

## **Berry College Policy on Travel Advisories by the United States Department of State**

Those considering international travel should familiarize themselves with political, health, crime, and other safety-related conditions prevailing in any country or area to be visited. One source of information is the [U.S. Department of State](https://www.state.gov), which provides travel information on all countries.

### **U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory Levels:**

**Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions:** *This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is some risk in any international travel. Conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States and may change at any time.*

**Level 2 - Exercise Increased Caution:** *Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security.*

**Level 3 - Reconsider Travel:** *Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security.*

**Level 4 – Do Not Travel:** *This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the U.S. government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. The Department of State advises that U.S. citizens not travel to the country or to leave as soon as it is safe to do so.*

*The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in the country-specific Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.*

*The Department of State issues an overall Travel Advisory level for a country, but levels of advice may vary for specific locations or areas within a country. For instance, they may advise U.S. citizens to “Exercise increased caution” (Level 2) in a country, but to “Reconsider travel” (Level 3) to a particular area within the country.*

### **Berry College Travel Policies:**

*Berry College prohibits travel to countries and/or areas that have been given a level 4 Travel Advisory by the U.S. Department of State.*

*Requests to allow activities in a Travel Advisory level 3 country/area should be directed to the Director of International Experiences for approval after consultation with the Provost and General Counsel, as appropriate. The written proposal must include:*

- Details on your proposed program, including dates, locations, organizations that you will be working with, and contact persons on-site.
- Reasons why your goals cannot be met by traveling to another country that is not currently under a Level 3 or 4 Advisory from the U.S. Department of State.
- A plan for relocation, in case the situation becomes too severe for you to stay.
- A list of who you have consulted about your travel to this particular location.

Berry College International Experiences, College Counsel, and the College Provost assess activities in high-risk locations. When requested to evaluate activities in a particular country or region, this team consults relevant faculty and staff, as well as external resources, such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), iNext travel insurance, local governments, and local contacts/staff on site.

The team makes recommendations for participation in Berry College approved activities based on the following guidelines. Note that even though the U.S. Department of State references U.S. citizens, these guidelines apply to Berry College community members of all nationalities. Berry College’s decisions are guided by consideration for the health, safety, and security of the entire Berry College community.

**Level 3 Travel Advisory:** Berry College will typically suspend or cancel activities if the U.S. Department of State issues a Level 3 Travel Advisory.

For activities in countries or regions in this category:

Applications/requests are considered, but typically not approved.

If an activity is approved, based on a review, Berry College will generally advise the use of extreme caution and awareness, and may place conditions on travel to, as well as within, the country.

If participants are already on site, Berry College may suspend or cancel activities and instruct the affected participants to leave the country as soon as possible.

**Level 4 Travel Advisory:** Applications/requests will not be approved.

If participants are already on site, Berry College will suspend or cancel activities and instruct the affected participants to leave the country as soon as possible.

**Cancellation Policy:** Travel Advisories are updated on a regular basis. If a Travel Advisory becomes more severe while participants are on site, Berry College may suspend or cancel activities and instruct the affected participants to leave the country as soon as possible.

Per the Berry College International Experiences Release and Hold Harmless Agreement, the College reserves the right to cancel without penalty the activity, and to make any alterations, deletions, or modifications in the itinerary and/or the scheduled activities. Any costs associated with withdrawal or removal from the program, relocation of program due to emergencies, or evacuation from the host country not covered by iNext insurance will be borne by the participant. Berry College will make a reasonable effort to facilitate the completion of an activity's academic component.

**Acknowledgement of Risks and Release:** Berry College community members who have been approved to participate in activities in countries under a Level 3 Travel Advisory will be required to sign an Acknowledgement of Risks and Release to acknowledge they have reviewed the travel advisory and are aware of the risks associated with their travel. Sometimes, in the case of students, their parents or guardians will be asked to execute a Parental Acknowledgement.

**Authority of the Provost and Reviewing Staff:** The Provost, in consultation with the staff listed above or unilaterally, has sole and complete discretion with respect to any decision regarding the approval, suspension, modification, or cancellation of any program involving travel to a country (or area within a country) under a Level 3 or 4 Travel Advisory. Decisions of the Provost are final and should a faculty or staff member, or student, choose to travel to such locations regardless of the decision of the Provost, Berry College will not provide academic credit, compensation or reimbursement of expenses, nor logistical/diplomatic/legal support or assistance, and all persons involved may be held responsible for any violations of the faculty/staff handbook, Viking Code, or other applicable policies.