

Travel Contingency Plans - Intercultural Studies (HANDS) 2020

Travel

There are inherent risks associated with any kind of local, national, or international travel. The purpose of this document is to clearly lay out the risks, making parents aware of the possible hazards that they are exposing their children to when they are considering giving permission for their children to travel. This document also intends to show how each of these risks is considered, the plans and procedures that are in place to prevent risks from becoming realities, and the steps that can be taken in the event of unexpected events and possible emergencies.

Prior to departure, parents, students, and staff/chaperones should familiarize themselves with this document and have a chance to ask clarifying questions.

This document relies heavily on the Government of Canada's website: <https://travel.gc.ca/>

This document relies heavily on RDPSPD's [*"International Education: Effective Practices, Operational Requirements and Checklists"*](#)

This document is subject to RDPSPD's Board Policies

Contacts

Before traveling, all members of a team should know the contact information in case of emergency, injury, loss, or separation.

The Canadian Embassy in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

Street address:

Carretera Verón-Bávaro Km 2.5

Amstar Business Center Suite 521

Higuey, La Altagracia

Tour Provider: EduDeo Ministries

ADDRESS:

621 Barton St. E., Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8L 3A1

Telephone: 1.866.360.4274 Or 1.905.387.9927

<p>Tel.: 809-455-1730</p> <p>Fax: 809-455-1734</p> <p>Hours of Operation:</p> <p>Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.</p> <p>Friday: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm</p>	<p>EMAIL:</p> <p>info@edudeo.com</p>
<p>Group Leader: Chris Kooman - cell phone # 587.876.0267</p>	<p>Group Leader: Geannette Lehman - cell phone # 403.302.2938</p>

Transportation

All students must arrange their own transportation to and from the airport.

Flights have been booked. This year flights depart from Calgary. There is a layover in Toronto, ON. We fly from Toronto to Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

All transportation in the Dominican is on a school bus. Bus drivers are professionals and hired by our trip provider, EduDeo.

- Under no circumstances will students travel in private cars
- Under no circumstances will students travel in 15 passenger vans
- Under no circumstances will students travel in mini-buses

Health

We advise all students and chaperones to seek medical advice from their General Practitioner (family doctor) or a travel specialist. In the past, doctors have recommended:

- Malaria medication
- Hepatitis A/B vaccinations or boosters
- Tetanus Boosters
- Typhoid boosters
- Rabies vaccinations
- Antibiotics for travelers' diarrhea
- The Zika virus is also present in the area. The Government of Canada travel website recommends caution in mosquito prone areas. Travellers that are pregnant or considering becoming pregnant should be extra cautious.

As teachers and team leaders, we encourage you to make an appointment with a doctor or pharmacist to talk about this further.

Travelling with Medication

Prescription medications for legitimate health conditions may come under intense scrutiny by foreign officials. In some countries, drugs that are legal and readily available in Canada are considered illegal, require a prescription, or may arouse suspicions among local officials and customs and immigration authorities. It is always best to contact the [foreign government offices accredited to Canada](#) of the country you plan to visit to confirm the status of your medication.

When travelling abroad with prescription or over-the-counter medication:

- The limit of two carry-on bags does not apply to medical supplies, equipment and mobility aids.
- Pack all medications in your carry-on baggage in their original, labelled containers to facilitate airport security and customs screening. Prescription medication is exempted from the liquid restrictions but must be presented to the screening officer separately from your carry-on baggage.
- Do not try to save luggage space by combining medications into a single container.
- Use the Family/Special Needs security line. Screening officers at these lines are trained to offer additional assistance.
- Pack an extra supply of medication in case you are away for longer than expected.
- Carry a copy of the original prescription and ensure that both the generic and trade names of the medication are included in case of loss or theft. A doctor's note describing why you are taking the medication is also recommended.
- Do not buy medication outside Canada unless you have been advised to do so by a healthcare professional. Be aware of counterfeit medications or those that may not meet Canadian standards.
- If you are carrying any unusual medication, check that it is legal and readily available in the country you intend to visit. Contact the [foreign government office in Canada](#) of the country you plan to visit before departing to make sure the medical supplies you intend to bring are allowed into the country.
- Consult [what you can bring on a plane](#) to determine what you can and cannot pack in your carry-on luggage.

Punta Cana and Santo Domingo both have a hospital that our group will access in case of emergencies. Pharmacies are common, and over-the-counter medication is quite easy to access. We travel with two full first-aid kits.

Travel Documentation

Different countries require different documentation to travel through, or enter. All students require:

- A passport that is good for 6 months after the itinerary return date
- [An Out of Country Field Trip Form](#)
- A permission form that is signed by parents and authenticated by a Commissioner of Oaths or a Notary Public
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Travel Insurance (provided by our school district)
- Detailed Itinerary - to be provided

Accommodation Arrangements

The Gateway HANDS team stays at a guest house in the Dominican Republic. In the past, we have stayed at Quinta Arien guest house, and The Nehemiah Center when we have travelled to Nicaragua. This year our accommodations will be at Villa Vacacional Roselis. This retreat center in the Dominican Republic feature dormitory style sleeping (multiple bunk beds in a room) for males and females separately. Toilet and shower facilities are attached to bedrooms. A common eating area hosts the entire group for meals.

Windows are often open in order for air to move through the rooms at night.

Valuable can be locked in lockers for the duration of the stay (cameras, phones, passports, travel documents, spending money)

It is recommended that valuables are not brought along with students, as pickpocketing is common.

Address of Retreat Center: Casa Abraham Autovia del Este 3, Playa Juan Dolió 21000 Playa Juan Dolió Tel: 809-221-5845	Address of Partner School:
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Risk, Safety, and Emergency Management

- Students and chaperones will be aware of safety and evacuation procedures at each venue (notably the work site, school, and guest house).
- Safety standards are different in developing countries than they are in Canada. Because of this, precautions are taken on the worksite, and instructions from group leaders, chaperones, EduDeo representatives, school authorities, and interpreters must be adhered to.
- The Team Leader will have a cell phone at all times.
- The Gateway HANDS team adheres to EduDeo's [Safe Team policy](#)
- Students and chaperones will carry information cards that list safe contacts, team leader's contact information

Safety While Transitioning Through Airports and Crossing International Borders

Traveling through airports and across borders can be a stressful and difficult time. Compounding this is traveling with a large group. Challenges can include staying together, arriving on time, keeping all members of the group together and accounted for.

In order to make these transitions as easy as possible, consider the following advice:

- Never go through security, board a plane, cross a border, or move through a checkpoint without your group, or your group leader's knowledge. Meet at designated checkpoints on time
- Consider your behaviour while in airports, security lines, customs checkpoints, and border crossings. Calm, carefulness, and quiet should be the norm
- Keep all personal belongings on you at all times: travel documents/passports, baggage, electronics, spending money. Ensure that you know all of the contents of your baggage.
- After proceeding through security, customs, or border crossings, wait at designated checkpoints for the rest of your group.
- Communicate to your group leader whenever you leave the group
- NEVER travel alone

It is impossible to predict all of the potential hazards while on a trip. However, some examples are included here:

Item	Immediate Action	Person Responsible	Follow Up
Informing Students and Parents of Risks	Review Safety Protocol, Contingency Plans, Risks	Team Leader Team Chaperones	Team Leader/Chaperones to review with students on trip at work site, school location, guest house, cultural day
Border Disputes	Discuss with personnel in charge. Remain with student	Chris Kooman returning	
Illness	Attend to traveler Acquire medicine if necessary Travel to medical clinic or hospital if necessary Remain at Guest house Alert parents	Team Chaperone Translators EduDeo Representatives	Contact parents Follow-Up Check-ins
Injury	Apply First Aid Acquire medical intervention if necessary Travel to medical clinic or hospital if necessary Alert Parents	Team Chaperone Team Leader Interpreters EduDeo Representatives	Contact Parents Follow-Up Check-ins
Natural Disaster	Shelter in Place or Evacuate Stay together as group if possible Acquire information online or from Canadian Embassy	Team Leader Team Chaperones	Contact Parents
Group Leader is incapacitated	Inform Team chaperones	All Team Members	

Items to consider regarding contingency plans:

- All parents to have emergency contacts
- All students to have emergency contact bracelets
- Team leader to have cell phone at all times
- Team chaperones to have access to WiFi when possible
- Parents have submitted email addresses
- Parents have signed up for HANDS 2019 Remind Service
- Other?