

## **LaGrange College Travel Warning Policy** updated October 2023

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The U.S. Department of State issues Travel Advisories for certain countries and regions; LaGrange College realizes these government advisories identify health, safety, and security risks for students, faculty, and staff traveling abroad.

LaGrange College monitors U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories and Center for Disease Control Health Notices and uses such pronouncements as a basis for evaluating whether College-sponsored study away should be cancelled. The institution uses information provided by these two government agencies to assist in assessing travel risk.

All questions pertaining to travel in regions that are currently under a Travel Advisory or Health Notice or could be placed under such designation in the near future should be directed to the Vice President for Academic Affairs who will consult with Global Engagement and the Global Engagement Risk Management Committee.

The Global Engagement Risk Management Committee is composed of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Finance and Operations, and the Vice President for Student Enrollment and Student Experience. This team will assess activities in high-risk locations, which include but are not limited to those that have been issued a Travel Advisory by the U.S. Department of State or a Health Notice by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). When requested to evaluate activities in a particular country or region, the team may consult relevant faculty and staff, as well as external resources such as [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), [Overseas Security Advisory Council](#) (OSAC), the College's insurance carrier, local contacts and government in those countries, and other national governments such as [Australia](#), [New Zealand](#), [Canada](#) and the [U.K.](#)

### **GUIDELINES FOR APPROVING TRAVEL TO COUNTRIES UNDER A STATE DEPARTMENT TRAVEL ADVISORY AND/OR A CDC HEALTH NOTICE**

Even though the U.S. Department of State references U.S. citizens in its Warnings and Alerts, these guidelines apply to LaGrange College community members of all nationalities. Decisions of the Risk Management Committee are guided primarily by consideration for the health, safety and security of the LaGrange College community.

Those considering international travel should familiarize themselves with political, health, crime and other safety-related conditions prevailing in any country and specific locations within the country(s) to be visited. The [U.S. Department of State](#) provides travel information on all countries and, as necessary, will issue a Travel Advisory for U.S. citizens under certain conditions:

**Security and Safety Travel Advisories** apply up to four standard levels of advice, describe the risks, and provide clear actions U.S. citizens should take to help ensure their safety.

**Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions:** This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is some risk in any international travel. Conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States and may change at any time.

**Level 2 - Exercise Increased Caution:** Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

**Level 3 - Reconsider Travel:** Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

**Level 4 – Do Not Travel:** This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the U.S. government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. The Department of State advises that U.S. citizens not travel to the country or to leave as soon as it is safe to do so. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

**Varying Levels:** The State Department may issue an overall Travel Advisory level for a country, but levels of advice may vary for specific locations or areas within a country. For instance, they may advise U.S. citizens to “Reconsider travel” (Level 3) in a country, but to “Exercise increased caution” (Level 2) in a particular area within the country. In this case, the Risk Management Committee may approve travel to that specific area. If this scenario is flipped, the Risk Management Committee may not allow travel to that specific area.

**Risk Indicators:** Travel Advisories at Levels 2-4 contain clear reasons for the level assigned, using established risk indicators and specific advice to U.S. citizens who choose to travel there. These are:

- **C – Crime:** Widespread violent or organized crime is present in areas of the country. Local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.
- **T – Terrorism:** Terrorist attacks have occurred and/or specific threats against civilians, groups, or other targets may exist.
- **U – Civil Unrest:** Political, economic, religious, and/or ethnic instability exists and may cause violence, major disruptions, and/or safety risks.
- **H – Health:** Health risks, including current disease outbreaks or a crisis that disrupts a country’s medical infrastructure, are present. The issuance of a Centers for Disease Control Travel Notice may also be a factor.
- **N - Natural Disaster:** A natural disaster, or its aftermath, poses danger.
- **E - Time-limited Event:** Short-term event, such as elections, sporting events, or other incidents that may pose safety risks.
- **O – Other:** There are potential risks not covered by previous risk indicators. Read the country’s Travel Advisory for details.
- **K – Kidnapping or Hostage Taking:** Criminal or terrorist individuals or groups have threatened to and/or have seized or detained and threatened to kill, injure, or continue to detain individuals in order to compel a third party (including a governmental organization) to do or abstain from doing something as a condition of release.

LaGrange College will not accept applications or allow travel to countries or regions within countries that are **Level 3, Reconsider Travel**, or **Level 4, Do Not Travel**. If a Level 3 or 4 Travel Advisory is issued after programs have been planned and approved, but prior to departure, LaGrange College may suspend or cancel programs or ask if it can be relocated. If participants are already on site, LaGrange College may suspend or cancel programs and instruct the affected participants to leave the country as soon as possible.

**CDC Travel Health Notices** inform travelers about current health issues that impact their health, like disease outbreaks, special events or gatherings, and natural disasters, in specific international destinations.

There are four levels of Health Notices that align with the Department of State Travel Advisories:

**Level 1: Practice usual precautions** Practice usual precautions for this destination, as described in the Travel Health Notice and/or on the [destination page](#). This includes being up to date on all recommended vaccines and practicing usual precautions.

**Level 2: Practice enhanced precautions.** Practice enhanced precautions for this destination. The Travel Health Notice describes additional precautions or defines a specific population at risk.

**Level 3: Avoid all non-essential travel.** Reconsider nonessential travel to this destination. The outbreak or event poses risk to travelers because limited precautions are available.

**Level 4: Avoid all travel.** Avoid travel to this destination unless traveling for humanitarian aid or emergency response; there is an extreme health risk for travelers and no available precautions.

LaGrange College will not accept applications or allow travel to countries or regions within countries that are at a **Level 3, Avoid all non-essential travel** or **Level 4, Avoid all travel**. If a CDC Level 3 or 4 is issued after programs have been planned and approved, but prior to departure, LaGrange College may suspend or cancel programs or ask if it can be relocated. If participants are already on site, LaGrange College may suspend or cancel programs and instruct the affected participants to leave the country as soon as possible.

**COVID-19:** It is highly recommended that all students who study away be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. This will decrease the risk of getting and spreading the disease in communities they will be visiting.

**Safety and Security Assessment:** LaGrange College faculty and staff will be responsible for submitting with their course proposal or travel plans any safety and risk concerns and reporting what security measures are in place to reduce danger and risk. Assessments of accommodations, transportation, activities and destinations need to be considered.

**Policy Application and Program Cancellation:** This policy applies to all LaGrange College-sponsored study away short-term faculty led courses. LaGrange College is not responsible for the unapproved travel of its employees, students, alumni, or otherwise College-associated individuals.

In the case that the Global Engagement Risk Management Committee is forced to make a decision to cancel a course based on health and/or safety concerns, participants might not be able to recover any/all of the funds paid for the course.

Students will be refunded monies which they have paid only to the extent that the College has been able to recoup those funds and cover the College's costs. LaGrange College will facilitate the completion of a cancelled program's academic component.