



University Employee Travel Abroad to State Department Level 3 or 4 Countries due to COVID

As many travelers know, most of the world's countries are State Department "Level 3: Reconsider Travel" or "Level 4: Do Not Travel" because community spread of COVID-19 remains high in those countries. Both levels of advisory carry risk, which is what the State Department is communicating to travelers.

While the University wants you to clearly understand that you **do not** have to travel to countries that are Level 3 or 4 specifically and only due to COVID-19, you are reading these guidelines because you are contemplating a trip to one or more of these countries. As such, if you decide to go, the University assumes you've explored the risk, considered it carefully, come up with a plan to enhance your safety (i.e., mitigate the risks), and made an informed choice to travel in those countries.

With that in mind, the University **strongly recommends** that you consider the following:

- The [State Department Travel Advisory](#) is Level 3 or 4 primarily because of COVID-19 incidence *and not for other common risk indicators, such as political violence, famine, civil unrest, crime, natural disaster, etc.*
- You have received and maintain proof of FDA Emergency Use or Approved COVID-19 vaccine.
- Observe all COVID-19 public health measures all the time from departure through return, including masking, distancing, avoiding crowds, avoiding poorly ventilated areas, and hand washing and sanitizing.
- The host country's healthcare infrastructure is *resilient* (resource: [SOS International](#)). You want to be assured that quality medical care is available throughout the country and that specialist care, emergency and dental services, and quality prescription drugs are widely available.
- The host country's COVID-19 case rate is *moderate* (resource: [Brown School of Public Health](#)). Compare with the U.S. case rate.
- The host country's COVID-19 vaccination rate is *moderate* (resource: [University of Oxford](#)). Compare with the U.S. vaccination rate.
- Be prepared in advance to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test to board the plane before departure to the host country as well as show proof of a negative test to return to the U.S, as per host government and entry requirements (resource: [US Embassy Directory](#)).
- The host country's *quarantine requirements* are reasonable (resource: [US Embassy Directory](#)). Be prepared to satisfy the requirements.
- Register online with the State Department's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#).
- Consider establishing contact with the nearest [U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#) upon your arrival in host country.

- Determine your host country's 911 equivalent. If possible, determine the locations of the nearest hospitals and clinics in the areas of your travel.
- Enroll in iNext international health insurance that covers medical and accidental expenses in Level 3 or 4 countries, including emergency quarantine coverage. The cost is rather low. Contact Dr. Ryan Larsen, Director of Education Abroad, for details. ryan.larsen@wwu.edu
- Contact your primary medical insurance provider to review your plan to know, in advance, what coverage you have for COVID-19 and other potential injuries and illnesses while abroad, and what procedures and notifications are needed to access care and have it covered.
- Contact Bruce Boyer, Workers Compensation Manager, to review available workers compensation benefits for a work-related illness or injury while abroad and what procedures and notifications are needed for coverage. bruce.boyer@wwu.edu