

## **Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Planned Response to Emergencies Abroad**

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. These have been organized below in the form of a checklist that can be used to guide a response by the home institution to emergencies facing international programs for students at TTUHSC.

In an emergency, the program administrator's first responsibility is to safeguard the safety and well being of program participants. A program administrator is the contact person at the host institution or the TTUHSC faculty member leading the program abroad. The administrator should do whatever is necessary to assure students' safety, whether it means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, Embassy intervention, or police protection.

When all has been done to assure the students' well being, the administrator should contact the Office of International Affairs' (OIA) emergency contact telephone number (806-252-4173). The on-call person assigned to the emergency contact telephone number must complete an Emergency Initial Intake Form (see pages 11 & 12), which will constitute initiation of a log of all calls and describe applicable activities that occur throughout the emergency.

The OIA will then respond based on the nature of the emergency as stated below.

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 13). This will ensure that the information obtained regarding this particular situation can be used to improve the program and also the emergency response plan.

## **Emergencies (i.e. Civil Disorder, Natural Disaster, Terrorist Attack, Outbreak of Disease) Involving Students Participating in a Program at an Institution Abroad or a Faculty-Led Program**

**Step 1:** The on-call person relays the information recorded on the Emergency Initial Intake Form to the Manger of the Office of International Affairs (MOIA) immediately.

**Step 2:** The MOIA contacts the program administrator to assess the situation. The program administrator relays detailed information gathered locally from the nearest consulate and local contacts such as police, government officials, and host institution officials regarding:

- The incident's proximity to students and staff;
- Its impact on the availability of food, water, and medical supplies;
- The target of unrest, if the incident is political;
- The presence of military or emergency personnel;
- The feasibility of continuing the program;
- The ability of students and staff to travel in the nation;
- The advice of the nearest U.S. Consulate.

In the event that the MOIA and the program administrator determine that a danger to students exists, the MOIA assembles the ART immediately to evaluate the situation and implement a response. (see Step 4)

**Step 2:** The MOIA calls the U.S. State Department's Citizen Emergency Center at (202) 647-5225 for suggestions and assistance.

**Step 3:** The MOIA calls U.S. offices, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), or other institutions with students in the affected location, to coordinate information and to devise a common action plan. The MOIA coordinates the planned response to the emergency.

**Step 4:** Once the essential facts have been gathered, the MOIA informs the SRVPAA. Together they decide:

- What other members of the ART team should be called, including the department chair;
- What immediate measures are needed to preserve the health and safety of students and staff;
- How to best address additional issues of health, safety, academics, financial aid, public relations, and legal liability;
- What the appropriate course of action abroad (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) should be;
- How to best work with HTH Worldwide, TTUHSC's provider of international health and MEDEVAC insurance, to develop an evacuation plan if necessary (considering 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);
- Who will be designated Incident Commander at the home institution;
- Who must be alerted once the entire plan is in place;
- How to best develop a daily communication plan;

- How best to coordinate with the TTUHSC Office of Communications to determine who the institution's spokesperson for the situation should be and channel any questions from the media through that spokesperson;
- Who must be kept abreast of the situation with a daily bulletin until the crisis is over;
- On an appropriate assessment of the impact of the incident once the crisis has subsided and document all actions taken in an after-action written report.

## **Emergencies Involving the Death of a Student While Participating in a Program at an Institution Abroad or a Faculty-Led Program**

**Step 1:** The on-call person relays the information recorded on the Emergency Initial Intake Form to the MOIA immediately.

**Step 2:** The MOIA contacts the program administrator to ascertain circumstances surrounding the death.

**Step 3:** Once the essential facts have been gathered, the MOIA informs the SRVPAA. Together they coordinate to:

- Determine what action needs to be taken and what other members of the ART team, including the department chair, need to be contacted;
- Inform the U.S. Consulate of the death. The U.S. Consulate will help organize the paperwork for the repatriation of remains;
- Contact the appropriate dean to inform the student's next of kin;
- Contact HTH Worldwide and coordinate with them regarding the repatriation of remains;
- Inform the TTUHSC Office of Communications who will determine who the university spokesperson for the situation should be. Any questions from the media should be channeled through the spokesperson.

## **Emergencies Involving Serious Illness or Injury to a Student Participating in a Program at an Institution Abroad or a Faculty-Led Program**

**Step 1:** The on-call person relays the information recorded on the Emergency Initial Intake Form to the MOIA immediately.

**Step 2:** The MOIA talks with the program administrator to ascertain the nature of the injury or illness. When applicable, review the student's Student Health / Emergency Treatment Authorization form for any information that might be helpful.

**Step 3:** The MOIA discusses the situation with the SRVPAA to determine what action needs to be taken and what other members of the ART team, including the department chair, need to be contacted.

Together they coordinate to:

- Contact the appropriate dean to inform the next of kin of the student's health;
- Work with HTH Worldwide as needed.

**Step 4:** In the event that evacuation is necessary, the MOIA will coordinate with HTH Worldwide.

## **Emergencies (i.e. Civil Disorder, Natural Disaster, Terrorist Attack, Outbreak of Disease) Involving Students and Faculty Participating in a Program Utilized by a Provider (i.e. Himalayan Health Exchange, Engineers Without Borders)**

**Step 1:** The on-call person relays the information recorded on the Emergency Initial Intake Form to the MOIA immediately.

**Step 2:** The MOIA contacts the program administrator to determine whether this situation poses a real danger to students and staff. The administrator relays detailed information gathered locally from the nearest consulate and local contacts such as police and government officials regarding:

- The incident's proximity to students and staff;
- Its impact on the availability of food, water, and medical supplies;
- The target of unrest, if the incident is political;
- The intensity of the emergency or of the political 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;
- The advice of the nearest U.S. Consulate.

In the event the MOIA and the program administrator determine that a danger to students exists, the program administrator will inform the MOIA what the provider plans to do for the students.

**Step 3:** Once the essential facts have been gathered, the MOIA informs the SRVPAA. The following issues should be discussed:

- Issues of health, safety, academics, financial aid, and public relations;
- Contacting students where possible;
- Contacting the student's next of kin;
- Assisting with an evacuation plan, if necessary (considering 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);
- Designating an Incident Commander at the home institution to remain in communication with the provider's program administrator;
- Preparing a list of individuals to be alerted once the entire plan is in place;
- Coordinating with the TTUHSC Office of Communications to determine who the university spokesperson for the situation should be and channeling any questions from the media through that spokesperson;
- Providing appropriate individuals with daily bulletins until the crisis is over;
- Assessing the impact of the incident once ended and documenting all actions taken in an after-action written report.

## **Emergencies Involving a Serious Illness or Injury to Students Participating in a Program Utilizing a Provider (i.e. Himalayan Health Exchange, Engineers Without Borders)**

**Step 1:** The on-call person relays the information recorded on the Emergency Initial Intake Form to the MOIA immediately.

**Step 2:** The MOIA contacts the program administrator to ascertain the nature of the injury or illness. When applicable, review the student's Student Health / Emergency Treatment Authorization form for any information that might be helpful.

**Step 3:** The MOIA discusses the situation with the SRVPAA. Together they coordinate to:

- Contact the appropriate dean to inform the next of kin of the student's health;
- Work with HTH Worldwide as needed.

**Step 4:** In the event that evacuation is necessary, the MOIA will coordinate efforts with the program administrator and HTH Worldwide.

## **Emergencies Involving the Death of a Student Participating in a Program Utilized by a Provider (i.e. Himalayan Health Exchange, Engineers Without Borders)**

**Step 1:** The on-call person relays the information recorded on the Emergency Initial Intake Form to the MOIA immediately.

**Step 2:** The MOIA contacts the program administrator to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the death.

**Step 3:** The MOIA discusses the situation with the SRVPAA. Together they coordinate to:

- Determine whether any additional action needs to be taken and what other members of the ART team, including the department chair, need to be contacted;
- Contact the appropriate dean to inform the student's next of kin;
- Contact HTH Worldwide and coordinate with them regarding the repatriation of remains;
- Inform the TTUHSC Office of Communications who will determine who the institution's spokesperson for the situation should be and channel any questions from the media through that spokesperson.



## **Emergencies Involving the Arrest of a Student Participating in an International Program**

**Step 1:** The on-call person relays the information recorded on the Emergency Initial Intake Form to the MOIA immediately.

**Step 2:** The MOIA talks with the program administrator to gather as many facts as possible about the incident.

**Step 3:** The MOIA calls the U.S. State Department's Citizen Emergency Center at (202) 647-5225 for suggestions and assistance. The Citizen Emergency Center and local U.S. Consular office cannot get a student out of jail, demand a student's release, represent the student at trial, provide legal advice, or pay legal fees and / or fines; however they can:

- Visit the student in jail;
- Provide a list of attorneys;
- Notify TTUHSC and the student's next of kin of the situation and relay information and/or requests on behalf of the student (but only with the student's permission);
- Intercede with local authorities to make sure that the student's rights under local law are fully observed and that the student is treated humanely, according to internationally accepted standards;
- Protest mistreatment or abuse to the appropriate authorities.

**Step 4:** Once the essential facts have been gathered, the MOIA informs the SRVPAA. Together they coordinate to:

- Determine what additional action needs to be taken and what other members of the ART team, including the department chair, need to be contacted;
- Contact the appropriate dean to inform the student's next of kin;
- Develop a daily communication plan;
- Inform the TTUHSC Office of Communications 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;
- Assess the impact of the incident once it has ended and document all actions taken in an after-action written report.

## **Emergencies Involving a Student Who is Missing from an International Program or the Kidnapping of a Student Participating in an International Program**

**Step 1:** The on-call person relays the information recorded on the Emergency Initial Intake Form to the MOIA immediately.

**Step 2:** The MOIA talks with the program administrator to gather as many facts as possible about the incident including where and with whom the student was last seen.

**Step 3:** The MOIA calls the U.S. State Department's Citizen Emergency Center at (202) 647-5225 for suggestions and assistance.

**Step 4:** Once the essential facts have been gathered, the MOIA informs the SRVPAA. Together they coordinate to:

- Determine what additional action needs to be taken and what other members of the ART team, including the department chair, need to be contacted;
- Contact the appropriate dean to inform the student's next of kin;
- Develop a daily communication plan;
- Inform the TTUHSC Office of Communications 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;
- Assess the impact of the incident once it has ended and document all actions taken in an after-action written report.

# 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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, HTH Worldwide, etc. been called?): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Advice of local authorities, U.S. embassy / consulate, HTH Worldwide, 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 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. Are there any changes that should be considered to prevent a similar incident from happening in the future?