

## Helpful Checklist for International Travel

We all may be aware of some helpful hints when it comes to traveling globally, but are you familiar with the tips and tricks of traveling internationally?

### Before you depart:

- Be sure you know about the destination's laws and customs and any possible risks. Also, obtain a good guidebook. The country's official website can be a great source for current information.
- Confirm the validity of your passport—Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months after the date of your return flight. Some countries will not let you enter if it isn't. Ensure that you carry another form of photo ID and a copy of your passport.
- Verify if you need a visa—Contact the destination country's embassy, or visit your website.
- Verify if you will need vaccinations and request that you see your doctor at least 6 weeks before departure.
- Confirm medication(s)—If you take prescription drugs, make sure you take the prescription with you in case you need a replacement or a refill. Pack your medication in your carry-on luggage. Double-check that your medications are legal in the destination country by contacting the appropriate embassy/consult.
- Make sure you have adequate funds—Take at least two forms of payment, i.e., traveler's checks and a credit card. Record the serial numbers of your checks.
- Secure adequate travel insurance—Ensure the policy provides coverage for medical treatment and return home (inclusive of interruptions, i.e., volcanic, etc.). Make sure you are covered for any dangerous activities, i.e., scuba diving, skiing. If you extend your stay, remember to extend the insurance coverage, too.
- Driving in a foreign country and auto Insurance—If you are driving in a foreign country, make sure your driver's license is current and valid for the country you are visiting. Confirm you have proper insurance and breakdown coverage if you take or rent a car.
- Make certain that family and friends are advised of travel plans—It is very important that people are able to make contact with you in an emergency. You should leave your flight itinerary and details of where you can be contacted during your time out of the country. Certify that you have all relevant contact numbers with you.
- Copies of important documents—Provide copies of your passport (including pages with any relevant visas), traveler's checks and credit card numbers, driver's license numbers, travel insurance details, any other important travel documents, and emergency contact numbers for your country of origin and destination(s). Also, leave one copy with a family member or a reliable friend (not traveling with you) and take one copy with you. Be sure you pack these copies separately from your passport.

Just prior to departure, be advised of the following:

- Respect local laws and customs—As an example, those who drink and drive in the UAE can be put in prison.
- Carry only as much money as you will need each day—You should place extra funds, tickets and documents in the hotel safe, and keep money and important papers in separate places.
- Eat and drink judiciously—You ought to ascertain if the local tap water is safe to drink. If not, drink only bottled water, plus avoid having ice in your drinks. Additionally, only eat food that has been freshly cooked to avoid contaminated food.
- Keep in contact with home—If family and friends know you are safe and secure, you are less likely to panic if there is an emergency in the country you are visiting.
- Know the rules of the road—On-the-spot fines are common in a number of foreign countries (no exceptions for foreigners).
- Always protect from mosquitoes—In many parts of the world, it is important to be protected from mosquitoes, i.e., use insect repellents, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and sleep under a mosquito net.
- Take necessary security precautions—Travelers should carry a minimum amount of cash each day and you should not bring valuables when sightseeing. Avoid unlit streets at night.
- Don't associate with illegal drugs—Passengers must never carry any items through customs for other people or leave your luggage unattended. Several foreign countries have the death penalty for involvement with illegal drugs.

If things go horribly wrong for you:

- If you are arrested or taken into custody: you should immediately contact your home country embassy/consult.

Most embassy/consular officials will:

- Issue emergency passports.
- Visit you if you have been put in prison.
- Put you in touch with local lawyers, interpreters and doctors.
- Contact relatives or friends if you need emergency money or tickets.
- Notify next of kin of an accident or a death, and advise on proper procedures to be followed.

Most embassy and consular officials will not:

- Give legal advice.
- Pay hotel, medical, legal or any other bills.
- Replace lost airline tickets.
- Secure release from prison.
- Intervene in court cases.
- Get better treatment in a hospital or prison.