

## Approval for University Employee International Travel

Title/Subject: APPROVAL FOR UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Applies to:  Faculty  Staff  Students  Student Employees  Visitors  Contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: March 2026

Policy Owner: Office of Risk Management (RM)

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**PURPOSE**

This policy establishes a framework for university employees to engage in international travel for professional purposes while ensuring a balance between individual autonomy and the university's responsibility to manage health and safety risks. It aims to facilitate safe and productive international engagement by clarifying roles, responsibilities, and procedures.

**DEFINITIONS**

1. **International travel** refers to travel destinations outside the fifty states of the United States of America, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. Journeys on international waters are considered travel abroad.
2. **CMU-related international travel** includes but is not limited to student recruitment, research, teaching, conferences, collaborations, and other professional engagements endorsed, facilitated, or sponsored by the university.
3. **CMU-sponsored international travel** utilizes funds provided in any portion by CMU, directly or indirectly (examples of indirect funding would include an employee utilizing internal or external grant or gift funds).
4. **International Health and Safety Committee (IHSC)** is convened on an ad hoc basis by the Office of the Provost to consider International Travel Exemption Requests.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. **University Employee Responsibilities:**
  - a. Conduct thorough research on the destination, including health, safety, and legal considerations.
  - b. Comply with all CMU policies and US federal laws and regulations.
  - c. Comply with all partner university policies, local laws, and regulations of the host country.
  - d. Register international travel plans via the [International Travel Approval Form](#).
  - e. Provide up-to-date emergency contact information and complete any required safety training.
  - f. Request a completed [Employment Verification Letter](#) from supervisor and obtain printed copies of the three most recent [pay statements](#).
2. **University Responsibilities:**
  - a. Provide resources and guidance to support safe and informed travel decisions.
  - b. Enroll approved international travelers in comprehensive insurances.
  - c. Review and approve requests for international travel to countries or regions that have been assigned an elevated Travel Advisory.
  - d. Provide emergency assistance and support in case of incidents abroad.

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**POLICY**

All university employees are required to obtain prior approval from the appropriate divisional Vice President (who reports directly to the President) for international travel plans before embarking on their trip.

This policy applies to all university employees traveling internationally within the context of their job responsibilities at CMU, including but not limited to student recruitment, research, teaching, creative endeavors, conferences, collaborations, and other professional engagements endorsed, facilitated, or sponsored by the university.

While university employees have the autonomy to plan and execute their travel, they must adhere to procedures designed to manage health, safety, and legal risks associated with approved international travel. CMU departments and offices endorsing, facilitating, or sponsoring CMU-related international travel are responsible for informing travelers of this policy and requiring and ensuring compliance.

**1. Approval Process**

- i. University employees must request approval of their international travel plans at least 60 calendar days in advance, or as soon as reasonably possible, by completing the online [International Travel Approval Form](#).
- ii. All international travel (excluding Faculty Led Study Abroad Programs and Volunteer Center Programs) must be approved by the appropriate Vice President, or in the case of Vice President travel, approved by the President.
- iii. University employees seeking approval for international travel must review and comply with the [Business Expense Manual](#), the [Field Work Safety Policy](#), the [Export Controls Policy](#), and CMU's [data security recommendations for international travelers](#)

**2. Travel Advisories**

- i. CMU shall not sponsor, organize, facilitate, encourage, or require travel by university employees to countries or regions for which:
  - a. The U.S. Department of State has issued a Level 3 or Level 4 [Travel Advisory](#), which indicates long-term, protracted conditions making a country or region dangerous or unstable.
  - b. The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) has imposed economic and trade sanctions on the whole country (see [Office of Foreign Assets Control – Sanctions Programs and Information](#) for more details).
  - c. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued a travel health notice of Level 3 (see [CDC Travel Health Notices](#) for a complete list).
- ii. Any university employee seeking approval to travel to a country or region that has been assigned a Travel Advisory as listed above must complete and submit an International Travel Exemption Request at least 90 calendar days in advance of travel, or as soon as reasonably possible. The divisional Vice President has the discretion to submit such requests to the International Health and Safety Committee (IHSC) for consideration and recommendation. However, they also retain the authority to approve or deny requests to travel to a country or region that has been assigned a Travel Advisory as listed above, without referring the matter/consulting to the IHSC.

**3. Right to Amend, Suspend or Cancel Travel**

CMU reserves the right to amend, suspend or cancel a program or other travel (prior to departure or while in progress) if facts and circumstances are such that the university concludes the traveler's health, safety or well-being may be jeopardized or would be inconsistent with applicable U.S. government regulations or laws.

**4. Pre-Travel Process**

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- i. All university employees approved for international travel and who are U.S. citizens must register their CMU related travel with the U.S. Department of [State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (STEP), a free service that makes it easier for consular officers in U.S. embassies and consulates around the world to contact travelers during an emergency. CMU travelers with citizenship other than U.S. should register with their respective consulates or foreign offices.
- ii. All university employees approved for international travel must carry with them while traveling a completed [Employment Verification Letter](#) and copies of their three most recent pay statements.
- iii. All university employees approved for international travel must carry and are automatically enrolled in the university's designated medical, emergency evacuation, and repatriation insurance for their type of travel. This insurance policy covers medical expenses and evacuation due to security/political unrest, natural disaster, and emergency medical situations for employees and study abroad participants and provides liability, sickness and evacuation coverage for other student travelers. Note that this is supplemental coverage for the duration of the approved travel and is not intended as primary health insurance.
- iv. University employees traveling internationally for CMU business purposes are entitled to coverage under the following policies: Foreign Liability; Global Crisis; Travel Accident; Educators Legal Liability (ELL); and Workers Compensation.
- v. The Office of Risk Management will email a packet outlining these insurance coverages upon approval of the proposed travel.

**5. Travel in Violation of this Policy**

University employees who travel in violation of this policy or choose to remain in destinations after being advised by CMU to evacuate may lose eligibility for university funding/reimbursement, may not be covered by university insurance coverages, and may be subject to additional restrictions and/or discipline.

**6. International Health and Safety Committee (IHSC):**

- i. This committee is convened on an ad hoc basis by the Office of the Provost to consider International Travel Exemption Requests.
- ii. This committee includes the individuals (or their designees) holding the following positions: Vice President and General Counsel, Director of Risk Management, University Health Services Physician, Director of Research Compliance, and Director of Study Abroad. Furthermore, the Provost and Executive Vice President will appoint two faculty members to the committee and appoint the chair from among the members. The Chief Information Security Officer in the Office of Information Technology should be consulted as needed. Should the committee determine that additional expertise is necessary, it reserves the right to invite individuals with such expertise to participate in its discussions.
- iii. The IHSC will study several factors when considering an exemption request, including but not limited to: the necessity of travel as it relates to essential underlying educational goals; whether travel can be delayed or postponed; the nature of the activity; specific country risks; specific city/locality of travel; whether and how students are involved; specific travel advisories; media reports; experience of person(s) traveling; availability of local support and evacuation options; ability to communicate with traveler and traveler's ability to communicate locally; contractual obligations to travel (if any); potential university liability/risk; and other information that the IHSC deems relevant.
- iv. The IHSC may, at its discretion, recommend conditional approval of an exemption request. Conditional approvals may include specific restrictions, including but not limited to requiring a signed release in which the traveler acknowledges the heightened risk, assumes all risk, and releases CMU from all liability.

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- v. The IHSC reserves the right to amend an exemption recommendation and/or seek additional information from the traveler at any time before or during the actual travel. The IHSC may amend recommended restrictions on travel or rescind the recommendation, including any university support, including but not limited to insurance coverages.

***Central Michigan University reserves the right to make exceptions to modify or eliminate this policy and or its content. This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures or guidelines related to this subject.***

Related Policies and Laws (Add Number & Name of Significantly Related Policy(ies))	
Appendices (Optional)	
Approval Authority	Neil J. MacKinnon, President
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