



# **EMERGENCY ACTION PROTOCOL: GUIDELINES TO PROTECT HEALTH & SAFETY WHEN ABROAD**

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## **PURPOSE**

It is ultimately the responsibility of everyone traveling abroad under the auspices of Gallaudet University to take the necessary steps to avoid situations that may put themselves or others in danger. However, because the nature of emergencies is that they are usually unforeseen, it is the purpose of this document to provide foresight on the proper steps to take when faced with an emergency situation. Because Gallaudet does not want members of its community to be isolated in a foreign country in the event of an emergency; information, resources, and support can be found here.

For the purposes of the guidelines, “Gallaudet University” or “Gallaudet community” also includes people from the Clerc Center: the Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (KDES) and Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD). The guidelines bind all members of the Gallaudet community who travel abroad to study, conduct research, or to represent the institution: students, faculty, teachers, staff, volunteers, and members of the Board of Trustees (Gallaudet Travelers).

See **Appendix A** for a list of defined terminology and contact information for the University’s response team.

## **EMERGENCY DEFINITION**

An “emergency” includes:

- (1) Death **under any circumstance**;
- (2) Injury or illness that either requires hospitalization or the inability to continue with the purpose of the trip;
- (3) Diagnosis of an infectious disease;
- (4) Emotional or psychological conditions that require removal from the program;
- (5) Misconduct that requires removal from the program;
- (6) Becoming a victim of a serious crime, such as assault or rape (theft is generally not considered a serious crime);
- (7) Being accused of committing a crime, or receiving a subpoena or warrant from authorities;
- (8) Sudden evacuation in response to an emergency in the United States; and
- (9) Change in the Travel Warning issued by the U.S. State Department that affects the country or region where anyone from the Gallaudet community is located.

Guidelines are focused on protecting the health and safety of those traveling abroad, but people may perceive a situation to be an “emergency” when danger is not apparent (such as a homesick student). The scope of the guidelines covers any situation—including a wide scale incident either in the United States or at an overseas location—that causes serious concern about the health and safety of a large number of people: e.g., political uprising, natural disaster, act of war, or other event causing or threatening harm to the foreign traveler. For clarity, these situations will be referred to as a “crisis” rather than “emergency.” In the event of a crisis situation, the campus Crisis Leadership Team (CLT) is responsible for the response.

Nothing in the guidelines precludes other communication between the Gallaudet Travelers and members of the Gallaudet community. Discussion about academic activities, changes in an itinerary, or requests for non-emergency assistance is both expected and encouraged.

## GALLAUDET TRAVELERS

These guidelines will not extend to someone who happens to be connected to the Gallaudet community through personal circumstances, such as a vacation. People traveling under the auspices of Gallaudet University include:

- 1) An employee who both receives a W-2 tax form and payroll compensation during the trip (including sabbaticals, but not administrative leave) and is traveling for Gallaudet duties.
- 2) A spouse or domestic partner of an employee, but only when traveling with the employed spouse or partner and when doing specific duties for the benefit of the program participants during the trip.
- 3) A person who volunteers to help with the trip, provides experience and knowledge to the group, has clear duties and responsibilities, and is approved by dean who approved and sponsored the trip (Responsible Dean).
- 4) Students who are traveling for academic credit or as part of a provost-approved extracurricular Gallaudet activity.
- 5) A member of Gallaudet's Board of Trustees who is representing Gallaudet in the official capacity of a trustee.

Travelers may be required to sign a participation agreement in **Appendix B**. All travelers are required to have health insurance (with international coverage) during the trip.

## EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

Gallaudet University recognizes that an effective emergency response often requires a team approach. The University's emergency responders are represented by:

- 1) Research Support and International Affairs (RSIA)
- 2) The Department of Public Safety (DPS);
- 3) The Office of Risk Management & Insurance (RM);
- 4) The Crisis Leadership Team (CLT);
- 5) The supervising faculty or staff member (Supervisor);
- 6) The Responsible Dean
- 7) The Office of Communications and Public Relations (PR); and
- 8) The President's Office (President).

Team members may also be assisted and supported by other experts, if appropriate, to ensure an effective response to the emergency.

In the event of a crisis situation, the campus CLT is responsible for the response.

### **Research Support and International Affairs (RSIA)**

An important function of Research Support and International Affairs (RSIA) is to offer and oversee international and intercultural education opportunities for students and faculty. The unit also serves as the point of contact for international partnerships, visitors, and scholars. To facilitate these

objectives, RSIA has centralized Gallaudet's international resources, bringing all global initiatives to one location. The unit comprises the operations of global education and scholar services, international student services, and Fulbright Program, World Deaf Leadership (WDL), and Sasakawa International scholarships. Specifically, RSIA:

- Offers services for students, faculty, visiting students, scholars, researchers, and professionals to enhance their expertise and knowledge of international issues related to deaf people and people with disabilities.
- Helps ensure that international students are in compliance with current immigration regulations.
- Oversees Fulbright, WDL, and Sasakawa scholarships. Fulbright, an educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government, promotes the mutual exchange of ideas between the U.S. and other countries through studying, teaching, and research. WDL and Sasakawa, both funded by the Nippon Foundation, provide scholarships to Gallaudet students from developing nations. WDL students must demonstrate the ability to become international leaders and improve the lives of deaf people in their home country or elsewhere.

If you are looking for study abroad or travel forms, please [click here](#).

#### **Department of Public Safety (DPS)**

DPS is a key communication link between Gallaudet and the foreign site. The supervisor abroad must immediately alert DPS of an emergency. Likewise, campus officials will ask DPS to alert the Supervisor abroad of a stateside emergency. DPS will alert the RSIA director. DPS dispatch is staffed 24 hours/7 days a week, and it will make every reasonable effort to facilitate communication between the Gallaudet campus and members of the University community overseas.

#### **Office of Risk Management & Insurance (RM)**

RM is the conduit between Gallaudet University and its institutional insurance broker and insurers. RM also assists with prevention efforts by evaluating contracts with tour operators, vendors, and collaborators; offers suggestions on health, safety, or weather issues; provides safety information and resources to those within the Gallaudet community who plan to travel overseas; and keeps copies of insurance and signed participation agreements for each traveler. RM also monitors the environment of host countries through the U.S. Department of State's Travel Advisories and Warnings ([www.travel.state.gov/](http://www.travel.state.gov/)) and, in case of a change in warning status, works with DPS, the Responsible Dean, RSIA, and the CLT Chair to determine the necessary action.

### **Crisis Leadership Team (CLT)**

The CLT Chair represents the Crisis Leadership Team in an emergency situation, participates in response decision making, and determines whether the situation is instead a crisis, in which case full CLT involvement is warranted. After consulting with the Responsible Dean, the CLT Chair also decides whether to notify and/or involve the President and Provost. If so, the CLT Chair will consult with them and determine further action.

For a situation deemed to be a “crisis,” the campus Crisis Leadership Team is responsible for managing the situation. Members of the CLT include:

1. Dean, Student Affairs and Academic Support (chair)
2. Director, Department of Public Safety (vice chair)
3. President
4. Provost
5. Vice President, Administration & Finance
6. Vice President, Clerc Center
7. Executive Director, Gallaudet Technology Services
8. Executive Director, Communications and Public Relations
9. Executive Director, Gallaudet Interpreting Services
10. Director, Counseling and Psychological Services
11. Manager, Insurance and Risk Management
12. Faculty representative
13. Staff Representative

### **Supervising Faculty or Staff (Supervisor)**

Some faculty and staff members travel alone. For the purposes of these guidelines, each single traveler is a “Supervisor.” When traveling alone, it is even more important to consider personal safety and tap available Gallaudet resources while planning the trip.

On other trips to foreign countries, a faculty or staff member will be responsible for the program, travel arrangements, and who will escort the participants. Any trip involving more than ten (10) participants requires a second Supervisor. The Supervisor(s) will address academic, passport, and logistical information, and health and safety issues with all travelers.

See The D.C. Health Department @ <http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,A,1374,Q,580184.asp>; the resources listed in **Appendix C**.

The Supervisor should tap RSIA and RM resources during trip planning to provide full health, safety, and emergency response information to Gallaudet Travelers. RM should also review any contracts with collaborating institutions, tour operators, or other vendors.

Gallaudet requires at least one pre-trip orientation, and it recommends that the Supervisor conduct a post-trip debriefing to assess whether academic goals were achieved, if there are additional ways to educate and support Gallaudet Travelers, and if there were unanticipated risks that can be addressed prior to future trips.

The Supervisor is also responsible for complying with the law during the trip. This includes ensuring that travelers have appropriate passports and visas, that equipment and materials can pass into the foreign jurisdiction (and then return stateside), and that the program activities are conducted in accordance with local law.

The Supervisor must also leave four (4) critical pieces of information with DPS at least one (1) week prior to departure.

- 1) A traveler roster that includes faculty, staff, students, and volunteers on the trip.
- 2) The group's itinerary and the Supervisor's and others' contact information at each location.
- 3) A contingency plan for the particular location that comprises contact information for the U.S. Consulate (See <http://usembassy.state.gov>), the local host or tour operator, the city or country's equivalent of a 9-1-1 emergency contact, local medical clinics and hospitals, police and fire agencies, local interpretation services, and a map showing the best evacuation route from the primary location to a designated safe haven.
- 4) Copies of passports/visa numbers for all travelers on the roster.

Once abroad, the Supervisor is the communication link to campus. Gallaudet University expects prompt notification to DPS of any emergency situation and full cooperation in the emergency response. After the emergency has passed, information about a successful or unsuccessful response to an emergency can be given to the CLT, DPS, RSIA, PR, Responsible Dean, and RM for inclusion in the debriefing.

### **Responsible Dean**

The Dean (Clerc Center or Gallaudet) responsible for the program sponsoring those traveling abroad is a key communication link within the academic unit and to the Provost. He or she may serve as the spokesperson to the media, if the President or Provost are not involved, and is likely to

respond to parents, faculty, and other students who are looking for information and assurance. In this role, the Responsible Dean must work closely with PR.

Following an emergency, the Responsible Dean is charged with ensuring that Gallaudet's academic and other programs get back to normal. This may entail granting additional leave to faculty or staff, rescheduling classes or faculty assignments, or approving extra expenses, if necessary.

### **Communications and Public Relations (PR)**

The Department of Communications and Public Relations is a key communication link with the media. If possible, all written statements to the media and the Gallaudet community should be distributed exclusively through PR, though other members of the emergency team can review and comment on a draft message. This might include a memorandum to the community in the *Daily Digest* online campus news or distributed through email, a campus alert via email/pager, or a notice on the Gallaudet website. Part of the purpose of this written communication is to notify and reassure members of the Gallaudet community without disrupting the emergency response or interference with other PR operations.

All verbal or ASL-signed statements to the media, government officials, parents, or other constituencies shall be made by the President, Provost, Responsible Dean, or, in the case of the Clerc Center, the Vice President. PR also provides other assistance and support as needed during the response to an emergency.

### **President's Office**

The President is the key communication link with Gallaudet University's Board of Trustees. The President's actual role may depend upon the seriousness of the emergency and its impact on both Gallaudet and its stakeholders. The President may serve as a spokesperson to the media, members of Congress, alumni, and donors and major funders. The President may serve as the source of information and reassurance to the Gallaudet and deaf communities through town hall meetings or Vlogs. The President may also be able to provide other forms of assistance and support as needed during the response to an emergency.

## TRAVEL EXPECTATIONS

Each person traveling abroad under the auspices of Gallaudet University must take his or her personal health and safety into account when planning and preparing for the trip. Employees and volunteers of Gallaudet, as well as University students over the age of 18 years, are expected to:

- 1) Avoid travel to any countries on the U.S. Department of State's Travel Warning List;
- 2) Register their travel itinerary with the U.S. Department of State at <http://travelregistration.state.gov>;
- 3) Acknowledge that all travel activities involve risk, that Gallaudet cannot eliminate risks or guarantee complete safety; and that Gallaudet will not endeavor to monitor all personal decisions and activities during the trip;
- 4) Acknowledge that laws and customs vary from country to country and that the traveler will become familiar with, and respect, these laws and customs;
- 5) Research the risks of their trip and consult with appropriate specialists (such as a physician) to ensure safe participation;
- 6) Research any special needs or accommodations (such as vaccination requirements for service animals) that may be required for the trip, and notify the program about them;
- 7) Read Gallaudet's policies for the travel program, ask questions if a policy or instruction is unclear, and comply with all policies;
- 8) Obey the laws of the United States and all foreign jurisdiction(s);
- 9) Create a personal communication plan with an adult family member or close friend to ensure information flows stateside in the event of an emergency;
- 10) Make sure that the Supervisor has a list of the traveler's medications, allergies, and medical conditions for release to emergency responders;
- 11) Take responsibility for his or her personal conduct, and the liability for such conduct, when overseas;
- 12) Purchase health insurance that covers hospitalization and medical care in the foreign jurisdiction, medical evacuation, and repatriation of remains;
- 13) Bring health and safety concerns to the attention of the Supervisor as soon as possible during the trip; and
- 14) Observe safe practices during the trip.

All adult students and volunteers are required to read and sign a participation agreement, which is attached as **Appendix B**.

Maturity, cooperation, and observance of safe practices are also expected from students below the age of majority (18 years). Parents or legal guardians of these minors from the Clerc Center (KDES and MSSD) must see that they comply with each expectation above, and read and sign a participation agreement, also found in **Appendix B**.

## PRE-TRIP REQUIREMENTS

Although each person traveling abroad under the auspices of Gallaudet University must carefully plan the trip and assume some risk, Gallaudet University helps and supports each traveler by:

- 1) Sharing information from past trips to Gallaudet Travelers;
- 2) Assigning an experienced faculty or staff member for trips that include student travelers and a second supervisor for more than 10 travelers;
- 3) Requiring all Supervisors to know basic first-aid/CPR, have a basic command of the native language to communicate with emergency responders (or have an available translator with the group), be familiar with the special contingency plan created for the trip, and be thoroughly versed in these guidelines;
- 4) Requiring Provost or Responsible Dean approval for any hazardous activities overseas, which may include driving a vehicle, participating in contact sports, pursuing academic activities that involve chemicals or power tools (such as through activities in a chemistry lab or performing community service), or housing students in private homes during the trip;
- 5) Requiring Supervisors to give DPS relevant contact information and itineraries during the trip before the group sets out;
- 6) Keeping copies of passports/visa numbers, airline information, and credit card numbers stateside that can be made available in an emergency;
- 7) Sponsoring at least one pre-trip orientation, during which the Supervisor describes the required activities and educational or other purpose of the trip, outlines deadlines for trip participation (such as payment of fees, required vaccinations, evidence of passports and insurance, request for accommodations, signed participation agreement, etc.), describes customs and laws of the jurisdiction(s), identifies risks of travel, suggests ways to minimize each risk, and makes resource material available for each traveler's personal research. **Appendix C** lists available resources;
- 8) Offering these guidelines and special information for a specific trip or country;
- 9) Offering written guidance and answers to specific questions by RSIA and RM to Gallaudet Travelers, on a timely basis;
- 10) Monitoring U.S. State Department Travel Warnings during each trip;
- 11) Providing resources to notify people who need information and reassurance; and
- 12) Coordinating with the U.S. State Department, institutional insurers, and other Gallaudet resources to resolve an emergency situation.

## IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

The Supervisor will remain calm, remove the individual(s) from danger, provide appropriate medical care, notify local authorities in the foreign jurisdiction and the U.S. Consulate in the country, and notify DPS. The Supervisor must cooperate with emergency response instructions, attend to the needs of any other travelers, and, as practicable, create a log or other documentation of the response activities.

# APPENDIX A

## Crisis Leadership Team (CLT)

A. Dwight Benedict (chair) [dwight.benedict@gallaudet.edu](mailto:dwight.benedict@gallaudet.edu)

Ted Baran (vice-chair) [ted.baran@gallaudet.edu](mailto:ted.baran@gallaudet.edu)

## Department of Public Safety (DPS)

Hours of Operation 24 hours each day, 7 days per week

(202) 651-5555 (voice/videophone)

[dps@gallaudet.edu](mailto:dps@gallaudet.edu) (text)

[dps@gallaudet.edu](mailto:dps@gallaudet.edu) (email)

(202) 651-5444 (tty)

## Non-Emergency Lines-Communication Center

(202) 651-5444 (tty)

(202) 651-5445 (voice)

[dps@gallaudet.edu](mailto:dps@gallaudet.edu)

## Gallaudet Travelers

Those people traveling under the auspices of Gallaudet University

## Human Resources (HR)

Elaine Vance [elaine.vance@gallaudet.edu](mailto:elaine.vance@gallaudet.edu)

## Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (KDES)

(202) 250-2761 (Videophone)

(202) 651-5206 (Voice)

(202) 651-5646 (Fax)

(202) 651-5425 (*en Español*)

## Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD)

(866) 954-4138 (Videophone)

(202) 651-5031 (Videophone/Voice)

(202) 651-5109 (Fax)

(202) 651-5425 (*en Español*)

Research Support and International Affairs

(202) 651-5150 (voice)

Office of Risk Management & Insurance (RM)

Pam Rypkema [Pamela.rypkema@gallaudet.edu](mailto:Pamela.rypkema@gallaudet.edu)

President's Office (President)

[president@gallaudet.edu](mailto:president@gallaudet.edu)

202-250-2837 (Videophone)

202-651-5005 (Voice)

202-651-5508 (Fax)

Communications and Public Relations (PR)

Catherine Murphy [Catherine.murphy@gallaudet.edu](mailto:Catherine.murphy@gallaudet.edu)

Responsible Dean (RD)

The Gallaudet or Clerc Center Dean who approved the foreign trip

United States location (Stateside)

Supervising Faculty or Staff (Supervisor)

The individual who is responsible for planning and leading the trip and responding to an emergency situation

## APPENDIX B

### Gallaudet University Participation Agreement & Waiver Form

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Gallaudet University wants each study abroad experience to be rewarding, but also safe. Much of this depends upon the foreign traveler. In exchange for my participation in Gallaudet University's program, I \_\_\_\_\_ agree that I:

- Am legally an adult (over age 18) and responsible for my decisions and personal conduct. I understand there is a real or perceived risk of injuring another person, or damaging property owned by another, and I assume full responsibility for my conduct and any resulting liability.
- Have researched the risks of the trip and consulted with appropriate specialists (such as my physician) to ensure my safe participation.
- Will comply with the laws and customs of all jurisdictions entered into during my trip.
- Have read and understood Gallaudet's policies for travel abroad and promise to comply with all policies and any additional instruction given by the person supervising the trip.
- Will ask questions and seek out additional information if a policy, rule, or other instruction is unclear, and I will cooperate with any educational or disciplinary issue that arises.
- Understand every activity involves risk. I have considered the risks of travel and the foreign environment and purchased appropriate insurance. I voluntarily assume all consequences of all such risks, and I promise to immediately inform the person supervising the trip about health or safety concerns and to actively cooperate with any plan to alleviate such concerns.
- Have created a personal crisis plan with an adult family member or close friend, and have established this individual as a designated contact in the event of an emergency situation. I have communicated my plan with family and friends and asked them to communicate stateside with my designated contact.
- Understand that Gallaudet University is not responsible for the theft, damage, or other loss of my personal property. I understand that insurance exists for this risk.
- Agree to waive any and all claims against Gallaudet University and its employees or agents. These claims include, but are not limited to, those seeking compensation or reimbursement for personal injury, property loss, property damage, death, or other loss sustained during the trip.

(Continues on Reverse Side)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, knowingly agree to the statements in this Participation Agreement and Waiver Form and, in exchange for participation in the program, I voluntarily assume all risks involved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student or Volunteer Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Printed Name)

**Emergency Contact Information --**

Name of Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Traveler: \_\_\_\_\_

Pager or Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Medications, allergies, or medical conditions that the travel supervisor should be aware of in case of emergency: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Clerc Center Participation Agreement & Waiver Form

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The Clerc Center wants each study abroad experience to be rewarding, but also safe. Much of this depends upon the foreign traveler. In exchange for my participation in the overseas program, I \_\_\_\_\_ agree that I:

- Will make my son, daughter, or ward (all of whom are referred hereafter as “Child”) understand that he or she must be responsible for decisions and personal conduct overseas and that there is a real or perceived risk of injuring another, or damaging property owned by another. I am responsible for my Child’s conduct and any resulting liability.
- Will research the risks of the trip and consult with appropriate specialists (such as my physician) to ensure my Child’s safe participation.
- Will require my Child to comply with the laws and customs of all jurisdictions entered into during the trip.
- Have read and discussed the travel policies with my Child, and I promise to require full compliance with the policies and additional instruction given by a supervising adult to my Child.
- Have encouraged my Child to ask questions and seek out additional information if a policy, rule, or other instruction is unclear, and to cooperate fully with any educational or disciplinary issue that arises during the trip.
- Understand every activity involves risk. I have considered the risks of travel and the foreign environment and purchased appropriate insurance. I will require my Child to immediately inform the person supervising the trip about health or safety concerns and to actively cooperate with any plan to alleviate such concerns.
- Have created a personal crisis plan with my Child to facilitate contact with him or her during an emergency situation. I have communicated the plan with other family members.
- Understand that the Clerc Center is not responsible for the theft, damage, or other loss of my Child’s personal property. I understand that insurance exists for this risk.
- Agree to waive any and all claims against the Clerc Center, Gallaudet University, and their employees or agents. These claims include, but are not limited to, those seeking compensation or reimbursement for personal injury, property loss, property damage, death, or other loss sustained during the trip.

(Continues on Reverse Side)

I knowingly agree to the statements in this Participation Agreement and Waiver Form and, in exchange for participation in the program, I voluntarily assume all risks involved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Legal Guardian Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Printed Name)

### Emergency Contact Information --

Name of Parent or Legal Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Pager or Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Other Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Traveler: \_\_\_\_\_

Pager or Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

[www.globaled.us](http://www.globaled.us)

<http://travel.state.gov>

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1765.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html)

<http://usembassy.state.gov>

[www.osac.gov/ResourceLibrary/index.cfm](http://www.osac.gov/ResourceLibrary/index.cfm)

[www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

<http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,A,1374,Q,580184.asp>

[www.ciee.org](http://www.ciee.org)

[www.asirt.org](http://www.asirt.org)

[www.miusa.org](http://www.miusa.org)

[www.gallaudet.edu](http://www.gallaudet.edu)