



STUDY & INTERN ABROAD PROGRAMS

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HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDE

KEI is committed to the health and safety of our students. We understand your concerns about going abroad. We are closely monitoring the current world situation. Our On-Site Staff in Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Australia are in constant contact with local authorities and the U.S. Embassies/Consulates. In addition, our New York staff receives information from the U.S. Department of State, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Association of International Educators (NAFSA), USC's Center for Global Education (SAFETI Clearinghouse), and the World Health Organization (WHO). KEI safety and health policies and emergency response plans are based on regular communication, reliable information, and well-planned actions.

KEI programs include **medical and travel insurance**. Coverage is provided through the World Class Study Abroad Plan administered by Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI). Visit the KEI Health & Safety webpage (www.keiabroad.org/programs/health-and-safety/) to download a description of the CISI insurance. (Note that some universities in the USA require their students enrolled in the university-provided insurance. In such cases, CISI insurance may not be included with the KEI program.)

This document contains answers to frequently asked questions regarding health and safety abroad, an outline of the KEI Emergency Response Plan, tips on having a safe and healthy experience, and suggestions for parents. You will find more specific information about your program location in the KEI program-specific Pre-departure Guide, which will be provided to students after they enroll in the program.

If you would like to speak with us in more detail about our safety, health and emergency policies and procedures, please do not hesitate to call 1-800-831-5095, Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM EST.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is it safe to study abroad?

Safety is of utmost importance to us. KEI monitors current world events closely, especially news that can affect our program locations. If a situation does become dangerous KEI will act in such a way as to ensure safety for our participants, and, if deemed necessary, suspend the program and make arrangements for students to return home. For more specific information about your program location, please read your *Program Predeparture Guide*.

How does KEI monitor student safety abroad?

KEI relies on continued information and communication with several reliable sources, including our on-site staff, local authorities, U.S. Embassies, U.S. Department of State, NAFSA, SAFETI, WHO, and CDC. Students are informed of any known dangers before departure through the KEI literature and pre-departure guides. KEI also registers students with the U.S. Department of State prior to their departure.

Students are required to notify the KEI on-site staff about independent travel and to leave their contact information. In addition, the On-site Staff addresses health and safety issues during on-site orientation and holds meetings with students throughout the program.

The Onsite Director addresses health and safety issues during the orientation and holds meetings with students throughout the program. If traveling away from the site, students are required to notify the KEI staff about intended travel to leave their contact information.

KEI gives students a mobile phone or SIM with a local phone number, which allows students to make calls at their convenience and make it easier for our onsite staff to contact students. Refer to the *KEI Services, Policies & Procedures Guide* for more information about mobile phones/SIMs.

How does COVID affect study abroad and how does KEI mitigate risk?

COVID-related restrictions have been lifted in all countries where KEI operates programs. Students are advised to be current on their COVID-19 vaccination (as well as all other vaccinations).

What is included in the medical and travel insurance provided by KEI?

The CISI World Class Study Abroad Plan is a comprehensive medical and travel insurance policy. Refer to the CISI Insurance overview guide for specifics about policy inclusions and exclusions. *Note that some universities in the USA require students to enroll in their university-provided insurance plan. In such cases, KEI does not enroll students in CISI. Students should contact the education abroad office at their university for more information.*

Does KEI recommend additional medical and/or travel insurance?

The CISI policy is comprehensive but does have some exclusions, including coverage for pre-existing medical conditions, dental and mental health care. Students should familiarize themselves with the CISI policy and seek additional coverage if needed.

Due to the uncertainties with travel, KEI also recommends students consider CFAR (Cancel For Any Reason) and IFAR (Interrupt For Any Reason) insurance. CFAR is a policy that protects your purchase before you depart for your KEI Abroad experience. IFAR is a policy that protects you from the day of departure until the end of your program.

Is there anti-American sentiment abroad?

In general, Americans are well liked by the local people. Most of our students find that people in the host country are eager to make friends and share their culture. While locals may demonstrate against U.S. policy and question U.S. politics, these protests and discussions are usually aimed at the U.S. government

rather than the people. We believe that political discussions about international policy are a beneficial part of studying abroad, allowing our students to view the USA from an outsider's perspective and better understand the role of the USA, and themselves, in the global community. Of course, every country, including the USA, has people who express strong anti-American views. Students are advised to avoid such people and refrain from participating in public demonstrations.

What happens if there is an emergency?

KEI developed an emergency response plan to deal with high-risk situations. The emergency response plan is placed into action if KEI determines that the program location is not safe for students. KEI protocols for program cancellation and student evacuation closely adhere to standards used by the study abroad industry. A public outline of the plan is described in the Emergency Response section of this document.

What is a DOS Travel Advisory?

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) Travel Advisories alert U.S. citizens to possible health and safety risks abroad, and provide suggestions for travel to specific destinations. See here: <http://www.travel.state.gov/> The DOS Travel Advisories are an important source, but not the only factor, in determining program cancellations.

Do I receive a refund if KEI cancels the program?

KEI's refund policy is in line with the industry standard. The refund policy is described in detail in the *KEI Services, Policies and Procedure Guide*, which can be downloaded from the KEI website - www.keiabroad.org/about-kei/policies-procedures/. Students should also refer to the COVID page (www.keiabroad.org/covid19/) for updates on program cancellation and refunds as it relates to COVID.

What happens if I become sick or injured abroad?

Students are asked to inform the On-Site Staff in the event of illness or injury. Whenever possible, our staff will assist students in obtaining medical care and prescription medication. In the event of serious illness or injury KEI will assist the student and his/her family in making arrangements to return home. KEI provides comprehensive medical and travel insurance for each student for the duration of the program. Students enrolled in multiple term programs are also covered during scheduled school breaks between consecutive terms. Coverage ends on the last day of the program.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

KEI developed a comprehensive response plan for dealing with emergency situations. The plan outlines protocols for program cancellation and student evacuation during periods of heightened risk, including onset of war, natural disasters and health epidemics. The Emergency Response Plan was developed by our Health and Safety Committee (HSC) using resources and advice from NAFSA, SAFETI, CDC, U.S. Department of State, local police and health organizations, and our host institutions.

The HSC continually monitors health and safety advisories from the U.S. Department of State and the Centers for Disease Control as well as government agencies in countries where KEI operates programs. In addition, our in-country staff monitor developments at the host location and alert the HLC in the event of heightened health and safety concerns. Emergency protocols are initiated if and when the HSC determines that a program location is unstable and/or unsafe for students.

KEI Health & Safety Committee

Eduard Mandell, President & Managing Director

Alcidean Arias, Associate Director of, Institutional Relations
Sol Kodsi, Legal Counsel
Dr. Patrick Mulindi, Onsite Director in Kenya
Dr. Daniele Katz, Onsite Director in France
Nancy Yanez Olarte, Onsite Director in Peru

Emergency Response Plan

Below is an outline of our Emergency Response Plan. Students are provided with a detailed plan of action prior to the program departure date and during the program orientation.

- KEI Program Managers and/or KEI Onsite Directors notify the HSC of any emergency or event that impacts a KEI program location(s) and/or nearby region(s). The HSC must be notified even if the situation is not imminent but has the potential of impacting a KEI program.
- The HSC makes a determination regarding the best course of action and assigned responsibilities to staff members to execute the action plan.
- Depending on the situation, an official message (approved by the HSC) is sent to home universities and parents (when appropriate) whose students are participating in the KEI program affected by the emergency situation.
- Calls from media, universities, and parents are to be directed to the following staff, in the order listed: KEI President & Managing Director, Associate Director of Institutional Relations, and Legal Counsel.

Things to Consider

Students should designate their parents or legal guardians as emergency contacts so that information regarding emergencies is automatically distributed to parents/legal guardians. Emergency contact information is requested on the program Application form. It is equally important for students to provide accurate and current contact information for themselves and their parents. To update any of your contact information provided to KEI, please call our NY office and speak with your Program Manager.

HEALTH & SAFETY TIPS

Living abroad can be an exciting, rewarding and enjoyable experience. Most of our participants comment that studying abroad greatly influenced their views of the world as well as their own countries, and helped them grow as people, students and future professionals. While living in a different country it is important to remember that you are subject to the laws, customs and norms of that country. Using common sense and following basic rules about safety can greatly enhance your experience and help avoid potential problems. While we do everything we can to provide health and safety information, ultimately it is the student's responsibility to follow our suggestions and guidelines. Below is a list of safety and health tips that we recommend students should follow.

Be Informed and Be Alert

It is always smart -- no matter where you are (at home or abroad) -- to take note of what is going on around you, including out-of-the-ordinary people and events. Be sensible. Make changes to your daily routines to avoid potentially dangerous situations. Be especially alert at night; stay on well-lit streets, avoid subways, buses, and train stations, do not walk in empty parks or areas, and travel with a friend or in a group!!

Travel Smart

Whenever possible, travel with a friend(s). There is always safety in numbers. Make sure to tell someone

where you are going, preferably the KEI On-Site Coordinator. Review maps to determine the route you will take before you go out. Looking lost or confused, or fumbling with a map or guidebook can make you vulnerable. Plan where you are going before you leave.

Keep a Low Profile

Learn the customs of the host country, especially norms that dictate fashion, acceptable clothing, and proper behavior (which may be gender specific).

Some questions to ask yourself:

- (1) Do people in this culture dress formally or informally?
- (2) What is considered appropriate clothing for this culture for a person of my gender and my age?
- (3) What are the general colors/style of clothing that are appropriate/typical?
- (4) On what occasions do people in this culture dress differently?

You should also be aware of differences in manners and actions that would make you stand out unnecessarily as a foreigner. Endeavor to learn some words in the native language as much as possible; most everyone appreciates it when foreigners do so. If you feel anti-American sentiment, avoid wearing clothing that identifies you as an American. This includes t-shirts with U.S. flags, college sweatshirts, blue jeans, baseball caps, etc. Try to stay away from U.S. establishments, including companies and food franchises. In general, keep a low profile.

Be Aware of Pickpockets and Scam Artists

Pickpockets tend to work in crowded places as a group. While one person distracts you, the other goes after your valuables. Be alert in public places, tourist locations and public transportation - a favorite with many pickpockets. Beware of strangers who approach you, are overly friendly, very loud, offer bargains, or offer to be your guide. If in a confined area, be assertive and elbow your way out. Protect your valuables by using a money belt, and wearing your backpack in front of you rather than on your back.

Use a Money Belt

We cannot stress this enough. Wallets are easy to steal for professional pickpockets. You will not even know it is gone until you need it. But, a money belt worn around the waist underneath your clothes is virtually impossible to pickpocket without alerting you to the action. Most money belts have a pocket for your passport, documents and money. Use a money belt, and avoid unnecessary worries!

Keep Important Information with You

You should have the following information on your person at all times, preferably kept in your money belt.

- On-Site Coordinator contact information, including mobile telephone.
- Address and direction card for the host university and your residence.
- Address and contact information for the nearest embassy or consulate.
- Personal identification, preferably not your passport (unless required by the laws of the host country). A student identification card usually works well.
- KEI Emergency Contact information.
- Health insurance card and information.
- Make photocopies of important documents: passport, airline tickets, health insurance card, student ID and other important documents. Make sure to keep this information in a safe place, preferably not with the original documents. Do not carry them with you. Mail, fax or email a copy to the KEI New York office before your departure. You will need this information if your wallet or backpack is lost or stolen.

Say No to Drugs

In most countries, possession or transportation of drugs is a very serious offense (just as it is in the U.S.), often resulting in jail (and even execution). Do not, under any circumstances, use illegal drugs! You should also take care that you don't leave your baggage unattended under any circumstances, lest someone put something in it; don't allow others to use you as a scapegoat.

Make Copies of Important Documents

Make a photocopy of your passport, airplane tickets, health insurance card, student ID and other important documents. Make sure to keep the copies in a safe place, preferably not with the original documents. Do not keep them with you. For added security, you can mail, fax or e-mail a copy to the KEI New York office before your departure. You will need this information if your wallet or backpack is lost or stolen. Remember, having copies of important documents will make their replacement much, much easier.

Keep Up with Current Events

Be aware of current events in your host and home countries. Political and international events may influence how people view and act towards you. Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances.

Tips for Female Students

Many countries have very traditional customs and norms that govern how men and women interact. While you may not agree with these customs, you should learn to respect and follow the laws and social norms of the host country. In addition, you should...

- Research the norms governing social behavior in the host country before the program.
 - Dress in clothes that blend in with the locals.
 - Don't ask strangers for help. If you need help, ask an authority figure, a woman or a couple.
 - Look confident.
 - Avoid unsafe neighborhoods and places.
 - Leave immediately if you find yourself in a dangerous situation.
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TIPS FOR PARENTS

We encourage parents to take an active role in helping their children prepare for study abroad. Being involved in your child's program will not only better prepare you in the event of an emergency, it will also alleviate some anxiety for both yourself and your child. Below are some helpful tips to get you started.

- Become familiar with the program by reviewing program literature and KEI website. Most of the literature can be downloaded from the website or mailed to your home address. Contact our office if you have any questions or concerns.
- Research the host location. The U.S. Department of State and Centers for Disease Control websites contain reliable information about each country, and general information about travel and safety.
- Stay informed. Keep current on world events, especially as they relate to the program location. Watch the news. Read foreign press releases. Many foreign news organizations have an English website.
- Discuss safety, health, insurance and emergency procedures with your child.
- Make sure you have a valid passport (in case of emergency requiring travel to the site, it will speed your travel abroad). Your child must also have a valid passport.
- Make a copy of your child's passport and legal documents. Keep them in a safe place.

- Discuss behavior issues with your child. Review and understand KEI policies regarding behavior and suspensions. Keep in mind that your child will be living under a different set of cultural norms, laws and social expectations.
- Discuss independent travel plans and activities with your child.
- Have your child's flight itinerary handy.
- Make sure you have contact information.
 1. KEI New York office phone number and email.
 2. Phone number for the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest the host university.
 3. Your child's email address.
 4. Local contact information, including your child's mobile telephone number, other local numbers and mailing address. Make sure your child provides you with this information when he/she arrives at the host location.
- Make sure KEI and your child has your contact information, including office and home phone numbers and email. You may also want to provide contact information for a neighbor, close relative, and/or good friend that will be able to reach you in case of emergency.
- Stay in touch with your child and KEI on a regular basis.