

# HIRAM STUDY ABROAD SAFETY HANDBOOK

## EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP)

The safety of students and staff is a fundamental priority for Hiram College. Therefore we must put comprehensive safety measures in place that will be useful in localized emergencies as well as in the wake of more serious occurrences. While some of the circumstances discussed in this plan are unlikely, it is prudent for us to be prepared for all possible events.

The plan will:

- 1) Enhance the safety of students and staff;
- 2) Take steps to assure communication and the ability of Hiram College to operate its programs in the event of a crisis; and
- 3) Reassure various constituencies, including parents, that we are prepared.

### I. Preparation

- 1) Trip Leader Responsibility – All faculty leaders of Hiram’s study abroad programs will implement the following policies:
  - Register all students and staff, unless they object, with their country’s Consulate in the district where the program is located.
  - Identify local hospitals, clinics, and/or trauma facilities in the program area.
  - Keep a photocopy of page one of the passport of each student to facilitate replacement in case of loss.
  - Create an emergency evacuation plan (See the Appendix for guidelines).
  - Identify a primary home emergency contact and inform the Study Abroad Office of the contact (only if this applies to your group situation)
  - Provide copies of the EAP to the trip leader’s primary home emergency contact and to Hiram College’s Study Abroad Coordinator.
  - Prepare a shortened version of this plan to be given to students prior to departure.
  - Include the following in orientation:
    - Information about preparations that have been made and the procedures for students to follow in case of an emergency.
    - Information and advice on personal security appropriate to the location.
    - The requirement that anyone who expects to be away from the program site overnight must inform the staff, roommate(s), and host family (whenever relevant), leaving an itinerary and contact information.
  - Obtain knowledge of alternative means of communication with the world outside of the host country.
- 2) Study Abroad Office Responsibility
  - Ensure the program leaders have prepared plans to continue the program at an alternative site or plans to terminate the program in the event of an emergency.
  - Make academic and financial arrangements appropriate to the particular program at the time of its termination after the students have been evacuated to safety.
  - Maintain a copy of the EAP.

### II. Decision-making in Time of Crisis.

- 1) In the event of a crisis in or near the location of the trip, the leader(s) should:
  - Locate all students and inform the Study Abroad Office about their welfare.

- Instruct students not to travel independently and to remain at a location where they can be reached.
  - Caution students to avoid unnecessarily alarming their families and others at home.
  - Contact the local consulate/embassy, or the local police, to become informed about the nature of the situation, including:
    - The safety for members of the study abroad program
    - The geographic proximity of the program to the crisis
    - The impact of the crisis on the quality of life (availability of food, potable water, medical supplies, the protection of law and order)
    - The need for evacuation and any measures that the U.S. is taking to evacuate its citizens.
  - Keep a chronological log of the crisis detailing what happened, what steps were taken, when they were taken, with whom staff members talked, and what follow-up actions were necessary. (The person keeping the log should note the time of each event as carefully as possible as well as the time at which the notes were written down and provide the log to the Study Abroad Office as soon as possible.)
    - Report the following to the Study Abroad Office:
      - How was the group affected by the crisis?
      - Do you know the whereabouts of all students and staff?
      - Were there injuries? Who was injured? What were their injuries? Have they been treated? Have the families of those affected been notified?
      - What is the extent of damage to the property of students or others with the program?
      - Who provided assistance at the emergency site? (fire department, police, government representatives, representatives of the U.S. consular staff)
  - Are there special circumstances associated with the emergency that continue to present a danger?
- 2) In case of attacks or other offences involving our students, immediately file a report with the police.
- 3) The Study Abroad Office will:
- Contact the State Department to identify alternative courses of action.
  - Contact other institutions with programs in that vicinity to discuss what action they are taking.
  - Request that Hiram College's campus emergency response team be called to decide the best course of action, including the possibility of evacuation. Once a decision has been made to evacuate, all students and staff members will comply with the evacuation procedures arranged by the College.
  - Notify the Office of College Relations. All public communications will be coordinated through the College Relations Office including responses to inquiries from relatives and the media.
  - Issue, in cooperation with the Dean of Students and the Director of College Relations, guidelines to staff about communicating with families.

**Steps to help you use your EAP more effectively in an emergency:**

- 1) **Remain Calm.** You will need a clear head in order to focus on your next move.
- 2) **Assess the situation.** Identify the nature of the emergency situation in which you find yourself. An emergency/crisis can be:
  - Personal: Accident/Injury, Illness, Family Problem, Sexual Assault, Kidnapping, Arrest, etc.

- Regional: Natural/Environmental Disaster, Civil Unrest, Political Uprising, Terrorist Attack.
- 3) **Take Action.** Follow the evacuation plan you have developed as part of your EAP to help remove you from the emergency and get you to a safer location where you can get help. Remember, elevators may not function, and electric doors may not open in the event of an emergency; make sure to map out escape routes in which you take the stairs (or wheelchair ramps) rather than elevators. Also, you may want to carry a handkerchief with you; a handkerchief may come in handy to cover your eyes, nose, or mouth from dust, smoke, or debris. Use your cell phone because phone lines may go down.
  - 4) **Get in touch.** Once in a safer and more stable location, update others about your situation. Get in touch with your emergency contacts so they can help you. Have them assist you in finding what you need (medical care, transport, etc.)
    - Keep Trying. If you cannot get anyone to help you (because phone lines are down, you are trapped, etc.) don't give up. Try alternate methods of communication and transportation until you are able to reach someone.
    - Take care of yourself. While you are waiting for your contacts to assist you, or in case you cannot reach anyone to assist you, use your emergency kit. Take out the supplies you need to keep yourself healthy (bandages, food, jacket, radio, etc). You may need additional/continuing medical care and/or personal/psychological counseling.
  - 5) **Move to a more permanent location.** After you have removed yourself from any immediate threat, regrouped at a safer location, and gotten in touch with your emergency contacts, you may need to move to a more permanent location for treatment/assistance. Consider your transportation options and get yourself to the appropriate location (hospital, police station, embassy/consulate, contact's home, etc.)
  - 6) **Stay in touch.** Maintain contact and update your emergency contacts on your condition. It would be useful to have a "communication tree" whereby your emergency contacts can collaborate to help you through the emergency situation.
  - 7) **Evaluate and revise your EAP.** After the emergency is over, and once your condition has stabilized, evaluate your EAP and use what you've learned to revise it in case of future emergencies (Please provide feedback to the Study Abroad Office about how other students might learn from your experience).

### **Special measures when there are terrorist or anti-American threats**

- 1) Eliminate any English language or any other indications that otherwise identify you as an American organization.
- 2) Call the American Embassy or Consulate at your location and ask them for their advice on any special precautions that are to be taken.
- 3) During orientation, students should be asked to take the following precautions:
  - a) Avoid congregating at American hangouts such as bars that might be targets for terrorists.
  - b) Avoid speaking loudly in English when walking with groups of other Americans
  - c) Avoid dressing in ways that readily identify you as American (e.g., baseball caps on backwards, American College sweat shirts.)
  - d) Exercise care in whom you invite to visit or how much information you give to strangers about the program and its location.
  - e) Be alert to any danger signs such as the presence of strangers behaving suspiciously, or of unidentified packages.
  - f) Keep abreast of local news through TV, radio, and newspapers
  - g) Stay in touch with the study abroad office so they can contact your group emergency contacts.

## APPENDIX

### Contents of the Emergency Action Packet

#### **Trip Leader – The Trip Leader should prepare an Emergency Action Packet that includes:**

1. Contact information for each location on the trip
2. Detailed evacuation plans showing possible routes from each location.
3. A safe, alternative site for the continuation of the program. The plan will also provide for the possibility that students and/or staff members may be unable or unwilling to evacuate.
4. Emergency contact information for each student (Each student will include the required information on their trip application form).
5. Copies of each participant's passport and visa (where applicable).
6. Copy of Insurance Card/Information
7. Copy of Area Maps/Safe Routes
8. Copy of emergency phone numbers
9. Location of the tentative meeting place in case of an emergency.
10. Copy of Traveler's Check Receipts (if applicable)
11. Copy of Driver's License

#### **Trip Participant – The following documents should be included in each traveler's EAP:**

1. Copy of Passport and Visa (where applicable)
2. Copy of Insurance Card/Information
3. Copy of Area Maps/Safe Routes
4. Copy of emergency phone numbers
5. Location of the tentative meeting place in case of an emergency.
6. Copy of Traveler's Check Receipts (if applicable)
7. Copy of Driver's License

#### **Items that each group should have available at all times:**

1. Communication Device(s)
2. Funds (Local \$s, US\$, Travelers Checks, ATM/Credit Card)
3. Basic Emergency/First Aid Kit (flashlight, water (or purification tablets), whistle, pocket knife (not on plane), adhesive bandages, elastic bandage (ace-type), antibiotic ointment, gauze pads, first aid tape, scissors, sun block, lip ointment, burn cream, acetaminophen or ibuprofen, am/fm radio, map, batteries, insect repellent, rain poncho, prescription/medication, thermal blanket, toilet paper, glasses, contacts/saline solution. (Varies by location and personal needs)
4. Surgical gloves

### **Some Tips for Creating Your EAP**

Ask yourself the following series of questions.

1. Where should you go first in an emergency, and what method of transportation will you use to get there?
2. Be aware of all your emergency transportation options. Know the numbers for the following: Airport, Taxi, Bus Station, Train Station, Metro Station, Rent-a-car, Boat/Ferry/Port Authority, Other.
3. Who will you call first, second, third, etc. in an emergency? In addition to your personal emergency contacts, we also recommend you look up/ask for the numbers for the following individuals and agencies nearest to your study abroad location(s): City or country's 24-hour 911 equivalent, Local government office/Visa office,

Consulate/Embassy, Police, Fire, Hospital, Post Office, Translator service, Lawyer, Red Cross, 24-Hour Assistance/Insurance, Hotline, Other.

4. Have you provided your emergency contacts with each other's phone numbers so they can communicate and relay information about you to each other?
5. Which of the following are communication options available to you?

Telephone	Cell Phone/Text Message	Fax
E-mail/Internet	PDA/Palm Pilot	Wire Service
Satellite Phone	Post Office/Express Mail Service	
6. Who are your emergency contacts?
7. Do all of your emergency contacts know what your wishes are in the event of your serious injury or other personal emergency?
8. Where is your nearest overseas contact, and how quickly can you get to him/her?
9. Do you have emergency cash reserves, travelers' checks, credit cards, etc. on-hand, in case you can't count on banks/ATMs?
10. Are there any other special conditions to consider which are unique to your situation (i.e. weather conditions/hazards in your region of study/travel, a personal physical handicap, poor public transportation or phone service in your area...)?
11. If the situation does not permit you to follow the original emergency plan, what is the back-up plan (*Plan B*)?
12. Which items do you still need to add to your emergency first aid kit before it is fully stocked and ready?
13. Using the emergency supplies and reserve money you have set aside, for how many days would you be able to sustain yourself, and what would you use each day?



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Print Name

Sign Name

Date

Cut on dotted line. Print, sign, and date to acknowledge you've read this and will supply the study abroad office with your emergency action plan prior to departure. Return slip of paper to the study abroad office.