

SAFETY & SECURITY HANDBOOK



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Contact Us

General Information

For coaches or teams:

617-470-6902

For participants and parents:

617-942-2882

www.goplaytours.com

Emergency Information

24/7 hotline: 617-470-6902

Introduction

Dear GoPlay Community:

In our 20+ years of operating travel programs around the world, we've had to navigate around all kinds of safety concerns. Sadly, it's become a part of modern life and one we can't ignore. At GoPlay, our mission compels us to find ways to live fully and experience a world that is increasingly complex. To achieve this mission, we take every precaution to ensure that our groups are safe and secure while traveling with us:

- We constantly monitor the advisories and recommendations of the U.S. government. We will never operate a program in any area where there are State Department travel warnings.
- If GoPlay determines a specific destination to be unsafe while a group is overseas, we will make immediate revisions to the itinerary to avoid the location in question at no additional cost to our participants.
- We proactively check in with all groups mid-trip, either in person or by phone, to ensure their well-being and confirm that all expectations are being met.
- Our 24/7 duty officer system is available to react instantly to requests and concerns to guarantee the comfort, security and safety of our groups.
- Our safety and support infrastructure is the cornerstone of our business— We go above and beyond to not only provide once in a lifetime experiences for our participants, but to also ensure that they return home safely.

Now, more than ever, we must continue on with what we've chosen to do—to travel, to engage, to teach tolerance, respect differences, shun hatred, and to see the world from a much broader perspective. No one organization, group, or individual can or should take this freedom from us.

Please rest assured that we will remain vigilant in our efforts to operate our trips safely and appropriately.

On Tour Safety

We take the welfare of each and every participant on our tours very seriously. Just as we work tirelessly to provide once-in-a-lifetime experiences to group leaders and students, we are equally committed to ensuring that all of our travelers return home safely. Here are some of the steps we take to ensure each group's safety.

Tour Managers

GoPlay Tour Managers accompany our groups every step of the way during their time on tour. These travel professionals are available 24/7 and handle all of the logistical aspects of the trip, while also providing educational commentary to meet each group's unique tastes. All new European tour managers go through a rigorous screening process or are qualified blue-badge guides. Outside of Europe, our tour managers are contracted local experts that are best in touch with the safety and security of their region. Annual training sessions are held each off-season to review best practices and procedures, and tour managers can always access the latest GoPlay information through our dedicated Tour Manager website.

Tour managers outline safety guidelines during an arrival briefing held on the first day of each tour. Throughout the tour, participants are given clear check-in locations/times and student participants are instructed to remain in groups of at least three during all free time. Should an emergency arise, our tour managers are trained to respond and have immediate access to our network of offices for further assistance.

Transportation

GoPlay utilizes regularly scheduled flights on major international airlines to transport groups to/from their destination. While on the ground, we use modern, clean and comfortable touring buses with well-trained and friendly drivers. When trains are included on an itinerary, we regularly opt for the best trains in Europe, including Eurostar, TGV and AVE. Public transportation can be used as part of sightseeing visits within a city. Before accessing public transit systems, tour managers brief groups on general safety procedures and ensure that all travelers know the route to be taken and the final stop for each journey.

Hotels

Our hotels are of 3- and 4-star quality and are located within city centers. These central locations provide a convenient meeting point in the case of an emergency and reduce the need to commute in and out of the city each day.

Mid-Tour Check-Ins

GoPlay staff from our overseas offices, as well as US-based staff regularly check in with groups in person to gauge each group's satisfaction and resolve any issues on the spot. Groups that are not seen in person will be checked on via either phone or email so that every coach will have the opportunity to voice any concerns while a trip is in progress, not just after the fact.

Communications

Duty Officer Network

Whenever an issue arises on tour that is beyond the tour manager's ability to fix on the spot, our both our tour managers and are trained to contact our 24/7 Duty Officer Network. (All group leaders receive an Emergency Numbers Card with the pertinent contact information to keep with them while on tour). Our Duty Officer system is staffed by a GoPlay employee.

Phone Chains and Emergency Contacts

All groups are required to establish a stateside phone chain before departure. GoPlay has the contact information for the first person on each phone chain and will initiate communications should the group leader be unable to do so for any reason. Each participant also provides an emergency contact name, phone number and email address during the registration process, which allows us to reach out directly to individual participant families as needed.

On-Tour Communication

Many of our groups today keep in touch on a regular basis with family and friends back home through a blog, private Facebook group, pre-set hashtags for Instagram or Twitter, or other social media tools like Remind, Cluster or GroupMe. Families can also stay in touch by activating an international calling plan on the traveler's mobile phone for the time s/he will be away or by setting up a cross-platform mobile messaging app such as WhatsApp. Most GoPlay hotels have wifi available, which facilitates communication without having to pay for international data or roaming fees.

GoPlay Emergency Protocol

Whenever an incident overseas occurs that has the potential to impact the safety of our traveling groups, we follow these steps to review the situation, check in with groups and facilitate communication with loved ones at home.

1) Assess the Situation

As soon as we become aware of a safety-related event overseas, we evaluate the severity of the situation based on the proximity of any of our groups to the event. We take advice from our tour manager on the ground, and any regional office.

2) Confirm Location and Status of All Groups and Participants

We search our operations database outlining the location of all of our traveling groups, the number of participants in each group, and the contact information for each group's Tour Manager and designated stateside Group Contact.

With this report in hand, we immediately reach out through our global office network to every Tour Manager guiding a trip in the affected region. Tour Managers are instructed to: a) confirm the well-being of every individual within the group, and once confirmed, b) ask the Group Leader to initiate his/her stateside emergency phone chain so that all families are updated as to the safety of their child. If for some reason, the emergency phone chain is not started directly by the Group Leader, our US staff will initiate that process on his/her behalf.

3) Prepare and Respond on the Ground

Tour Managers review emergency procedures with groups at the mandatory arrival briefing that takes place on the first day of every GoPlay tour. All travelers are made aware of their hotel name and address, with instructions to return there if an emergency occurs when the group is not all together. During the course of any day's free exploration time, Tour Managers will assign local meeting spots at designated times for ongoing check-ins. Travelers under the age of 21 are instructed to remain in groups of at least three during all free time. If travelers are unable to return to a designated meeting spot during the course of an emergency, they are told to contact GoPlay' 24-hour emergency telephone number for further instructions.

When an emergency occurs, Tour Managers are trained to seek safe shelter for the group, either by returning to the group's hotel or to an alternative location as instructed by local authorities. Once the group is in a safe location, the Tour Manager will contact his/her local network office to report on the status of the group.

4) Handle Catastrophic Events

In the extremely rare occasion where an GoPlay traveler is directly affected by an overseas emergency, the health protection included on all GoPlay tours allows for the immediate care of any injured individual. We will reach out to the individual's designated emergency contact directly to inform them of the situation. Then, we liaise with our travel insurance provider, to arrange for transportation of the participant back home or for a family member to join the participant overseas if s/he is unable to travel. ACIS staff will be dispatched to the scene to assist in any way possible.

5) Monitor the Ongoing Situation

As the immediate crisis subsides and emergency communications are complete, we will rely on our local offices, Tour Managers and government authorities to determine the best course of action for our groups. Groups will be flown home or itineraries will be adjusted to move groups out of affected areas. Updates on individual groups will be conveyed using the group's pre-established communications chain

Speak to a Reference

If you would like to speak with a fellow teacher or parent about their recent GoPlay travel experience, we would be more than happy to connect you with someone.

Send an email to dlyons@goplay-sports.com with the subject line *"Talk to a Traveler"* and tell us what you'd like to hear more about.