks associated with that location or activity.

It is possible that a specific program, activity in a specific location (city, region, or country), or all activities abroad would need to be modified or suspended by the University due to a health or safety concern. This concern may arise if conditions at a location have changed significantly as determined by the U.S. Department of State, Tufts' Global Assistance Provider, or other official entity. If conditions and accompanying risks of operating in a particular location change significantly, Global Operations will consult with relevant administrative units overseeing the activity, members of the Committee and other appropriate individuals to determine the best course of action. The final recommendation will be made by the Committee.

Typical recommendations may include, but are not limited to:

- No material program changes
- Modifications to program housing, activities, or schedule
- Suspension and withdrawal/evacuation

In cases where a new U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory changes after an activity has already been approved but prior to the starting date, every effort will be made to facilitate an emergency meeting of the Committee to conduct a thorough and timely review of the situation. If emergency action is needed immediately, Global Operations or the department's designated on-call representative will act to ensure that travelers' safety is protected and may advise or order postponement, suspension or evacuation, effective immediately. If a Tufts-affiliated program or office is impacted, Global Operations would work with the Office of Emergency Management, following the procedures enumerated in the University's current Emergency Operations Plan.

## Financial Responsibilities

Tufts University does not assume responsibility for financial risks associated with participation in its education abroad opportunities. If the University cancels a program before departure or while the program is in progress for reasons beyond its control including, but not limited to, political unrest or danger to participant safety, changes in Tufts' Global Assistance Provider's risk rating, or U.S. DOS Travel Advisory, only those recoverable fees or tuition refunded to the University by service providers or institutions will be returned to participants. The University will make reasonable efforts to obtain refunds from applicable service providers or institutions, but no refunds are guaranteed. In addition to lost fees and tuition, participants may incur additional travel expenses in connection with program cancellation. Participants may or may not receive academic credit if a program is canceled. The University assumes no responsibility for the financial or other losses of program participants resulting from program cancellation.

## Supplemental Insurance

Students, staff, and faculty are encouraged to consider supplemental insurance options to cover losses if programs or activities are canceled. Supplemental insurance is also helpful if a traveler needs to cancel an international trip or return early due to unforeseen personal emergencies. Such insurance is not required or arranged by the University and must be purchased on an individual basis.

## Waiver and Indemnification

All Tufts students participating in International Travel must sign a travel waiver form with Tufts acknowledging that they understand the risks of travel, affirming that they have reviewed and understand relevant safety-related materials, and acknowledge that they assume the risks related to their International Travel. Students may sign and submit this document electronically when registering their travel with Tufts Travel Registry or when submitting a Travel Review. Students under the age of 18 must obtain a parental or guardian signature on the form.

## Distribution and Change of Policy and Procedures

This policy should be made available to every person participating in university-related International Travel as defined by this policy. Tufts University reserves the right to change this policy and procedures in light of changing circumstances affecting travel, safety, health, or other matters related to the best interest of the University.