

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso

Planned Response to Emergencies Abroad

Purpose

This plan has been prepared to provide the guidelines of response actions for a variety of emergency situations while abroad. Before reacting to an emergency situation, it must be determined whether the emergency is real or perceived. Both types of emergencies require a response from the home institution, and that response will be most effective if it is grounded in a well-reasoned master plan. Although no single plan will apply to every situation, a common set of factors must be examined in every case.

This plan specifies responses to the following situations: serious illness or injury, death, mental health crisis, major crimes against a student, arrest, missing/kidnapped student, political crisis, and environmental/natural disaster.

In an emergency, the program administrator/point of contact's (POC's) first responsibility is to secure the safety and well-being of students. The program administrator/POC should do whatever is necessary to assure students' safety, whether it means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, embassy intervention, or police protection.

Emergency Contact Numbers

When all has been done to assure the students' well-being, the program administrator/POC should contact the Office of Global Health and Societies (OGHS.) The Senior Director of OGHS or the person assigned to the emergency telephone must complete an Emergency Initial Intake Form (see pages 8 & 9), which will constitute initiation of a log of all calls and describe applicable activities that occur throughout the emergency.

In the event of an emergency, the program administrator/POC or student will first contact On Call International, a contracted medical and travel security assistance company, which is available at all times. When possible, contact the OGHS at (915) 215-4805 from the hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Mountain Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

Following the resolution of a crisis, a detailed report of all the information related to events leading up to the incident, the incident itself, the actions of all involved, the resolution to the emergency, and the impact of the incident should be recorded in an after-action report (see page 10). This will ensure that the information obtained regarding this particular situation can be used to monitor and improve the program and the emergency response plan.

Specific Emergency Procedures

After contacting On Call International, the program administrator/POC or student will adhere to the following emergency procedures pertinent to the specific situation.

I. Serious Illness or Injury of a Student Participating in a TTUHSC El Paso Global Health Program

- The program administrator/POC will take the ill or injured student to the nearest hospital or medical facility.
- The program administrator/POC will call an ambulance if necessary.
- The program administrator/POC will call OGHS to report the illness or injury. OGHS will discuss the situation with the program administrator/POC to ascertain the nature of the injury or illness and when applicable, review the student's Health/Emergency Treatment Authorization form for any information that might be helpful.
- Once the essential facts have been gathered, OGHS will contact the assistant vice president for student services (AVPSS) at the earliest reasonable time to implement an appropriate response. Together they will coordinate to:
 - Determine what action needs to be taken and what other members of Assessment and Response Team (ART) need to be contacted.
 - Call the respective dean who will inform the student's emergency contact.
- OGHS will work with vendor providing international health coverage and MEDEVAC as the situation requires.

II. Death of a Student Participating in a TTUHSC El Paso Global Health Program

- The program administrator/POC will verify the identity of the victim and will gather as much information as possible about the circumstances surrounding the death.
- The program administrator/POC will notify local police.
- The program administrator/POC will notify OGHS. OGHS will gather as much information as possible surrounding the circumstances of the death from the program administrator/POC.
- OGHS, working with the program administrator/POC, will notify the U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
- Once the essential facts have been gathered, OGHS will contact the AVPSS at the earliest reasonable time to implement an appropriate response. Together they will coordinate to:
 - Determine what action needs to be taken and what other members of ART need to be contacted.
 - Contact the respective dean who will contact the student's emergency contact. OGHS will work with the dean and additional faculty as needed to offer the appropriate support, including transportation arrangements and accommodations.
 - Inform the TTUHSC El Paso Office of Institutional Advancement-Communications and Marketing who will designate a spokesperson for the institution. Any questions from the media should be channeled through that spokesperson.
- OGHS will contact vendor providing international health coverage and MEDEVAC and coordinate with them regarding the repatriation of remains.

III. Mental Health Crisis

- The program administrator/POC will gather as much information as possible on the behavior and the history of the problem and will assess the extent of the problem.
- If necessary, the program administrator/POC will take the student to the nearest hospital or medical facility.

- If there was a suicide event or drug overdose, the student must be assessed medically. This applies to over-the-counter medications as well.
- The program administrator/POC will contact OGHS. OGHS will gather as much information as possible surrounding the circumstances from the program administrator/POC.
- Once the essential facts have been gathered, OGHS will contact the chair of GHC and AVPSS at the earliest reasonable time to implement an appropriate response. Together they will coordinate to:
 - Determine what action needs to be taken, including any necessary counseling services or referral to a facility in the host country, and what other members of ART need to be contacted.
 - Contact the respective dean who will, **with the student's consent**, contact the student's emergency contact. Consent will be presumed if student is incapacitated.
- OGHS will work with vendor providing international health coverage and MEDEVAC as needed.

IV. Major Crimes Against a Student Participating in a TTUHSC El Paso Global Health Program

- The program administrator/POC will report the crime to the local police. In case of sexual assault, clarify with the student to what degree he/she wishes to involve local authorities, the emergency contact person, family, and TTUHSC El Paso.
- The program administrator/POC will ensure that the physical and emotional needs of the victim are being attended to. In case of physical injury, the student will be taken to a hospital or medical facility.
- The program administrator/POC will contact OGHS. OGHS will gather as much information as possible surrounding the circumstances from the program administrator/POC.
- Once the essential facts have been gathered, OGHS will contact the chair of the GHC and AVPSS at the earliest reasonable time to implement an appropriate response. Together they will coordinate to:
 - Determine what action needs to be taken, including any necessary counseling services, and what other members of ART need to be contacted.
 - If applicable, contact the respective dean who will contact the student's emergency contact.
 - If necessary, inform the TTUHSC El Paso Office of Institutional Advancement-Communications and Marketing who will designate a spokesperson for the institution. Any questions from the media should be channeled through that spokesperson.
- Depending on the severity of the crime, General Counsel, working with the program administrator/POC, may need to contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
- The program administrator/POC will monitor the situation and update OGHS on the developments.
- OGHS will work with vendor providing international health coverage and MEDEVAC as needed.

V. Arrest of Student Participating in a TTUHSC El Paso Global Health Program

- The program administrator/POC will contact OGHS and provide as much information as possible.
- OGHS will contact the appropriate parties.
- Once the essential facts have been gathered, OGHS will contact the chair of the GHC and AVPSS at the earliest reasonable time to implement an appropriate response. Together they will coordinate to:
 - Contact the U.S. State Department's Emergency Consular Services at (202) 647-5225 for suggestions and assistance.
 - Determine what additional action needs to be taken and what other members of the ART team need to be contacted.
 - Contact the appropriate dean to inform the student's emergency contact.
 - Contact TTUHSC El Paso general counsel.
 - Develop a daily communication plan.
 - Inform the TTUHSC El Paso Office of Institutional Advancement Communications and Marketing who will designate a spokesperson for the institution. Any questions from the media should be channeled through that spokesperson.
 - Provide appropriate individuals with a daily bulletin until the crisis is over.

VI. Student Missing from a TTUHSC El Paso Global Health Program or the Kidnapping of a Student Participating in a TTUHSC El Paso Global Health Program

- The program administrator/POC will gather as much information as possible to determine where and when the student was last seen.
- If the student has been missing for more than 24 hours or kidnapped, the program administrator/POC will notify local police and ask them to check hospital admissions and city records for possible information.
- The program administrator/POC will notify OGHS, providing as much information as possible.
- OGHS, working with the program administrator/POC, will notify the U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
- Once the essential facts have been gathered, OGHS will contact the chair of the GHC, AVPSS, and TTUHSC El Paso general counsel at the earliest reasonable time to implement an appropriate response. Together they will coordinate to:
 - Contact the U.S. State Department's Emergency Consular Services at (202) 647-5225 for suggestions and assistance.
 - Determine what additional action needs to be taken and what other members of the ART team need to be contacted.
 - Contact the appropriate dean to inform the student's emergency contact.
 - Develop a daily communication plan.
 - Inform the TTUHSC El Paso Office of Institutional Advancement–Communications and Marketing who will designate a spokesperson for the institution. Any questions from the media should be channeled through that spokesperson.
 - Provide appropriate individuals with a daily bulletin until the crisis is over.

VII. Political Crisis Affecting Students Participating in a TTUHSC El Paso Global Health Program

- The program administrator/POC will advise students to keep a low profile, avoid congregating with Americans in public places, and avoid using luggage tags or wearing articles that are identified as American. Students will also be reminded to not divulge program information or personal information to strangers.
- The program administrator/POC will contact OGHS immediately to relay detailed information gathered from local contacts such as police, government officials, and host institution officials regarding:
 - The incident's proximity to students;
 - Its impact on the availability of food, water, and medical supplies;
 - The target of unrest;
 - The presence of military or emergency personnel;
 - The feasibility of continuing the program;
 - The ability of students and staff to travel in the nation.
- OGHS, working with the program administrator/POC, will contact the appropriate parties.
- OGHS will monitor U.S. State Department public announcements and/or travel warnings and send regular updates to the program administrator/POC via e-mail, fax, or telephone.
- In the event of physical danger for students, the program administrator/POC should contact OGHS regarding the necessity of evacuation.
- Once the essential facts have been gathered, OGHS will contact the chair of the GHC and AVPSS at the earliest reasonable time to implement an appropriate response. Together they will coordinate to:
 - Contact the U.S. State Department's Emergency Consular Services at (202) 647-5225 for suggestions and assistance.
 - Determine what additional action needs to be taken including:
 - dealing with student concerns,
 - recommending appropriate student behaviors,
 - developing a written course of action, and
 - having students acknowledge receipt of such information.
 - Determine what other members of the ART team need to be contacted.
 - Identify what immediate measures are needed to preserve the health and safety of students.
 - Determine how to best address additional issues of student's health and safety.
 - Contact U.S. offices of other institutions that have students in the affected location to coordinate information and to devise a common action plan.
 - Designate an incident commander at the home institution.
 - Determine who must be alerted once the entire plan is in place.
 - Develop a daily communication plan.
 - Inform the TTUHSC El Paso Office of Institutional Advancement – Communications and Marketing who will designate a spokesperson for the institution. Any questions from the media should be channeled through that spokesperson.
 - Provide appropriate individuals with a daily bulletin until the crisis is over.

- OGHS will coordinate with vendor providing international health coverage and MEDEVAC to develop an evacuation plan if necessary. The evacuation plan will consider the safety of various modes and routes of travel, possibility of reducing the level of threat by dispersing students in small groups to reconvene later in another locale, and available in-country resources.

VIII. Environmental/Natural Disaster

- The program administrator/POC will gather as much information as possible about the environmental disaster through local media and other means.
- The program administrator/POC will assess the danger to students.
- The program administrator/POC will contact OGHS to relay detailed information regarding:
 - The incident's proximity to students;
 - Its impact on the availability of food, water, and medical supplies;
 - The presence of emergency personnel;
 - The feasibility of continuing the program;
 - The ability of students to travel in the nation.
- OGHS, working with the program administrator/POC, will contact the appropriate parties and ask for information and assistance. In the event of physical danger for students, the program administrator / POC should contact OGHS immediately to assess the situation.
- Once the essential facts have been gathered, OGHS will contact the chair of the GHC and AVPSS at the earliest reasonable time to implement an appropriate response. Together they will coordinate to:
 - Contact the U.S. State Department's Emergency Consular Services at (202) 647-5225 for suggestions and assistance.
 - Determine what additional action needs to be taken including:
 - dealing with initial student panic,
 - recommending appropriate student behaviors,
 - developing a written course of action, and
 - having students acknowledge in writing receipt of such information.
 - Determine what other members of the ART team should be called.
 - Identify what immediate measures are needed to preserve the health and safety of students.
 - Determine how to best address additional issues of health, safety, academics, public relations, and legal liability.
 - Contact U.S. offices of other institutions that have students in the affected location to coordinate information and to devise a common action plan
 - Designate an incident commander at the home institution.
 - Determine who must be alerted once the entire plan is in place.
 - Develop a daily communication plan.
 - Inform the TTUHSC El Paso Office of Institutional Advancement–Communications and Marketing who will designate a spokesperson for the institution. Any questions from the media should be channeled through that spokesperson.
 - Provide appropriate individuals with a daily bulletin until the crisis is over.

- OGHS will coordinate with vendor providing international health coverage and MEDEVAC to develop an evacuation plan if necessary. The evacuation plan will consider the safety of various modes and routes of travel, the costs of evacuation and the method of meeting those costs, the possibility of reducing the level of threat by dispersing students in small groups to reconvene later in another locale, and available in-country resources.

Acronyms

ART—Assessment and Response Team
AVPSS – Assistant Vice President for Student Services
GHC – Global Health Council
OGHS OGHS—Office of Global Health and Societies

Emergency Initial Intake Form

Date: _____ Time Abroad: _____ Time in U.S.: _____

Name of person calling: _____

Name of host institution or program provider: _____

Name of program administrator / POC:

Return phone and/or fax number abroad: _____

Location of caller (city, country, street): _____

Site / location of emergency and proximity to students: _____

Persons / students involved in emergency: _____

Nature of emergency (description, injuries, etc.): _____

Steps that have been taken and status (what medical treatment has been received, has local law enforcement, U.S. embassy / consulate, vendor providing international health coverage and MEDEVAC, etc. been called?): _____

Advice of local authorities, U.S. embassy / consulate, vendor providing international health coverage and MEDEVAC, etc.: _____

What impact, if any, did the emergency have on availability of food, water, and medical supplies:

What was the target of unrest, if the event was political? _____

What is the intensity of the emergency or of the political unrest? _____

Are there military or emergency personnel at the site of the emergency? _____

Are students able to travel in the country? _____

Other: _____

Emergency Contact Name and Numbers: see student(s)'s Emergency Contact and Information Release Form

See TTUHSC El Paso Planned Response to Emergencies Abroad

Report of Emergency, Assessment, and Response

Name: _____ Title: _____
Site of Emergency: _____
Date/Time of Emergency: _____
People Involved in Emergency: _____

Please include the following information in this report:

- Where incident took place
- When incident took place
- Who was involved in the incident
- A description of the incident
- Assessment of the incident
- Response to the incident
- State of situation now—aftermath of incident—how are people responding, is counseling needed / for whom, what other needs are there?

Include as much detail as possible. The final section should be an assessment of current conditions and what is needed, if anything, to help those involved cope with the situation. Are there any changes that should be considered to prevent a similar incident from happening in the future?