

AHA HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Student, staff and faculty health and safety while abroad are AHA's priority. AHA's crisis management and emergency response planning involve a number of different components:

Preparation

Students receive information about health and safety preparation prior to departure, and comprehensive information specific to their site (including safety briefings, advice, lists of local health and safety providers, and communication protocols to be followed in the event of emergency) during orientation at the site. All students are registered electronically as a group with the local U.S. embassy after arrival on-site.

Emergency Communications

During regular business hours (8:30 am – 5:00 pm PST), emergency communications should be directed to the main AHA number, 1-800-295-7730. In the event of an after-hours emergency, AHA crisis management staff can be reached 24 hours a day through our emergency answering service at 1-503-764-4146; this number is listed on all AHA Portland staff voicemail greetings.

AHA communications regarding emergency situations will be as follows:

- In the event of a health or safety emergency involving an individual student, AHA will make every effort to notify the student's sending school as soon as possible and within 24 hours. AHA will also notify the student's emergency contact as allowed within FERPA guidelines and in coordination with the student's sending school.
- In the event of an emergency affecting an entire location (political unrest, natural disaster, etc.), AHA will post a message regarding the status of the program and students on our website, and send this information directly to all sending schools with 24 hours. Updates will be provided as available until the situation is resolved.

Crisis Management Staff

AHA maintains a Crisis Management team headed by the Executive Director. Area Directors, the Director of Student Services, the Director of Communications, the Budget Manager, and a Site Director serve on the Crisis Management Team which meets regularly to assess AHA crisis management plans. In individual emergencies, the Area Director and Site Director for the program are the key managers of AHA response, with the Site Director managing the on-site response and support and the Area Director managing stateside communications (internally, with the sending school, and with the student's emergency contact) and support. In the event of a serious or large-scale crisis, the entire Crisis Management Team is assembled.

Resources and Information Monitoring

AHA regularly reviews the consular information sheets, travel warnings, and advisory messages issued by the U.S. Department of State and the Overseas Advisory Council and

Crisis Management staff receive automatic updates from these sources. Each on-site director reviews and assesses information relevant to student health and safety received through a variety of resources including in-country professional associations of international program advisors, the local U.S. embassy through the Warden network, local universities and educational organizations, local media, and local public health and safety sources.

Insurance

All participants are covered throughout the duration of their program by a comprehensive health insurance plan, which includes medical evacuation and repatriation insurance.

Crisis Management and On Site Support

All sites make 24-hour emergency contact information available to students. Site Directors also maintain communication protocols to contact all participants quickly.

Written protocols are maintained for addressing a variety of health and safety emergencies such as accident, political unrest, natural disaster, serious health crisis, assault, or death of a participant, as well as communication and reporting protocols. These protocols are regularly reviewed, assessed, and modified as needed. For security reasons these documents are not made public.

In the event of an emergency situation arising on the site, Site Directors will contact participants as soon as possible to verify each student's safety and situation, and to provide information, instructions, and advice. Site Directors will also confer with local resources (local U.S. embassy, other study abroad programs and organizations in the area, local public safety and health authorities, etc.) for advice and information. Site Directors will advise students to contact family and emergency contacts as soon as possible to reassure them as to their safety. The Site Director will also keep AHA's Portland office updated regarding the situation and the condition of students; AHA Portland will communicate with all sending schools and depending on the seriousness of the incident, with student emergency contacts.

Student Advice and Responsibilities

Students are expected to participate actively in preparation and orientation, pay attention to safety and health information, and comply with all health and safety requirements communicated to them by AHA staff.

Students are encouraged to make sure that their parents or other emergency contacts have up-to-date local contact information for them.

Students are encouraged to keep in regular contact with their emergency contacts, friends and family, and immediately notify them of any health or safety emergency or incident that affects them.

Students are expected to notify the Site Director of any health situation or of any safety concerns immediately.

AHA Procedures for Investigation and Discipline of Conduct Violations and Communications With Schools

AHA students are expected to comply with all country laws and AHA policies, regulations, and standards of conduct. All AHA students are required to sign the Participant Agreement, in which they acknowledge that they have read the AHA Agreement Regarding Student Behavior. Students suspected of violating the Agreements, laws, or AHA Policies, will be subject to investigation and possible disciplinary action.

Investigation

The Site Director is responsible for investigating all alleged violations of AHA regulations or policies. Normally, this investigation will consist of interviews with the reporting party, witnesses, and the person alleged to have breached the Agreement. When the person alleged to have breached the Agreement is interviewed, he/she will be informed of the nature of the allegation, the regulations or policy allegedly violated, his/her right to respond, and the procedures to be followed.

Disciplinary action and consultation

Possible sanctions as described in the Code include: Written Warning, Letter of Reprimand, Written Disciplinary Probation, or Dismissal from the Program, as well as additional sanctions that may be combined with any of the above. Any sanction imposed will take into consideration the context and seriousness of the violation.

In cases where the alleged violation carries the potential for immediate harm to self or others, the Site Director has the authority to immediately remove any student from his/her residence and/or the program on an interim basis.

The primary purpose of the Written Warning is to communicate the seriousness of the situation to students who have engaged in violations that are not in and of themselves grave, but that in the Site Director's evaluation have the potential to escalate. The Warning is intended to serve as a counseling tool for the Site Director, to encourage students engaging in minor violations or troubling behavior patterns to rethink their behavior. As such, they are retained in the student's file at the site, but will not be forwarded to the Portland office or the student's home institution unless additional violations occur.

Any sanction above the level of Written Warning will be forwarded to the Portland office and the student's home institution. If a student who has received a Written Warning engages in subsequent misconduct and receives a sanction above Written Warning, the original Warning as well as the new sanction will be forwarded to the Portland office and the student's home institution.

Appeal

To ensure due process, students must be allowed to appeal sanctions of disciplinary probation and dismissal. The Executive Director will receive appeals; if the Executive

Director is unavailable, an Area Director who does not work with the site will serve as her designee. Any appeal and appeal response will be forwarded to the student's home institution.

Academic guideline violations

In cases of Academic Guideline violations involving courses taught by AHA faculty (including visiting faculty), the regular investigatory procedures will be followed and any sanction above the level of Written Warning will be forwarded to the student's home institution.

If the SD receives a report from a host university or instructor that a student has violated academic guidelines (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) in a course not directly under AHA's control (i.e. a host university course), the SD will conduct a parallel AHA review of the allegation following the Agreement Regarding Student Behavior procedures. Typically, a student found to have violated academic guidelines in this situation would receive an academic sanction (grade reduction or failure, etc.) from the host university and a Letter of Reprimand from AHA; both would be forwarded to the student's home institution.