

Confirmation of Travelers Database Registration E-mail

Dear MSU Traveler:

My name is Julie Friend and I am the Travel Security Analyst for the Office of Study Abroad and the Center for International Programs. One of my primary responsibilities is to serve as first responder for any staff, faculty, or student emergency abroad.

Your college or department has just registered your upcoming international travel in the MSU Travelers Database. While I hope that your time abroad will be trouble-free, if you need assistance, please do not hesitate to call the 24/7 International Emergency Assistance line at 517-353-3784. An MSU police cadet will take your call, note your needs, and contact me (or another appropriate MSU official) who will then return your call.

Security Alerts

If you have not already done so, I strongly urge you to [register your travel](#) with the [U.S. Department of State](#). Situations like the 2004 Southeast Asian tsunami, the 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict, and the 2007 earthquake in Sichuan, China, demonstrate the importance of State Department registry. Also, as a result of your registration, you will be able to receive emergency information from the relevant Embassy or Consulate via e-mail.

Health Issues

The [MSU Travel Clinic](#) provides faculty, staff, and graduate students with travel health services. For information on required and recommended vaccinations for your area, refer to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). For travel to South Africa, please read the [Travel Health Advisory](#) from Dr. Beth Alexander, University Physician, regarding XDR-TB.

Stay current with the [World Health Organization's](#) announcements regarding H1N1 flu. Educate yourself about [pandemic flu](#) and follow Dr. Beth Alexander's infectious disease prevention strategies. Direct your questions about traveling and H1N1 flu to the MSU Travel Clinic at (517) 353-3161 or travelclinic@ht.msu.edu.

Medical Insurance Abroad

MSU employees have [MEDEX coverage](#) for university-sponsored international travel. Graduate Teaching Assistants generally have coverage for university-sponsored international travel under [Aetna](#), but check your coverage dates carefully. Other graduate students should contact the Office of Risk Management at (517) 355-5022 to sign up for coverage through [HTH](#) to receive the same comprehensive coverage as study abroad participants.

MSU employees should create a user profile with [MEDEX](#). Click on "group" then "member center login." Your policy ID to get into the member center is 2254016. Such access will allow you to research medical facilities in your location abroad. You can even inquire about the country's supply of H1N1 flu testing kits and access to antiviral medications such as Tamiflu or Relenza.

Whatever your employment status, please review insurance coverage limitations. Faculty and staff should note that the cost of emergency treatment is not covered by MEDEX. Coverage is limited to evacuation, repatriation, and the coordination of benefits with your domestic provider. In most cases where emergency medical treatment is required abroad, you will be expected to pay upfront. MEDEX will then work with your domestic provider to obtain reimbursement (if this is a benefit provided in your domestic plan). Authorized medical evacuations are covered if local emergency treatment facilities are considered inadequate. Keep in mind that most of our emergencies abroad are a result of illness or injury, so plan accordingly. Record MSU's MEDEX ID number, 22540, and the 24/7 Emergency Assistance number (410-453-6330) in a useful

location, or pick up a MEDEX card from the Office of Risk Management (113 Olds Hall), the Travel Office (370 Admin), or my office in the Int'l Center (Room 4, basement).

Remember, too, that MEDEX coverage is limited to the time you are traveling on university business. If you choose to tack on personal travel, either before or after your employment-related travel, I strongly suggest you purchase international health insurance coverage for those particular dates. Coverage can also be purchased for a spouse or dependants traveling with you. While routine medical care is unlikely to be costly abroad, the cost of emergency treatment, hospitalization, evacuation, or repatriation can range from \$1,000-\$50,000. Numerous insurance organizations provide such coverage, but the three companies with which I have experience are:

- [Highway to Health](#)
- [MEDEX](#)
- [SOS International](#)

Communication Plans

If you do not own an international cell phone or do not have access to one on-site, look into international phone rental. Costs are becoming more and more competitive. The best way to find a quality provider is to talk with your travelling colleagues after searching via Google.

MSU Equipment/Materials

Keep in mind that if you are traveling with controlled equipment or materials (e.g. global positioning systems, encrypted software, or select agents), you may be in violation of federal law. Review the [Office of Export Controls & Trade Sanctions](#) web site or contact Ron Russell at 432-4500 to discuss federal restrictions or limitations related to your destination.

Country Background Information

Read the [State Department Consular Information Sheet](#) and the [Country Background Notes](#) for your destination. For comparative information, you may wish to consult the [Australian Department of Foreign Affairs](#), the [Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade](#), or the [UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office Consular Reports](#).

MSU offers many resources regarding [international travel](#). I highly recommend the "[Know Before You Go](#)" document as well as the [Global Access Database](#), where you can connect to a variety of country-specific resources.

Should you have any questions about health, safety, or security abroad, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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