

# TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

## MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY OFF CAMPUS ACTIVITIES



### LOCATION

- Be informed and mindful of local laws and culture, specifically norms that differ from what the participants would be used to, or that could result in a heavy penalty, even the death penalty in some cases. This could be related to cultural customs, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or clothing.
- Remain vigilant in areas with higher levels of crime. In these areas it is especially important as participants could be targeted as tourists to the region.
- Plan travel/walking routes ahead when traveling to new or unfamiliar locations. Participants can get lost or disoriented in unfamiliar locations.
- Prepare accordingly if traveling to locations prone to natural disasters or hazardous weather conditions (including unfavourable driving conditions). Participants should have appropriate equipment, clothing and first aid kits.
- Have contingency plans in place for locations with unreliable 3rd party transportation or communication services.
- If traveling internationally, register with the Government of Canada Registration of Canadians Abroad program. This free service allows the Government of Canada to notify the registered traveler in case of an emergency, natural disaster or civil unrest abroad, or a personal emergency at home.
- If traveling internationally, download the International SOS app to leverage their healthcare, medical assistance and security services. This includes pre-travel location specific planning guidance. MRU Membership Number: **27AYCA49888**.
- For personal security reasons, limit the information you share on social media about your travel locations. Refrain from posting real-time travel updates.



### HEALTH AND MEDICAL

- If there are participants with life threatening medical conditions or allergies it should be noted on the group record (not the student's personal details), and planned for accordingly. The group must ensure that an epi pen or other relevant emergency devices be carried throughout the trip. If someone has a severe nut allergy, this should be noted so other participants do not bring nut products with them.
- Some prescription medication may be legal in Canada but not in the host country (i.e. narcotics to treat anxiety/depression or diabetic syringes). Check local laws before traveling with medication.
- Plan accordingly if traveling to locations where fresh food may be not readily available. Vegetarian or other specialty diets may be difficult to follow.
- Take necessary precautions in areas with insect borne diseases/illnesses (i.e. malaria, lyme disease, tick-borne encephalitis)

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### ACTIVITY TYPE

- When engaging in outdoor activities, be mindful and plan accordingly for exposure to wild animals, insect bites/stings, poisonous plants/flowers (poison ivy, wild parsnip, water hemlock, giant hogweed etc.), and potential for extreme weather conditions (cold, heat, weather related disasters).
- Take into account any activity specific hazards that may be applicable. Prepare accordingly, including consideration for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Watercraft activities – Canoes, kayaks or motorized boats – Risk management plans should note who will be operating watercraft and whether they have the appropriate certification/licenses.
- Water activities - Swimming, scuba diving or snorkeling – The Risk management plan should note any additional details about the activity plans, eg: travel in pairs, no water activities during bad weather, etc. It should also be noted that the students will confirm with their personal travel insurance provider that they will be covered if they are injured while participating in these activities.



### INFORMATION AND CYBER SECURITY

- Always maintain physical control of all your devices.
- Avoid connecting to public/unsecured networks, including hotel WiFi, without using the MRU VPN.
- Choose private browsing when accessing websites and clear your internet browser of history, caches, cookies, and temporary files after each use.
- Do not use public USB/wireless charging stations.
- Never plug unknown devices into MRU equipment/systems or connect to unknown Bluetooth devices.
- Turn off devices when traveling through security and customs.
- Only travel with the necessary MRU files and data. Some countries may have legislation that gives them a legal authority to access or take possession of any information that is in the custody of visiting persons. This includes any data and research that participants may be travelling with. Some intangible transfers of technological knowledge and capabilities could constitute a breach of Canada's export control legislation and regulations or Defence Production Act.
- Don't install software updates, patches or unnecessary applications.
- Monitor your devices for unusual behaviour, such as performance issues, pop-ups or reduced battery performance. If you encounter issues, contact the MRU IT Service Desk immediately: **403.440.6000**. Do not take the device to local repair shops.
- Information and research security is a growing risk. Even if participants are not traveling for research purposes, bad actors can use MRU faculty/staff/students to obtain information. Avoid discussing your work/reason for travel in public spaces. Ask yourself what is normal – strangers/unfamiliar individuals that strike up conversations can have ulterior motives.