



EMORY

Office of the General Counsel

*Representing Emory University  
and Emory Healthcare*

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## **GENERAL COUNSEL ADVISORY<sup>1</sup>**

**September 2003**

**TOPIC: Guidelines Regarding Security and Safety Considerations Arising from the Participation of Emory Students, Staff and Faculty in University-Organized Programs Involving International Travel**

In May of 2002, Emory University adopted its “Guidelines Regarding Security and Safety Considerations Arising from the Participation of Emory Students, Staff and Faculty in University-Organized Programs Involving International Travel” (“Guidelines”). These Guidelines are posted on the Emory University website on the Provost’s Office page ([www.emory.edu/PROVOST/policy\\_bylaws/travel\\_guidelines.htm](http://www.emory.edu/PROVOST/policy_bylaws/travel_guidelines.htm)).

The Guidelines are not meant to address every potential problem that might arise when traveling internationally, but rather, as the name implies, the Guidelines address general safety and security issues to consider when developing programs involving international travel. In addition, the Guidelines dispense more targeted guidance for programs involving travel to areas of heightened risk.

The existence of the Guidelines does not alleviate the need for each school to develop its own set of policies and procedures for programs involving international travel. The University recognizes that there are many different purposes and locations for international travel and that each one gives rise to a unique set of concerns. Consequently, each school and department is presumed (and encouraged) to have its own policies and guidelines, tailored to address the risks and considerations of its own programs. The school’s or department’s policies and guidelines though must be at least as stringent as the University’s Guidelines. If they are not, the University’s Guidelines will control. If a school or department does not have its own guidelines, then the University’s Guidelines will control as well.

The following is a short summary of the Guidelines.

### **Section I: Guidelines Regarding General Safety and Security Considerations**

These Guidelines apply to all “Emory University-Organized Programs” involving international travel. These are programs that are arranged and/or sponsored by the University.

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<sup>1</sup> General Counsel Advisories are general statements intended to alert the Emory Community or specific portions thereof about significant legal issues and to provide helpful guidelines for complying with legal standards in effect as of the issuance date of each advisory.

Individuals traveling independently should contact the Vice Provost for International Affairs directly. Each program (school, center, and office) is expected to maintain internal procedures for providing general safety advice to students and other participants, and for addressing routine health and safety concerns that typically arise in the context of international study. Such information should be tailored to the destination, purpose and type of traveler involved in each program. Additionally, program offices are encouraged to work with other available support structures, including the Office of International Affairs and the Office of General Counsel. All travelers in Emory University-Organized programs must complete appropriate consent forms available from the Office of General Counsel.

Additionally, all Emory faculty, staff and students traveling abroad should develop a specific contingency plan to be implemented in an emergency situation. These plans should include procedures for evacuation to safer areas, registration with consular officials, and for communicating with responsible parties in the U.S. Each plan must be submitted in writing to the program office and distributed to all program participants before departure.

## Section II: Guidelines Regarding Travel by Emory University-Organized Programs to Destinations Subject to a Critical International Situation

These Guidelines apply to Emory University-Organized Programs that involve travel to a country or region that may be subject to a “Critical International Situation” during the course of the program. A “Critical International Situation” is a situation that arises out of political, military, public health, natural disaster or other circumstance and poses a greater level of risk or danger to travelers than is usual in that country or region.

When applying these Guidelines, it is important to keep in mind that conditions that may necessitate the cancellation of one program may not necessitate the cancellation of all programs. Programs at one location may involve different types of activities and participants with different levels of training and experience.

- In general, a program held in a country or region that is the subject of a State Department travel advisory should be reviewed by the Executive Travel Safety Committee (which currently consists of the University President, the Provost and the General Counsel or the designated Associate General Counsel) for a determination as to whether that program should be continued or canceled. The Executive Travel Safety Committee may also review other programs where a Critical International Situation may arise. The overall procedure for review is outlined in Section II.D of the Guidelines, and is essentially as follows.

- The primary administrator of a program may, after consulting with the relevant Dean (or chief administrative officer), faculty and staff, call for a review of a program if that group believes that the location is or will soon be subject to a Critical International Situation. A State Department warning of the lowest level creates an obligation to review travel to that location. Section II.D.1(b) contains specific information about State Department warnings.

- Upon completion of the review by the administrator and the relevant personnel, a recommendation shall be drawn up on whether to continue, cancel or modify the program. The

recommendation should be forwarded to the Vice Provost of International Affairs, who will consult as needed with others at the University who might be affected by the decision.

- The Vice Provost will then forward his/her recommendation on whether to continue, cancel or modify a program to the Executive Travel Safety Committee. The University President, in consultation with this Committee, will make the final decision as to whether to continue, cancel or modify a program.

- Finally, if a program has been reviewed and the State Department advisory is still in effect at the beginning of the next semester, the program must be reviewed again, following the same procedure.

If you have any questions about this advisory or the Guidelines themselves, please call Carol McMahon at (404) 727-6012.