These guidelines include recommended topics for a principal investigator (PI), program lead or University unit (school, department, center or institute) administrator to include when putting together a ***Safety and Emergency Preparedness Plan*** for international activities or operations.

**Process for Developing and Updating the Plan**

The Plan ***should not be*** a comprehensive safety and security handbook, but rather should focus on details particular to the operating context of the program. For example, the plan may include specific information on where to park vehicles at night, who will brief new staff on security matters, and what evacuation routes should be used from each office.

It is important that the international operation engage both locally hired and international staff in development or revision of the plan to ensure that it is realistic and understandable to all staff. Moreover, the plan should take into account the different circumstances of locally hired staff versus international assignees. These plans should also be developed with input from the **Insurance and Risk Management** unit of the Office of the Treasurer. Should you require assistance or would like help in coordinating this process, please reach out to Global Support ([globalsupport@columbia.edu](mailto:globalsupport@columbia.edu))

**Use of the Plan**

The plan should:

* Be accessible to all staff, with translated versions as necessary
* Be updated regularly and whenever there is a change in the situation or threats faced by the operation
* Be provided to all new staff members, along with a security briefing and any training required to implement the plan

***The operation should ensure that the University unit staff in NY has the most recent copy of their security plan on hand. The initial and revised plans will be emailed to globalsupport@columbia.edu.***

**Planning Basics**

* **Statement of Purpose and Applicability:** describe the purpose and scope of the plan.
* **Definitions:** define major terms in order to provide the user or readers with a clearer understanding. Please ensure that terminology used on this plan is clear and that it translates well to local slang.
* **Roles and Responsibilities:** the roles and responsibilities of individuals participating in any procedure should be defined clearly.

**I. General Preparation**

1. **Background Information for Risk Assessment**

Information to allow an ongoing assessment of risk, including but not limited to political risk, crime risk, health risk, hazard risk (including natural disasters), and economic risk. This should clearly describe who will be tasked with assessing risk, how often it will be assessed and what sources will be used for this process. Sources include but are not limited to:

* The [Travel](http://www.state.gov/travel/) section of the U.S. Department of State website
* The [International Travel and Health](http://www.who.int/ith/en/) section of the World Health Organization website
* The [Traveler’s Health](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/) section of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website
* Insurance and Emergency Travel Assistance companies (Columbia has a contract and tailored website through [ISOS](http://www.internationalsos.com/MasterPortal/default.aspx?membnum=11BSGC000064))
* Other resources as indicated by the conditions of the program and site.

1. **Forms, as Needed**

Some or all of the following forms should be part of your emergency plan. They are filled out by each student or other Columbia traveler/program participant. Depending on the type of international operation, University units could have different requirements and this section should be tailored accordingly.

* Waiver and release of liability
* Medical information form
* Emergency contact information form
* Emergency medical authorization form
* Insurance form

1. **Security of Facilities, Staff and Visitors**

* Procedures for facility security
  + Procedure for conducting a security inspection of a facility prior to leasing and occupying it
  + Procedure for controlling access to and distribution of keys and security access codes for buildings
  + Guards and Security Service Agreements
* Procedures for carrying or keeping firearms and other weapons
  + Define under what circumstances it could be allowable to carry/keep firearms or other weapons in program vehicles (whether leased or owned) and on program premises
  + Define to whom would policies be applicable (i.e., not only to employees, but also to all other individuals who enter program vehicles or premises) and potential exceptions:
    - * If there is an immediate threat to life
      * If the firearm is carried by an on-duty law enforcement officer or other official, and his/her entrance is approved by a member of the Host Country Leadership Team
      * If the program has University unit approval for the Host Country Operation to have armed guards to allow protection of staff or property

***Columbia University does not tolerate any acts or threats of violence committed by or against employees. Columbia will discipline or terminate any employee found to have violated this policy.***

* Procedures to ensure staff wellness
* Procedures for transportation safety
* Procedures to prevent kidnapping and abductions

1. **Unique Risks**

* Identify conditions or risks particular to the program or location that may require unique response *(for example, a program for the treatment of an infectious disease should include in their plan a section for post exposure prophylaxis in case of accidental exposure)*

1. **Registration of travelers with the U.S. Department of State via STEP (Smart Traveler Enrollment Program) or direct registration with the U.S. Embassy AND, for eligible Columbia community members, registration with ISOS**

* [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html) - recommended for all international travelers
* [U.S. Embassies, Consulates and Diplomatic Missions](http://www.usembassy.gov/)
* [Columbia ISOS](http://finance.columbia.edu/content/isos) (see eligibility and additional information) – eligible Columbia community members are strongly encouraged to register their international travel itinerary.

1. **Insurance**

* Health Insurance: Ensure that participants are covered fully and in compliance with U.S. Federal Law (the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 – **ERISA** and the Affordable Care Act of 2010 – **ACA**).
* Emergency Travel Assistance: Ensure that participants are covered for medical evacuation, and evacuation for political unrest and natural disaster. Columbia community members should check their eligibility through either [ISOS](http://finance.columbia.edu/content/isos) or [Frontier MEDEX](https://members.medexassist.com/Default.aspx).
* CIGNA International Health Plan.

1. **Appendix - Lists of Resources in host country in proximity of operation**

* First aid—supplies and training appropriate to the program, regularly maintained
* Health care providers
* Emergency rooms
* Dentists
* Counseling and other mental health resources (see CIGNA International Health Plan for providers in host country)
* Pharmacies
* Banks (ATMs and specifications regarding types of cards that can be used, for example, “pin and chip” cards are required by most banks in Nigeria but most U.S. banks don’t regularly issue them)
* Emergency numbers for police, fire, ambulance, hospitals or clinics
* List of recommended hotels or other longing facilities, preferably with some type of agreement with the operation or recommended by the U.S. Embassy
* Recommended restaurants
* Grocery stores
* Directions to airport, train station, evacuation roads, and so forth
* Directions and contact information for U.S. Embassy or applicably embassy or non-U.S. citizens

1. **Appendix - Pre-departure Health and Safety Precautions for travelers** (for additional information, refer to the [**Before You Go**](http://finance.columbia.edu/content/cu-travel-guide) page of the International Travel section)

* Vaccinations
* Information prepared for participants on Health, Safety and Security issues and precautions relevant to the host country including:
  + Necessary vaccinations
  + Avoiding communicable diseases
  + Avoiding known dangerous areas
  + Walking safely at night
  + Maintaining an awareness of local attitudes toward men and women
  + Dressing appropriately
  + Carrying personal items discreetly such as:
    - Cash
    - Laptops, cell phones, PDAs, cameras, jewelry, and so forth
    - Passports
  + Avoiding areas with landmines
  + Avoiding dangerous animals
  + Advice on consuming alcohol in public
  + Information on specific host-country program facilities such as:
    - Emergency exits
    - Entry and exit protocols, such as maintaining locked doors
    - Evacuation routes and procedures
    - Hired security
  + Establish a straightforward protocol for contacting the Designated Program Contact in New York

**II. Emergency Response Preparation**

1. **Responsible Personnel**

* Establish a chain of command for emergency response.
* Establish a clear understanding of the respective responsibilities of the Columbia unit in NY, the project leads, managers, vendors, and other partners.
* Include a provision for backup when one or more staff members is away
* Record the names, title, and telephone numbers of each member of the chain of command.

1. **Appendix - Contact numbers and email addresses for all participants.**

* Assemble and continue to update before and throughout the duration of the program or activity.

1. **Appendix - Essential Activity Contact Information**

* Establish two 24-hour contact numbers for students and staff.
* Provide all participants with a card listing the emergency contact information.
* Have all participants put this information on their mobile phones.

1. **Business continuity procedures:**

* Procedures to ensure that critical program activities can continue under unusual circumstances, such as after a fire or natural disaster
* Protecting data and equipment, including regularly backing up work.
* Using remote servers
* Outlining disaster recovery steps for information technology personnel to ensure that technology systems continue functioning or resume functioning in the event of a natural disaster or other disruptive event
* Working remotely
* Temporarily renting alternate facilities.
* Documenting personal contact information such as cell phone numbers in the event that business phones are unavailable (in accordance with data-security laws in home and host countries)

1. **Cash Management**

* Work with program director or designee, finance offices, and risk management to develop contingency plans for sending funds to host-country authorities in the event of an emergency that disrupts normal business practices.

1. **Itineraries and Travel Arrangements**

* Detailed itineraries of travelers should be filed with unit administrators
* Develop a travel form for participants to fill out when traveling off-site.

1. **Means of contacting students and other participants.**

* Consider multiple means, e.g. texting, phone calls, a Facebook page, etc.
* Ensure that mobile phone or satellite phone service is available
* Identify locations where internet access is available
* Specify what you will do if communications fail.

1. **Communication with New York**

* Establish a straightforward instruction for contacting New York in the event of an emergency: whom to contact and when.
* Establish a plan for filing incident reports and holding follow-up discussions.

1. **Fire Safety**

* Include a fire safety plan for program and housing facilities, including inspection of facilities and provision of fire extinguishers and smoke detectors

1. **Providers and Vendors**

* Include emergency plans provided by university partners, housing providers, and other vendors.

**III. Evacuation Preparation**

1. **Criteria for evacuation**

* Describe the circumstances under which a facility, locale, or program site would need to be evacuated.

1. **Assembly Points**

* Designate a primary and a secondary assembly point.
* Include instructions for arrival at assembly point or return to main facility on foot or by public transportation.

1. **Shelter-in-place**

* Specify how communications and logistics such as food and water could be sustained if students or staff were “locked-down” in a residence hall, homestay, or other facility.

1. **Large-scale Evacuation**

* Include provisions for what you would do if it were necessary to evacuate your location—city or country.
* Include an emergency transportation plan, i.e., what means of transport you would use to evacuate students should it become necessary.

**IV. Emergency Response – Essential Actions**

Following are actions that are common to any response plan in order to respond to an emergency and stabilize any emergency situation. **An actual *Safety and Emergency Preparedness Plan* will be customized to the particular conditions of a given activity and location.**

1. **Essential Actions On-Site**
2. **Meet the immediate needs of affected students, faculty or staff.**
   * Contact police, ambulance, or other first responders as necessary.
   * Stay with individuals affected until help comes or the situation clarifies. Only move participants if it is deemed too dangerous to shelter in place.
3. **Assess the situation and any threats or dangers it poses to students, staff, or other participants.** 
   * What specific threats or dangers do they face?
   * What immediate steps can and should be taken to help reduce the harm, danger, or threat level for participants?
   * Are the participants safer remaining in their present location(s) or in an alternative location? If the latter, where?
4. **Contact all program participants.**
   * Determine whether they are accounted for and safe within one hour or as soon thereafter as practicable.
   * Determine and record their present locations.
   * Instruct them to follow the program’s emergency plans, specifically about where they should or should not go and what they should do or not do in light of the crisis.
5. **Contact your Emergency Travel Assistance Provider**

* [ISOS](http://finance.columbia.edu/content/isos) or [Frontier MEDEX](https://members.medexassist.com/Default.aspx)

1. **Notify Designated Program Contact**
   * Inform designated contact on-site and/or in New York of the nature of the crisis, your location, the location of students and staff members, and all relevant details available to you.
   * If emergency assistance is required and you cannot reach your designated contact number within fifteen minutes, call their designated backup person.
   * If you cannot locate that number or cannot reach that person, call **Columbia Public Safety, 212-854-5555**
2. **Update Columbia University continuously, throughout the crisis and regularly in the following hours and days regarding the condition, safety, and location of all University personnel**
   * Pass along new information as it becomes available or as conditions change to the Designated Program Contact in New York or others, depending on the situation
3. **Maintain a written log of the crisis.** 
   * Include specific dates, times, actions taken and other relevant details, beginning with your first notice of the crisis and continuing through its resolution.
   * Include copies of all emails.
   * Include the written log with your incident report.
4. **Essential Actions for Central or Home Office**
   1. **Verify the situation on the ground.**
   2. **Maintain contact with the affected participants.**
   3. **Ensure that affected individual(s) receive appropriate assistance.**
   4. **Contact sponsoring Unit and Insurance and Risk Management.**
   5. **As appropriate, contact local authorities, U.S. Embassy, similar operations in the area.**
   6. **Contact** [ISOS](http://finance.columbia.edu/content/isos) **or** [Frontier MEDEX](https://members.medexassist.com/Default.aspx)

**V. Safeguarding of Plan**

1. **Multiple copies in safe locations -** Provide a copy of the plan and contact information each semester or each repetition of the program to the sponsoring unit at Columbia University and the **Insurance and Risk Management** unit of the Office of the Treasurer.

**VI. Communication of the Plan**

1. **Procedures for security briefings and staff orientation –** these should include a process for orienting newly hired staff as well as periodic refreshers and drills for existing staff
2. **Procedures for traveler and student briefing/orientation –** relevant sections of this plan should be provided to travelers in advance of travel to the host country as well as immediately upon arrival through briefing