International Travel Guide for Practicum

Students wishing to conduct an international practicum must receive approval for their travel. Travel for practicum is considered university business and is subject to all UTHealth policies for traveling abroad.

Depending on your travel destinations and the length of your trip, required travel approvals can take 4-8 weeks to complete.

The Office of Public Health Practice will help you obtain the necessary institutional approvals for your travel. Please follow all steps below.

STEP 1: Notify the Office of Public Health Practice at practicum@uth.tmc.edu of your international travel plans.
Let us know where you will travel for your practicum, your anticipated travel dates, and the name of the organization you will be working with.

STEP 2: Read and follow UTHealth’s policies for international travel.
Student International Travel Requirements
Step-by-Step Guide for Students Traveling Internationally
UTHealth Travel to Restricted Regions

STEP 3: Check travel advisories for your travel destinations.
Look up the advisory level of each of your travel destinations and connections (stopovers/layovers) on the U.S. Department of State’s Country Information website.

When checking the U.S. Department of State’s travel advisory level, it is very important that you read the entire advisory for information about your specific destination within that country. The level for your destination city, state, or region could be higher (level 3 or 4) than the advisory level for the overall country (level 1 or 2). See example.

Next, look up the advisory level for each of your travel destinations and connections on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s Travel Notices website.
Complete the instructions under Step 4 if either a or b below applies to your university business (practicum) destinations or connections (stopovers, layovers) to and from these destinations. We advise against connecting through countries with a level 3 or higher travel advisory or warning, if possible.

a.) U.S. Department of State’s website lists a **level 3 or 4 travel advisory** for any of your university business (practicum) destinations or connections.

b.) CDC’s Travel website lists a **warning level 3** for any of your university business (practicum) destinations or connections.

If neither a nor b applies to your trip, then you may skip Step 4 and go to Step 5.

Per UTHealth travel policy, continue to check the U.S. Department of State’s and CDC’s travel websites as your trip approaches. **If the travel advisory for any university business destination or connection changes to a level 3 or higher, you must apply travel exemption approval prior to your departure (Step 4).**

If you need help determining whether your travel requires an exemption, contact the Office of Public Health Practice or Yuliana Nunez in the Office of Global Health Initiatives.

**STEP 4: Apply for Travel Exemption, if applicable.**

Submit an **Application for Exemption from Travel Restrictions** to the UTHealth Office of Global Health Initiatives, if either a or b under Step 3 applies to your trip.

Note: To submit the online travel exemption application, you must be logged into the UTHealth intranet.

The Office of Global Health Initiatives (OGHI) and the International Travel Oversight Committee will review your travel exemption request and provide further instructions. Their review usually takes 2-3 weeks. OGHI will email you their decision. If an exemption is granted, OGHI will send a Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims form for your signature.

**STEP 5: Book your airfare.**

You **must** use Corporate Travel Planners (at 866-366-1142) to book your airfare if you plan to receive funding or reimbursement from UTHealth sources for any part of your trip.

**STEP 6: Create a complete travel agenda for each leg of your trip.**

*See travel agenda example.*

List the start and end dates of your practicum on a separate line.

For personal travel, include the start-end dates and note the purpose as "personal’ or "vacation."

Include separate entries for travel connections.
STEP 7: **Register your trip details with International SOS.**

International SOS (ISOS) is an emergency response organization whose services are available at no cost to students traveling on university business. Entering your trip details in ISOS will enable the service to locate and contact you in case of an emergency.

1. Log in at [https://www.internationalsos.com](https://www.internationalsos.com) and use membership ID **11BSGC000037**.
2. Enter your trip details for your practicum travel in the “My Trips” section. If you purchased your airfare through Corporate Travel Planners, your flights should have already been entered.
3. Enter a contact phone number that can be used to contact you during your travel.
4. Enter your lodging information for all university business (practicum) segment(s) of your travel under the “Add Accommodations” tab.
5. Enter any planned ground transportation for your practicum under the “Add Ground Transportation” tab.
6. Provide at least one emergency contact in the emergency record section. If possible, include at least one emergency contact in the U.S.
7. Print out the ISOS screens showing your name and My Trips.
8. Review and print out the ISOS ID card and policy brochure on the Student International Travel Accident and Sickness Policy webpage and take these with you when you travel.
9. Take your current medical insurance card with you when you travel.

STEP 8: **Submit your practicum learning contract.**

Mark your practicum setting as “international” in the learning contract.

STEP 9: **Complete and sign the Student International Travel for Practicum Application.**

STEP 10: **Make sure the dates in all your travel documents match each other.**

Conflicting dates on these documents will slow down your travel approval. If you plan to conduct part of your project in the U.S, however, your learning contract may have different project start and end dates.

STEP 11: **Email the documents below to practicum@uth.tmc.edu.**

- Student International Travel for Practicum Application
- Travel Agenda
- ISOS printouts showing your name and “My Trips” section.
- Flight itinerary showing the departure/arrival time for all departures and destinations, including connecting flights.
- Confirmation that you have applied for a travel exemption, if applicable to your trip. (Steps 3-4). You may forward the rest of your travel paperwork if a decision is pending.
- Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims form, if applicable to your trip (Step 4)
- Learning Contract
**STEP 12:** **Sign a Request for Travel Authorization.**

Once we have reviewed your travel documents, we will complete a Request for Travel Authorization form (RTA) on your behalf.

We will e-mail the RTA form to you for your signature.

Sign the RTA as the traveler and route the signed page back to us.

If UTHealth is funding all or part of your travel, we will forward your travel documents to the department or program administrator at UTHealth responsible for the funds (e.g. grant or student award) supporting your travel.

Please check with this administrator to ensure you are following any travel policies specific to the source of funding for your trip. In addition, review UTHealth’s expense reimbursement policies prior to your travel.

**STEP 13:** **Wait for your travel approval.**

We will route your complete travel application for approval by the School of Public Health Dean's Office.

If your trip requires a travel exemption from the International Travel Oversight Committee (Steps 3-4), we must forward a copy of the email approving the exemption and a copy of your signed Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims form to the Dean's Office.

Travel lasting more than 29 days requires the UTHealth President’s signature on the RTA.

Once your travel is approved, we will email you a copy of the signed RTA from the practicum mailbox.

**STEP 14:** **Prepare for your travel**

You MUST consult with your international advisor in the Office of International Affairs about your practicum and your travel plans if you are an international student.

Obtain the personal documents and immunizations necessary for your international travel. For information about entry, exit, and visa requirements, check with the embassy or consulate for each country that you will travel to or through. You can locate the website and contact information for the embassy or consulate by using the “Learn about your destination” search tool on the U.S. Department of State’s travel website. The “Quick Facts” and “Entry, Exit and Visa Requirements” sections on the U.S. Department of State Country Information site also provide helpful information.

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Traveler’s Health website to search for health and vaccine recommendations for your travel. International SOS also provides health and safety recommendations for your travel.

U.S. citizens and nationals traveling abroad are eligible to enroll their trips in the U.S. Department of State’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). This is a free service that helps the U.S. embassy or consulate contact you during an emergency.
EXAMPLE: How to Check Travel Advisory Levels on the U.S. Department of State’s and CDC’s Travel Websites

1.) Go to https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html/.

2.) Type the country name of your travel destination in the “Learn about your destination” search box. In our example below, our practicum destination is Guadalajara, Mexico.

3.) Mexico has a level 2 advisory. Level 2 does not require a travel exemption. However, we must click on “Read More” to check for a higher advisory for the specific city, region, or state.
4.) **Guadalajara** is in **Jalisco** state.

   Reading through the complete travel advisory, we find that Jalisco state has been assigned **Level 3- Reconsider Travel**.

   This example is tricky because there is also a note about “no restrictions on U.S. government employees” staying in Guadalajara. This exemption does not apply to UTHealth, however, so the Level 3 advisory stands for our practicum destination. Therefore, we must follow instructions under Step 4 to apply for a travel exemption.

   **Jalisco state - Level 3: Reconsider Travel**

   Reconsider travel due to crime. Violent crime and gang activity are common in parts of Jalisco state.

   U.S. government employees are prohibited from travel to areas bordering Michoacán and Zacatecas states. U.S. government employees are prohibited from traveling between cities after dark and from using Highway 80 between Cocula and La Huerta.

   U.S. government employees may use federal toll road 150 for travel to Mexico City. However, they may not stop in the towns of La Barca or Ocotlan for any reason.

   U.S. government employees are prohibited from patronizing adult clubs and gambling establishments in Jalisco.

   **There are no restrictions on U.S. government employees for stays in the following tourist areas in Jalisco state:** **Guadalajara, Puerto Vallarta, Chapala,** and **Ajjic**.

   Visit our website for **Travel to High-Risk Areas**.

5.) Repeat steps 1-4 for each travel destination. If a **level 3 or level 4 travel advisory** appears for any of your practicum destinations or connections (layovers, stopovers) to or from your practicum, you must follow instructions under Step 4 to apply for a travel exemption.

6.) Next, check your travel destinations on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-Traveler’s Health website: **https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/**.
3.) If a **CDC Warning Level 3** appears for any of your practicum destinations or travel connections (layover, stopovers) to or from your practicum, you must follow instructions under **Step 4** to apply for a travel exemption. In the example below, we find Venezuela is the only country that currently has a CDC Warning Level 3.

However, we strongly recommend reading the CDC Travel Health Notices for each of your travel destinations.

![Travel Health Notices]

4.) Select the country from the “Where are you going?” search box to read the CDC travel health notices for your destination. Select any applicable criteria from the “What kind of traveler are you?” section (optional).

![Where are you going?](Mexico)

**What kind of traveler are you?**

*optional*

- [ ] Traveling with Children
- [ ] Chronic Disease
- [ ] Cruise Ship
- [ ] Extended Stay/Study Abroad
- [ ] Immune-Compromised Travelers
- [ ] Pregnant Women
- [ ] Mission/Disaster Relief
- [ ] Visiting Friends or Family

**Return to Travel Guide.**
TRAVEL ITINERARY EXAMPLE

- Include a complete itinerary, detailing each location of your travel.
- Include a separate entry for the start-end date of your practicum.
- Check that dates on your itinerary and other travel documents match.
- Check travel warnings for each country you are traveling to, including flight stopovers.

Itinerary for [STUDENT’S NAME]
Public Health Student Practicum
[SEMESTER]
[PRACTICUM LOCATION]
TRAVEL JUNE 5, 2017-AUGUST 13, 2017

June 5
Departure flight from Houston, TX
Arrive Toronto, Ontario

June 5-June 7
Personal/vacation

June 7
Departure flight from Toronto, Ontario

June 8
Arrive airport in Dehli, India

June 9-June 11
Personal/vacation

June 12-August 11
Conduct Practicum at [HOST SITE’S NAME]

August 12
Departure flight from Dehli, India

August 13
Arrive airport in Toronto, Ontario (connection flight)
Arrive airport in Houston

Return to Travel Guide.