

Government Connection: Monitoring Travel Advisories and Conditions Abroad During COVID-19

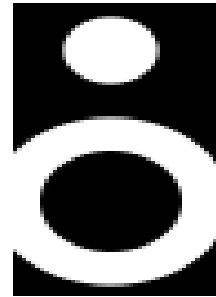
August 12th, 2PM Eastern Time



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Government Connection: Monitoring Travel Advisories and Conditions Abroad During COVID-19

August 12th, 2PM Eastern Time





Jason Hope

Director of International
Health,
Safety and Security
University of Kentucky



**Timothy
Starkweather**

Country Officer, Office of
American Citizen Services,
U.S. Department of State



Beth Klimow

Country Officer, Office of
American Citizens Services
Department of State



Allison Cash Spiro



Caroline Donovan White

Agenda

- Welcome
- Audience Poll
- Consular Safety and Security Messaging
- Risk Analysis, Policy Changes and Lessons Learned
- Discussion
- NAFSA Resources, Advocacy, Upcoming Events



Consular Safety and Security Messaging

Beth Klimow & Tim Starkweather
Country Officers
Office of American Citizen Services



What is our goal?



travel.state.gov/travelsafely



Safety and Security Messaging Strategy



Messaging Products



Access to Consular Messaging

Travel Advisory for every country

One Country Page helps U.S. citizens make informed decisions for themselves about their travel

Alerts sent by posts to inform people about security scenarios

Mobile-friendly for tablets and smartphones

Simple Language with clear actions for U.S. citizens to take

Standard format worldwide used by embassies and consulates for consistent advice on what action to take



One-stop country page

One-stop country page on *travel.state.gov*



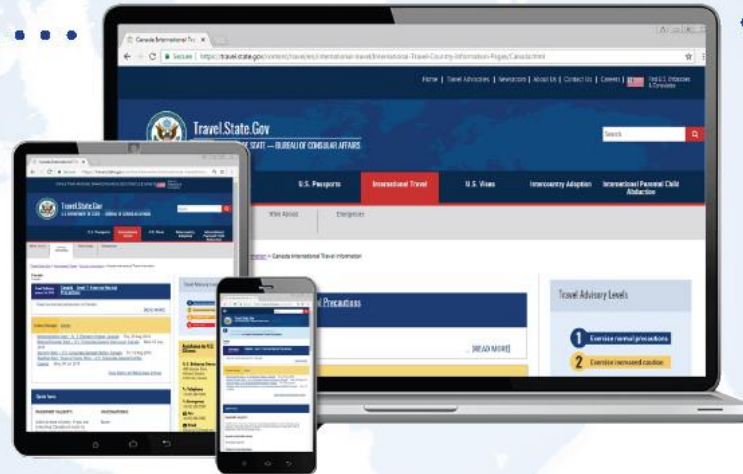
TRAVEL
ADVISORY FOR
EACH COUNTRY
AT LEVELS 1-4

- Level 1 – Exercise Normal Precautions
- Level 2 – Exercise Increased Caution
- Level 3 – Reconsider Travel
- Level 4 – Do Not Travel



AND MORE

- Emergency contact numbers
- Entry and exit requirements
- Health and transportation information



ALERTS

- Specific safety/security concerns, like demonstrations and weather events
- Streamlined format allows quicker release to public, easier to find and understand

travel.state.gov/destination



Country Page - Travel Advisory

Home | Travel Advisories | Newsroom | About Us | Contact Us | Careers | Find U.S. Embassies & Consulates

Travel.State.Gov
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE — BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS

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Before You Go Country Information While Abroad

Travel Advisory Levels:
Level 1 – Exercise Normal Precautions
Level 2 – Exercise Increased Caution
Level 3 – Reconsider Travel
Level 4 – Do Not Travel

[Travel.State.Gov](#) > [International Travel](#) > [Country Information](#) > Republic of X

Travel Advisory September 11, 2018 **Republic of X - Level 2: Exercise Increased Caution** T U

Exercise increased caution in Republic of X due to **terrorism** and **civil unrest**.

Terrorist groups may conduct attacks with little or no warning, targeting tourist locations, transportation hubs, markets and shopping facilities. Attacks may occur on remote islands which could lengthen the response time of authorities.

A country-wide state of emergency is in effect. Security forces have been deployed to prevent public gatherings and have also been reported where political prisoners are being held.

Read the Safety and Security section on the [country information page](#).

If you decide to travel to Republic of X:

- Avoid demonstrations and crowds.
- Monitor local media for breaking events and be prepared to adjust your plans.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Stay alert in locations frequented by Westerners.
- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive Alerts and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Follow the Department of State on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- Review the [Crime and Safety Report](#) for Republic of X.
- U.S. citizens who travel abroad should always have a contingency plan for emergency situations. Review the [Traveler's Checklist](#).

Risk Indicators:

- C – Crime
- T – Terrorism
- U – Civil Unrest
- H – Health
- N – Natural Disaster
- E – Time-limited Event
- K- Kidnapping
- O – Other

Travel Advisory Levels

- 1 Exercise Normal Precautions
- 2 Exercise Increased Caution
- 3 Reconsider Travel
- 4 Do Not Travel

Interactive map shows Travel Advisory levels

Republic of X Country Map

Assistance for U.S. Citizens

Travel Advisory – COVID Information

Canada Travel Advisory

Travel Advisory
August 6, 2020

Canada - Level 3: Reconsider Travel



Reconsider travel to Canada due to COVID-19.

Read the Department of State's [COVID-19 page](#) before you plan any international travel.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Level 3 Travel Health Notice for Canada due to COVID-19.

Canada has lifted stay at home orders, and resumed some transportation options and business operations. Visit the Embassy's [COVID-19 page](#) for more information on COVID-19 in Canada.

Read the [Country Information page](#).

If you decide to travel to Canada:

- See the [U.S. Embassy's web page](#) regarding COVID-19.
- Visit the CDC's webpage on [Travel and COVID-19](#).
- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive Alerts and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Follow the Department of State on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- Review the [Crime and Safety Reports](#) for Canada.
- Prepare a contingency plan for emergency situations. Review the [Traveler's Checklist](#).

Last Update: Reissued with updates to COVID-19 information.



COVID Information on Embassy Web Pages

Last updated August 3, 2020 at 2:38pm EDT.

[COVID-19 – Visa Services and Restrictions](#)

[Information on COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

[July 16, 2020 – Travel Restrictions Fact Sheet: COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions across the U.S. Borders with Canada and Mexico](#)

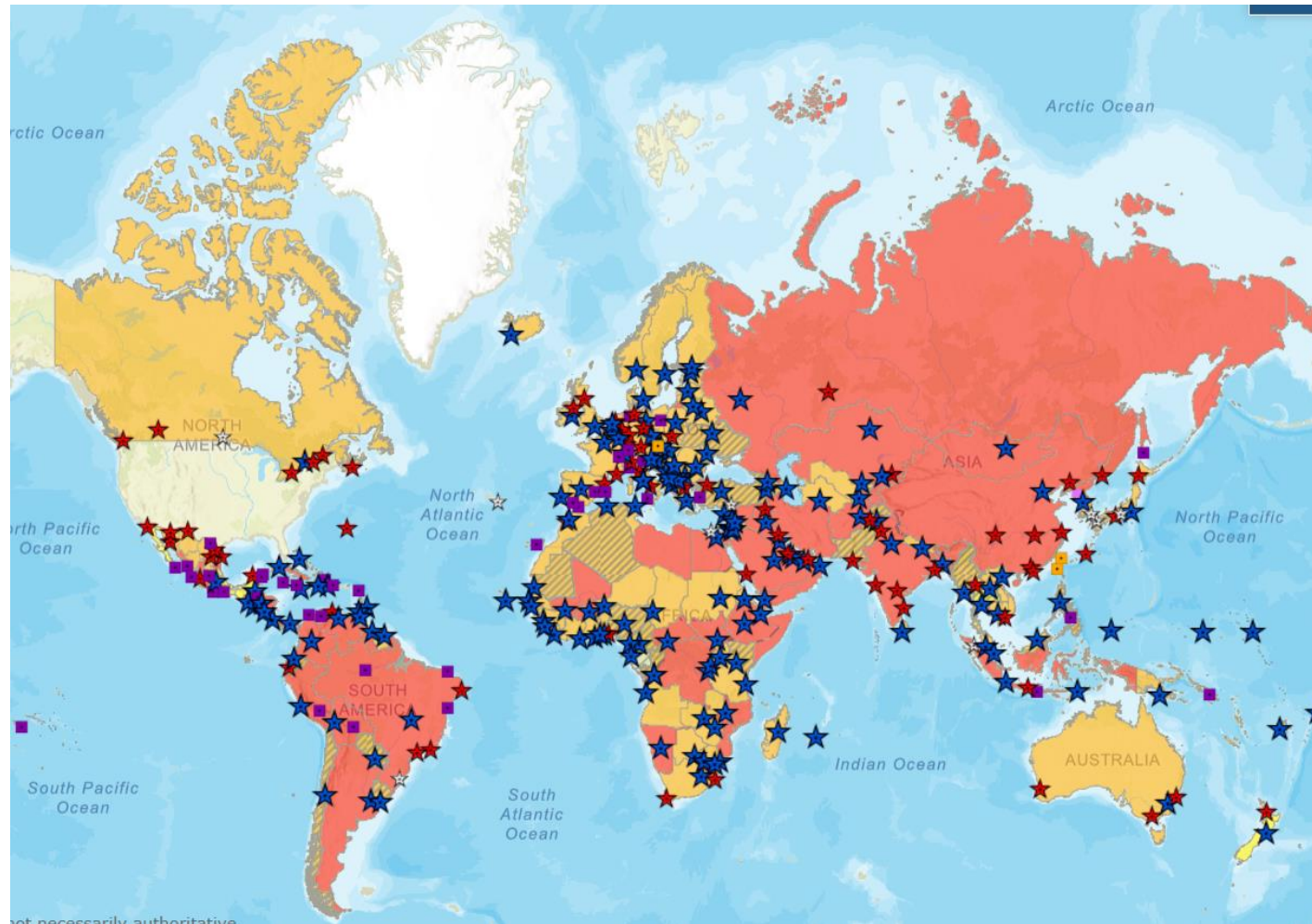
[March 20, 2020 – U.S.-Canada Joint Initiative: Temporary Restriction of Travelers Crossing the U.S.-Canada Land Border for Non-Essential Purposes](#)

Country-Specific Information:

- Canada has confirmed cases of COVID-19 within its borders.
- On July 16, the United States and Canada announced a mutual agreement to extend restrictions on non-essential travel across our shared border for an additional 30 days.
 - “Non-essential” travel includes travel that is considered tourism or recreational in nature. “Essential travel” still permitted includes: work and study, critical infrastructure support, economic services and supply chains, health, immediate medical care, and safety and security.
 - U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, and individuals with valid travel documents will be exempted.
 - Trade and business travel will continue to operate across our borders, ensuring workers and



Travel Advisory Map



travelmaps.state.gov



Alerts

Alert Features



Mobile-friendly



Improved format



Standard language

Example:

Republic of X: X City: Possible Demonstrations on April 21, 2019

Location: XYZ area in W Governate

Demonstrations are expected to take place in the XYZ area in the W Governorate beginning Friday morning, April 21, 2019.

Actions to Take:

Avoid demonstration areas.

Assistance:

U.S. Embassy in Republic of X: +123 456-789
123 W Street.

State Department:

1-888-407-4747 (within the U.S. & Canada)
1-202-501-4444 (outside the U.S. & Canada)

[Republic of X Country page](#) (Dept. of State)

[Travel Advisories](#) (Dept. of State)

[Sign up in STEP](#) to receive security updates

Sign up – ***STEP.state.gov***



State Department Resources

Overseas Emergencies

- Nearest U.S. embassy or consulate: ***travel.state.gov/destination***
- Overseas Citizens Services | Washington, D.C.:
U.S. & Canada - 888-407-4747
Outside U.S. - 1 202-501-4444

Visit us Online

Consular Affairs:

travel.state.gov

STEP.state.gov

careers.state.gov/ca

OSAC:

OSAC.gov

ECA:

studyabroad.state.gov

exchanges.state.gov

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Risk Analysis, Policy Changes and Lessons Learned from COVID-19

Jason Hope – Director of International Health, Safety & Security
University of Kentucky

August 12, 2020



Landscape of Policy & Risk Analysis

January 2020



Undergraduate students may only engage in educational travel in countries or regions where the U.S. Department of State has issued a Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) Advisory or where the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) have issued a Warning Level 3 after completion of a mandatory review process and with the approval of the Associate Provost for Internationalization in consultation with the college dean or designee. Undergraduate students may not engage in educational travel in countries or regions where the Department of State has issued a Level 4 (Do Not Travel) Advisory.

- *University of Kentucky Administrative Regulation 4:9*

Implications:

- Department of State and CDC advisories are the two formal guideposts that the University uses in making programmatic risk decisions
- The University is bound by these advisories in considering where to allow programming (*consider senior administration's perspective*)
- If an advisory changed during a program, then what...?

The Old Way of Using Advisories

“Is it safe in ...?”

Advisories and other risk analysis sources were traditionally used to understand if a place was safe for the purpose of building a future program there.

Though these decision points were subject to change, they were *relatively* stable.

Consider the timelines under which EA offices operate- we plan programs months in advance (at least!). Traditionally, advisories could help us understand long-standing risk issues in host countries, and if they did change, we could react on a case by case basis. They told us at a general level whether a country or region was “safe.”

But COVID-19 upended that completely. Have you heard anyone talking about “COVID time?”

What Does the Future Hold?

What is on the horizon for the coming winter and spring terms? How do we plan?

Broaden our risk analysis horizons to include as many sources as possible

- OSAC Crime & Safety Reports
- OSAC listservs and the Academia Working Group – real time updates
- British, Australian, Canadian, etc. government resources
- Private sector organization resources – daily changes

What do we need to do to ensure we can cancel programs a month before they depart? A week before?

Fundamentally – what policy changes do we need to make to be able to make quicker and more agile decisions around programs? And how do we gain the trust of our administrations in being empowered to make those decisions (or at least have our recommendations accepted)?

From an International Crisis to an Institutional Crisis – Decision Making

Every major international crisis eventually reaches a tipping point where it moves from being something managed by the International Center to being managed by the central administration (e.g., student death, COVID-19). At UK, this tipping point was reached on March 12th- the day of the EU executive order.

- This is almost certainly an ‘institutional crisis’ at every university. Decision-making power may no longer lay with international offices.
- It is *critical* that International Center voices are at the table when this inflection point is reached. How can you ensure that you are at that table?
- Senior administrators may not understand the nuances of travel advisories, differences between Department of State and CDC Warnings, cultural nuances on-site, or program types.
- The easy answer for senior administrators is ‘no.’ But what does that mean for the future of international mobility? How can we influence the institutional conversation?

Q&A with Panelists



Jason Hope

Director of
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Safety and Security
University of Kentucky



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Country Officer,
Office of American Citizen
Services, U.S. Dept of State



Beth Klimow

Country Officer,
Office of American Citizens
Service, U.S. Dept of State



Allison Cash Spiro

Reminders

- Today's Government Connection was recorded and will be available to watch on demand within 48 hours.
- Download the handout from today's presentation in the "files" section.
- Continue today's conversation in the Education Abroad Knowledge Community Network – visit www.nafsa.org/eakcnetwork

SAVE THE DATE

- August 19 – NAFSA webinar: Navigating Career Transitions and Professional Development www.nafsa.org
- August 20 – NAFSA Government Connection: Understanding CDC Travel Health Notices and Guidance for Travel Abroad www.nafsa.org/governmentconnection
- October 8 – NAFSA Virtual Workshop Student Health and Safety Abroad
- October 15 – NAFSA Virtual Workshop Risk Assessment and Crisis Management in Education Abroad www.nafsa.org/workshops



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