



## **Risk Management**

## **Travel Guidelines**

**Revised April 2022**

The Pacific Lutheran University Travel Guidelines were initially issued in February 2004 by the Office of Finance and Operations. The guidelines are reviewed annually and revised as needed. The April 2022 revision has been prepared by Sue Liden, Director of Risk Services

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## I. Introduction

The purpose of the risk management travel guidelines is to promote safe and enjoyable travel for university administrators, staff, faculty and students. The guidelines are designed to assist leaders in planning off-campus activities. These guidelines are not intended to modify any existing rules or policies or create new liabilities or obligations of Pacific Lutheran University. For guidance on the use of the University's resources to pay for travel and expenses please refer to the Travel and Business Expense Policy. This policy can be found at <https://www.plu.edu/business-office/travel-and-business-expense-policy/>. Any rules or policies can be changed without reference to these guidelines and those rules or policies will control regardless of statements made in these guidelines.

## II. University Sponsored Activities

### A. Determination

Official off-campus activities receive the benefit of the university's insurance and other support. Affiliation with PLU doesn't equate to sponsorship of travel or activities. The leader of a group activity should check with his or her supervisor to learn the details of what resources are available and how the activity can become officially sanctioned. Travel and activities that are not covered by the university's insurance may leave the trip leader and participants vulnerable to legal liability, payment of expenses and contractual obligations.

**Criteria for determining sponsored status:** If all of the following questions can be answered affirmatively then it is likely that the activity will be classified as sponsored and benefit from university insurance resources. If all or some of the criteria have a negative response, your activity may not be covered by university insurance.

- Is the activity part of the educational mission of the university?
- Is the function of an activity an official function of a university academic or administrative unit?
- Do university personnel, acting within their capacity as university employees, have a major planning role in this activity?
- Has the Department Head, Dean and/or Chair approved the program or activity?
- Is there direct supervision by a university employee, acting within the scope of their employment throughout the course of the activity?
- Is the activity financially supported by the university?

### B. Off-campus class/student organization activities

Off-campus class and student organization activities should be planned using these guidelines and approved purchasing practices. Student organizations should also refer to the PLU Clubs and Organizations website.

Trip leaders must complete and take the [Emergency Information Template](#) and copies of signed *Waivers* on the trip.

Leave an itinerary, contact information and original signed waivers on campus with someone in your department who can be easily contacted.

### C. Off-campus employee gatherings, conferences and retreats

Off-campus gatherings, retreats, and professional development travel required of employees should be planned using these guidelines and approved purchasing practices. Optional conference and professional development travel should also be planned according to these travel guidelines.

Complete and take the [Emergency Information Template](#) with you. Leave an itinerary and contact information on campus with someone in your department who can be easily contacted.

Waivers are usually not necessary for employee retreats, gatherings or conference travel. International travel programs may require employees to provide medical disclosures and sign waivers.

Accidents that occur during appointed meeting or gathering times may be eligible for worker's compensation or a combination of insurance resources. Travel to and from off-campus gatherings is not covered by university insurance when it originates the from employee's home address.

Employees involved in university activities as a student or some other non-employee context, must complete the same processes required of the other participants (waiver, purchasing insurance, etc.). Worker's compensation and other employee benefits do not cover activities in a non-employee context.

#### **D. University policies that govern off-campus activities**

Off-campus instructional activities and locations should be planned in accordance with university policies, including those concerning alcohol and drug use, vehicle use, student misconduct, smoking, sexual harassment, consensual relationships, and principles of academic freedom. In some circumstances these policies may also apply to non-instructional activities even though the activity is off-campus (for example, sexual harassment is prohibited no matter where or when it occurs).

As a result, participants should be familiar with PLU policies. Employee policies and student conduct codes and handbooks can be found at: <https://www.plu.edu/personnel-manual/> and <http://www.plu.edu/conduct/Student Code of Conduct and Procedures>.

### **III. Arranging Transportation**

#### **A. Determination of transportation requirements**

Factors to consider when determining transportation requirements for an off-campus activity include:

- distance to be traveled
- number of participants
- availability of public transportation
- availability of PLU owned and/or rental vehicles
- [PLU's Vehicle Safety Policy](#)
- budget restrictions

#### **B. Use of personal vehicles**

**Employee or student owned vehicles used for PLU business are NOT covered by PLU insurance.** Avoid the use of any personal vehicles for university-sponsored travel. PLU employees and students can drive university and rental vehicles as long as they meet the requirements outlined in the Vehicle Safety Policy.

*Instructors/trip leaders should not suggest, encourage or facilitate carpool arrangements.* Announce to students/participants that they are responsible for their own transportation when PLU transportation is not available for local field trips, off-campus classes or activities. The Off-Site Class/Activity Notice may be used to inform students/participants of the location of the class/activity and their requirement to provide their own transportation. If public transportation is available it can be noted on this form.

Mileage reimbursement is available to employees who use their personal vehicles for university-sponsored travel. Mileage is intended to offset the costs of operating a vehicle (gas, wear and tear, and insurance). Refer to the <https://www.plu.edu/business-office/travel-and-business-expense-policy/>.

#### **C. PLU Vehicle Safety Policy**

All members of the university who are authorized to drive university vehicles or operate a vehicle to conduct university business must operate vehicles in strict accordance with all Washington State and Pierce County laws or the laws in the jurisdiction where they are operating the vehicle. ***No work or errand is of sufficient importance to violate safe driving***

**practices.** Safe vehicle operation is the responsibility of all members of the PLU community while participating in all PLU business or activities.

Be familiar with the PLU Vehicle Safety Policy. The policy includes motor vehicle record check requirements, driver training requirements, auto insurance information, accident reporting instructions and van transportation policies.

#### **D. PLU/rental vehicles**

Information about rental of PLU fleet vans and commercial rental vehicles can be found on the Campus Safety website. PLU has contracted for a discounted vehicle rental rate from Enterprise Rent-A-Car and National. The Parkland branch of Enterprise Rent-A-Car will drop off rental vehicles to PLU Campus Safety.

#### **E. Airplane travel**

**Personally, owned aircraft are not covered by university insurance.** The owner of the aircraft and trip leaders assume all liability for people and accidents while aboard the aircraft. **Privately owned aircraft should never be utilized for university-sponsored education or recreational programming.**

**Chartered aircraft travel.** PLU must be named as additional insured for chartered airplane trips. That means a certificate of insurance with additional insured status must be requested and received from the company prior to travel. A copy of the certificate of insurance must be sent to: Pacific Lutheran University, Attention: Administrative Services, Tacoma, WA 98447. Require participants to sign a waiver before embarking on travel in chartered aircrafts.

**Commercial Flights.** During travel in a commercial airliner, participants are covered by the insurance of the airliner not the university insurance. Commercial airline flight does not require additional insured status.

#### **F. Watercraft**

Watercraft not owned by PLU are not covered by PLU insurance. Activities that occur while aboard the uninsured watercraft are not covered by PLU insurance. PLU's foreign travel insurance policy will cover travel in watercraft for students and employees participating in travel abroad programs. Require participants to sign a waiver before embarking on any chartered water travel.

### **IV. Travel Planning Requirements – for additional information see Appendix A.**

#### **A. Itinerary**

When planning an off-campus activity the trip leader should submit a written itinerary to the department head/organization advisor. This itinerary should include:

- Purpose of trip
- Names of participants
- Mode of transportation
- Name(s) of PLU authorized drivers (if a PLU or rental vehicle is used)
- Contact information for trip leader (e-mail and phone numbers)
- Address of destination(s)
- Date and time of departure from campus
- Estimated time of arrival to destination
- Estimated time of departure from destination
- Date and time of return to campus

## B. Plan adjustment/cancellation

Rather than expose participants to risk, delay departure or make itinerary adjustments for inclement weather, political unrest, or natural disasters. Consult with on-campus contacts so that the university is aware of any changes made to the travel itinerary.

International travel is governed by the University's Policy on PLU Travel to Countries with Travel Advisories. This policy can be found on the Wang Center for Global and Community Engaged Education [Documents and Forms webpage](#).

## C. Information to participants

**1. Potential hazards/dangers.** Travel leaders should warn participants about and prepare them for hazards or conditions they may encounter during travel. Describe the cultural customs, dangers, and general environs of the destination(s) well in advance of the departure date. It is a good idea to engage travel participants in brainstorming about potential dangers along with appropriate precautions. These risks should be noted on the waiver form that participants sign prior to departing on the trip.

### 2. Standards of conduct.

**Students.** Discussions about the risks the participants might encounter are also a good way of encouraging appropriate conduct. By warning them of risks or concerns, the trip leader is also suggesting conduct parameters. Trip leaders should remind students of the Student Code of Conduct and may impose additional restrictions that seem appropriate. Trip leaders have the authority to remove travelers from a program at any time because of conduct, inappropriate preparation (i.e. unsuitable clothing, lacking medical information, or waivers), security or medical concerns, and natural disasters.

Even though participants do have to comply with the applicable rules of conduct imposed by the Student Code of Conduct or the trip leader, the participants are responsible for their own actions and behaviors at all times. Although trip leaders may not have to supervise participants during free time, the trip leader should be aware of where the participants are and what they are doing so that the trip leader can respond to medical or legal emergencies that might occur during a student's personal time.

Trip leaders may choose to set limits and curfews for student's off-time activities.

**Employees.** University employees and/or trip leaders should carefully consider personal, social, and instructional interactions through the course of the travel program or activity. The employee/trip leader should be aware of how the situation, setting, and personal conduct could be perceived by the students and colleagues and act accordingly.

## D. Waivers

Waivers are documents designed to warn participants of risks and require that the participant sign and return the waiver to the trip leader prior to participating in the activity/trip. If you have questions about waivers, call the Director of Risk Services, 253-535-7116.

### 1. Purpose

- Creates awareness for trip leaders of risks and better equips them for incidents that might arise.
- Increase awareness of the risks and obligations participants will assume and for which they are responsible. These include not only the risks of injury or sickness, but also unexpected travel costs, delays, itinerary changes, and property losses.
- Demonstrates that PLU has taken reasonable steps to inform participants of risks; and that PLU has taken reasonable precautions to prepare participants for the risks of the trip and activities.
- Protects PLU from unwarranted lawsuits. (If the institution is not negligent.)



- Waivers have become standard across the nation and are recommended as a Best Practice by our insurance consortium.

## 2. Waiver requirements.

### a. *Waivers are NEEDED when:*

- PLU has full or limited control of the activity and the activity is either inherently dangerous, includes overnight travel, or travel by a PLU vehicle or rental vehicle.
- One waiver can be used for multiple similar events over a fixed time period.
  - Fixed time period – one semester or one academic year.
  - Similar events – same activity/risks, same or different venue

### b. *Waivers are NOT NEEDED when:*

- PLU has full or limited control of the activity and the activity does not include overnight travel, is not inherently dangerous and the university is not providing transportation.
- PLU has no control of a voluntary activity. (PLU's name should not be used with any advertising of the activity.)
- Trip is voluntary and not required for an academic course; and the university is not providing transportation.

## 3. Types of waivers.

**a. Student Activity/Club Waiver:** Used when a waiver is required and the activity is not a club or intramural sport.

**b. Club Sport/Intramurals Waiver:** Used for club sports and intramural athletics.

**c. Departure from Group Waiver:** Ask participant(s) to sign this waiver if they will depart from the group itinerary and/or transportation and use independent means to travel to or from an activity location. When all participants are responsible for independent travel to and from events this waiver is not necessary or appropriate.

The Wang Center for International Programs will provide the waivers for all international trips and any other trips that they organize. If you have questions about the appropriate waiver to use, contact the Director or Risk Services at 253-535-7116 for clarification.

## 4. Administration.

**How to administer the waiver.** Always complete the following items when asking participants to sign waivers. Failure to do one of them will compromise the protection of the waiver and the participant.

- List the risks of the activity, from the least to most extreme. Insert the list of risks into the waiver (be specific and include the extremes like death and dismemberment).
- Inform participants that by signing the waiver they are:
  - releasing their right to legal recourse; and
  - assuming responsibility for the risks of the activity – both physical and financial.
- Obtain a signed waiver for each participant **before** leaving. A participant should not be allowed to participate in the activity without a signed waiver. If the participant is a minor (under 18), obtain signatures from both the participant and parent/guardian. (The waiver process informs parents and students of risks and obligations to them. Notice that parents do not have the authority to waive the claims of the minors, so, instead, they are asked to indemnify the university against any such claims.)
- For additional tips on effectively completing a waiver, refer to Appendix B.

Retain waivers in department files for three years. For those under 18, retain for three years after age 18. Departments may opt to send signed waivers to Risk Services for the retention period.

## E. Preparation for Emergencies

**1. Preparation for Emergencies.** Trip leader should carry the [Emergency Information Template](#) at all times during travel. Include after-hour and daytime campus contacts, destination hospitals and police phones and addresses. Hospital and police locations and phone numbers can be found on the internet. If you have a cell phone leave it on or check it frequently for messages so that you can respond if participants call you. Remind participants to leave their cell phones on or to check for messages so that the trip leader can easily contact participants at any time.

**2. Obtaining medical treatment during off-campus travel.**

All participants should have health insurance. Confirm that all participants carry their health insurance card on the trip. The trip leader should carry emergency contact information for each participant.

Some medical providers will not treat travelers without payment in advance even with proof of insurance. If a participant is unable to pay for treatment, we suggest that the parents or spouse are contacted to obtain a credit card number. If all else fails, provide a university credit card or call a university contact. Remind patients to get medical records and receipts at the time of treatment. These records are required for reimbursement from an insurance company.

Medical expenses are the responsibility of participants. The university must be reimbursed *immediately* upon return when treatment, services, or supplies were funded by the university.

## V. Insurance

### A. Vehicle.

**1. Personal vehicles.** PLU auto insurance may not provide coverage for personal employee or student vehicles when used for PLU business. The vehicle owner's insurance will be primary. In case of an accident report the accident to your insurance company and notify your department head.

**2. Rental vehicles.** When renting a vehicle in foreign countries (including Canada) **always** purchase rental vehicle insurance. When renting in the United States **do not** purchase rental vehicle insurance because PLU's auto insurance covers PLU authorized drivers during PLU sponsored activities in PLU owned or rental vehicles. Always check rental vehicles for damage before and after use. Document any damage, or lack of damage, on the forms provided by the vendors.

### B. Health/Worker's Compensation.

Students and employees participating in PLU sponsored international travel are covered by the university's foreign travel insurance policy. This policy is a short-term policy that covers emergency medical treatment, evacuation and repatriation in foreign countries. Each participant will be issued insurance information that should be carried at all times.

Students participating in PLU sponsored travel in the United States are responsible for their own health insurance. Students should carry proof of their insurance coverage at all times.

Worker's compensation insurance will cover medical expenses for employees who become injured in the performance of their job responsibilities. Some care providers will not treat without payment in advance regardless of insurance. Be prepared to provide a university or personal credit card to pay for medical care in such situations. Obtain medical records and receipts for care and supplies immediately for insurance purposes and reimbursement. Report the claim to Human Resources upon return to campus. Medical expenses for healthcare treatment unrelated to an injury caused by the job are the responsibility of employees.

**C. Travel.** PLU's [Assist America Global Emergency Services](#) program provides 24-hour emergency assistance to PLU employees, experiencing a medical or other emergency when they travel 100 miles or more from home on PLU business. Travel must be less than 90 days. Please note that this does not replace medical insurance. Information on this program is available on the Risk Services website.

**D. Property.** The university insurance does not cover personal belongings that are taken on a trip or located in an employee's office, classroom or other campus locations or a student's residence hall room or other campus locations. Individuals should purchase renters or homeowner's insurance for personal belongings. Unnecessary documents, credit cards, identification and valuables should be left at home

**E. Liability.**

While acting within the scope of employment responsibilities, PLU employees involved with university sponsored travel are covered by the university's general liability and professional liability policies. Professional development and conference travel are often included. To be sure, check with the Director of Risk Services in advance (253-535-7116). In any case, be sure your program is "sponsored" and authorized because you will not be covered during unauthorized travel and activities.

Students and participants who are not employees, as well as employees who are participating in the activity when the activity is not part of their job, typically are not covered by insurance. This includes activities involving clubs and other organizations' activities, even if those activities are approved by the university.

Intentionally harmful or negligent acts may not be covered by university insurance.

**VI. Response to Emergency/Medical Incidents during Travel.**

**A. Emergency Management.** Trip leaders can find themselves faced with crisis or emergencies while away from campus. Situations listed below require the trip leader to contact the university staff, no matter the distance from campus. A trip leader should always consult with the appropriate campus parties about any situation when feeling uncomfortable or uncertain. *Situations requiring emergency management that should be reported to immediately to Campus Safety include:*

- Death or serious injury/illness (student or employee)
- Emotional or psychological problems (student or employee)
- Incarceration or accused of committing a crime (student or employee)
- Victim of a crime: theft, assault, rape, harassment, etc. (student or employee)
- Vehicle accident or damage
- Political unrest or natural disaster

**B. Vehicle accidents.** Call Campus Safety immediately in the event of any accident that occurs while on PLU business or driving a PLU or rental vehicle. Campus Safety will provide instructions and support. If driving a PLU or rental vehicle avoid providing personal contact information to anyone but the police. Substitute PLU addresses and phone numbers. Expenses for repair or damage of university fleet or rental vehicles will be charged to university departments. If an insurance claim is filed, departments are responsible for the deductible.

**C. Incidents requiring medical treatment.**

The trip leader is typically thrust into the role of advocate for the patient in the event of medical emergencies. Some medical providers will not treat travelers without payment in advance even with proof of insurance. If a participant is unable to pay for treatment, we suggest someone call parents or spouses to obtain a credit card number. If all else fails, provide a university credit card or call a university contact. Remind patients to get medical records and receipts at the time of treatment. It can be difficult or impossible to get records afterwards, particularly in foreign countries. The records are required for reimbursement from an insurance company.

Medical expenses are the responsibility of participants. The university must be reimbursed immediately upon return when treatment, services, or supplies were funded by the university.

## Appendix A: Travel Checklist

### Pre-Travel:

- \_\_\_ Determine sponsorship for trip and obtain authorization
- \_\_\_ Complete pre-travel authorization forms and submit to supervisor.
- \_\_\_ Plan your trip itinerary carefully. *International trips must be coordinated through the Wang Center for International Programs; local trips should be planned using your department guidelines and university purchase policies.*
- \_\_\_ Arrange transportation with insured vendors and procure vehicles with adequate space. ***Do not coordinate or suggest carpools.***
- \_\_\_ Complete *Emergency Information Template*
- \_\_\_ Communicate the following information to participants in advance of travel:
  - \_\_\_ itinerary
  - \_\_\_ dangers, hazards, and risks they will assume
  - \_\_\_ precautions about personal possessions
  - \_\_\_ discuss expectations including alcohol policy
  - \_\_\_ pre-travel medical requirements and instructions for obtaining same
  - \_\_\_ encourage personal insurance policies
  - \_\_\_ explain medical treatment protocol away from campus
  - \_\_\_ explain purpose of medical statement and provide instructions for completion
  - \_\_\_ select and administer appropriate waiver(s)

### Collect and/or distribute prior to departure:

- \_\_\_ Obtain signed waivers from every participant if appropriate-retain on campus.
- \_\_\_ Leave a detailed itinerary and emergency phone numbers with someone on campus
- \_\_\_ Get travel advances or a purchasing card from the Business Office
- \_\_\_ Leave credit card information, traveler's check numbers, and copy of passport in a safe place

### Take with you and carry throughout travel:

- \_\_\_ Completed *Emergency Information Template*
- \_\_\_ Cell phone and recharging unit

### Upon return:

- \_\_\_ Shred participant telephone numbers and other personal information
- \_\_\_ Store waivers for three years in department files or send to Risk Services
- \_\_\_ Provide post-travel documentation to your department and the Wang Center for International

**Appendix B: Tips for administering an effective waiver.**

*Example of Specific Activities	*Examples of Corresponding Specific Risks	Special Precautions for Trip Leader
Water: activities near, but not in, the Water (specifics not known)	Drowning, sunburn, heat/sun stroke, vehicle accidents	Provide sunscreen; watch for riptides/undercurrents and storms
Water: Swimming	Over exertion, drowning, physical injury by sea animal or debris, sunburn, heat/sun stroke. vehicle accidents	Certify that participants can pass swim test at PLU pool, advisable to swim where lifeguards posted; swim in clean water; provide safe swimming environments (no dangerous undercurrents/riptides, storms, rocks, poisonous jellyfish, etc.); provide sunscreen; 1 participant should have CPR/First aid skills;
Water: boating, kayaking, canoeing, rafting Sitting for long periods Swimming	Over exertion, drowning, loss of personal property to water, broken bones, head injury, dismemberment, loss of vision, lacerations, sunburn, heat/sun stroke, vehicle accidents	<b>Mandatory:</b> life jacket to be worn by every individual 100% of the time on any and every vessel; provide sunscreen; 1 participant should have CPR/First aid skills; certify that participants can pass swim test at PLU pool
Hiking over physically challenging and dangerous terrain	Over exertion, head injury, dismemberment, loss of vision, lacerations, sunburn, heat/sun stroke, death, vehicle accidents	Orient participants before trip about physical skills requirements and equipment requirements; be realistic about ADA accommodations; provide sunscreen; 1 participant should have CPR/First aid skills; have cell or satellite phone on hike; advisable to ensure participants are physically matched for the activity
Hiking moderately physically challenging and dangerous terrain	Over exertion, head injury, dismemberment, loss of vision, lacerations, sunburn, heat/sun stroke, death, vehicle accidents	
Hiking in locations in safe areas over terrain that an average physically fit person will not find difficult	Over exertion, lacerations, falling, broken bones, vehicle accidents, exposure to poisonous snake and insect bites,	
Sports: specify which: basketball, football, softball, bowling, etc. Running, moving in unaccustomed ways, throwing,	Sprains to limbs, back, internal organs; bruises, face injuries, broken bones, head injury, lacerations, damage to or loss of teeth, vehicle accidents	
Road Trips: specify: shopping, art viewing, theater, or other events where participants are spectators	Vehicle accident and any kind of injuries related to an accident, crime resulting in loss of personal property and/or physical injuries	
Service Projects: specify: picking up garbage, working with children, crowds, activities using unfamiliar and potentially dangerous machines, unknown people, animals	Strains or sprains from lifting heavy objects, moving about in unfamiliar locations, exposure to illnesses	
Others? List specific physical actions and activities	List all of the worse case scenarios	Research needed precautions

**PRECAUTIONS FOR EVERY TRIP: Be realistic about reasonable accommodations and your ability to provide a safe opportunity and extra staffing! Don't endanger anyone through untested accommodations. Obtain advice from the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations.**