

Special Waiver and Acknowledgement

I have read the [U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory to Lebanon](#) from October 21, 2019 concerning U.S. citizens' travel to Lebanon. In spite of that warning I have voluntarily and on my own initiative elected to study in Lebanon at The American University of Beirut for the summer 2020 semester should I be accepted into the program.

With my signature below, I understand and acknowledge that:

- I am required to sign the International Travel Waiver form and other forms required by Amherst College for college-sponsored travel, such as study abroad and/or summer fellowships, that will be shared with me by the Office of Global Education.
- Amherst College, including its employees, is in no way responsible for my health, safety or security while in, and while traveling to and from, Lebanon. I acknowledge that travel may expose me to significant risks including, but not limited to, terrorism, war, kidnapping, serious bodily injury, illness or death, property damage, and other risks that may not be foreseeable.
- If I am in need of evacuation for a non-medical emergency (war, terrorism, etc.), I am responsible for all costs associated with such evacuation even if the College provides assistance.
- Should I decide to leave Lebanon before the end of a program because of health or safety concerns, or for any other reason, Amherst will not be obligated to refund any expenses or fees I may incur.
- I acknowledge that my participation in study to Lebanon is completely voluntary and have chosen to study Lebanon for the summer of 2020d.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent's signature indicates an awareness of the student's plans and of Amherst's policies as outlined above.

[Lebanon Travel Advisory](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Lebanon.html)

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(NOTE: Portions of the most recent Advisory have been copied below. YOU assume full responsibility for reading the entire Advisory, including any future updates to the Advisory, on the U.S. Department of State's website or otherwise.)

Last Updated: April 9, 2019

Reconsider travel Lebanon due to **crime, terrorism, and armed conflict**. Please read the entire Travel Advisory.

Do not travel to:

- the border with Syria due to **terrorism and armed conflict**
- the border with Israel due to **the potential for armed conflict**
- refugee settlements due to **the potential for armed conflict**

U.S. citizens should reconsider or avoid travel to certain areas in Lebanon because of the threats of terrorism, armed clashes, kidnapping, and outbreaks of violence, especially near Lebanon's borders with Syria and Israel. U.S. citizens living and working in Lebanon should be aware of the risks of remaining in the country and should carefully consider those risks.

U.S. citizens who choose to travel to Lebanon should be aware that consular officers from the U.S. Embassy are not always able to travel to assist them. The Department of State considers the threat to U.S. government personnel in Beirut sufficiently serious to require them to live and work under strict security restrictions. The internal security policies of the U.S. Embassy may be adjusted at any time and without advance notice.

Terrorist groups continue plotting possible attacks in Lebanon. The potential exists for death or injury in Lebanon because of the attacks and bombings perpetrated by terrorist groups. Terrorists may conduct attacks with little or no warning targeting tourist locations, transportation hubs, markets/shopping malls, and local government facilities.

The Lebanese government cannot guarantee the protection of U.S. citizens against sudden outbreaks of violence. Family, neighborhood, or sectarian disputes can escalate quickly and can lead to gunfire or other violence with no warning. Armed clashes have occurred along the Lebanese borders, in Beirut, and in refugee settlements. The Lebanese Armed Forces have been brought in to quell the violence in these situations.

Public demonstrations can occur with little warning and could become violent. You should avoid areas of demonstrations and exercise caution in the vicinity of any large gatherings. Protesters have blocked major roads to gain publicity for their causes, including the primary road to the U.S. Embassy, and the primary road between downtown Beirut and Rafiq Hariri International Airport. Access to the airport may be cut off if the security situation deteriorates.

Kidnapping, whether for ransom, political motives, or family disputes, has occurred in Lebanon. Suspects in kidnappings may have ties to terrorist or criminal organizations.

If you decide to travel to Lebanon:

- Visit our website for [Travel to High-Risk Areas](#).
- Avoid demonstrations and crowds.
- Stay alert in locations frequented by Westerners.
- Monitor local media for breaking events and adjust your plans based on new information.
- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Follow the Department of State on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- Review the 2018 [Crime and Safety Report](#) for Lebanon.
- U.S. citizens who travel abroad should always have a contingency plan for emergency situations. Review the [Traveler's Checklist](#).

Border with Syria – Level 4: Do Not Travel

Since August 2014, deadly terror attacks have occurred in border towns along Lebanon's border with Syria, as have episodic clashes between the Lebanese Army and Syrian-based violent extremist groups. A 2017 Lebanese Army offensive expelled ISIS militants from territory along Lebanon's border with Syria. The U.S. Embassy strongly urges U.S. citizens to avoid the Lebanese-Syrian border region. The U.S. Department of State also warns U.S. citizens of the risk of traveling on flights that fly over Syria, which include some flights to Beirut.

Visit our website for [Travel to High-Risk Areas](#).

Border with Israel – Level 4: Do Not Travel

There have been sporadic rocket attacks from southern Lebanon into Israel in connection with the violence between Israel and Hizballah: the last reported incident was in 2014. The U.S. Embassy urges U.S. citizens to avoid this border area.

Visit our website for [Travel to High-Risk Areas](#).

Refugee Settlements – Level 4: Do Not Travel

The U.S. Embassy urges U.S. citizens to avoid travel to refugee settlements, where violence has resulted in shootings and explosions.

Visit our website for [Travel to High-Risk Areas](#).

Last Update: Reissued with updates to the Risk Indicators

Read the Safety and Security section on the [country information page](#). [Brief summary is below.]

The current [Department of State Travel Advisory](#) urges U.S. citizens to reconsider or avoid travel to certain areas in Lebanon because of the threats of terrorism, armed clashes, kidnapping, and outbreaks of violence, particularly near Lebanon's borders with Syria and Israel. U.S. citizens living and working in Lebanon should understand that they accept the risks of remaining in the country and should carefully consider those risks. There is potential for death or injury in Lebanon because of terrorist attacks. Violent extremist groups operate in Lebanon, including U.S. government-designated terrorist organizations Hizballah, ISIS (Da'esh), Al-Nusrah Front (ANF), Hamas, and the Abdullah Azzam Brigades (AAB). ISIS and ANF have claimed responsibility for suicide

bombings in Lebanon. U.S. citizens have been the targets of terrorist attacks in Lebanon in the past. The threat of anti-Western terrorist activity persists, as does the risk of death or injury as a non-targeted bystander. Clashes between Lebanese authorities and criminal elements continue to occur in areas of the Bekaa Valley and border regions. Hizballah maintains a strong presence in the Bekaa Valley, in addition to areas in southern Lebanon and south Beirut. Hizballah has been the target of attacks by other extremist groups for their support of the Asad regime in Syria.

The Department of State considers the threat to U.S. government personnel in Beirut sufficiently serious to require them to live and work under strict security restrictions. The internal security policies of the U.S. Embassy may be adjusted at any time and without advance notice. Security restrictions may prevent access by U.S. Embassy officials to certain areas of the country, especially in parts of metropolitan Beirut, the city of Tripoli, northern Lebanon, the Bekaa Valley, refugee settlements, and southern Lebanon.

In the event that the security climate in the country worsens further, U.S. citizens are responsible for arranging their own travel out of Lebanon. The Embassy does not offer protection services to U.S. citizens who feel unsafe but directs U.S. citizens to plan for unexpected situations and to take extra precaution in ensuring their safety. We advise you to be aware of your surroundings and to know how to access police assistance in case of emergency. U.S. citizens with special medical or other needs should be aware of the risks of remaining given their condition, and they should be prepared to seek treatment in Lebanon if they cannot arrange for travel out of the country.

U.S. government-facilitated evacuations, such as the evacuation that took place from Lebanon in 2006, occur only when no safe commercial alternatives exist, and they are not guaranteed even when commercial travel options are limited or non-existent. Evacuation assistance is provided on a cost-recovery basis, which means the traveler must reimburse the U.S. government for travel costs. U.S. citizens in Lebanon should ensure that they have valid U.S. passports, as lack of documentation could hinder U.S. citizens' ability to depart the country. Additional information on the Department's role during emergencies is provided on the Bureau of Consular Affairs' [website](#).

Kidnapping, whether for ransom, political motives, or family disputes, is a problem in Lebanon. Suspects in kidnappings sometimes have ties to terrorist or criminal organizations. The U.S. government's ability to help U.S. citizens kidnapped or taken hostage is limited. Although the U.S. government places the highest priority on the safe recovery of kidnapped U.S. citizens, it is U.S. policy not to make concessions to hostage takers. U.S. law makes it illegal to provide material support to terrorist organizations.

Public demonstrations occur with little warning and may become violent. You should avoid demonstrations and exercise caution if in the vicinity of any large gatherings or protests. Protesters have blocked major roads to gain publicity for their causes, including the primary road to the U.S. Embassy and the primary road between downtown Beirut and Rafiq Hariri International Airport. Access to the airport may be cut off if the security situation deteriorates.

U.S. citizens who choose to travel to Lebanon in spite of the Travel Advisory should be aware that consular officers from the U.S. Embassy are not always able to travel to assist them. Also, the Lebanese government cannot guarantee the protection of U.S. citizens in the country against sudden outbreaks of violence. Armed clashes have occurred along the Lebanese borders and in Beirut. Armed clashes have also occurred in the Tripoli neighborhoods of Bab al-Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen, resulting in deaths and injuries.

Family, neighborhood, or sectarian disputes can escalate quickly and can lead to gunfire or other violence. Also, celebratory gunfire in Lebanon has resulted in accidental injuries and deaths.

Avoid the Lebanon-Syria border region: The U.S. Embassy strongly urges U.S. citizens to avoid the Lebanese-Syrian border region. There have been incidents of cross-border shelling and air strikes of Lebanese villages from Syria, resulting in deaths and injuries. There have been episodic clashes between the Lebanese Armed Forces and Syrian-based extremists along the border with Syria. There have also been reports of armed groups from Syria kidnapping or attacking Lebanese citizens living in border areas.

Avoid the Lebanon-Israel border region: There are border tensions to the south with Israel, and the U.S. Embassy urges U.S. citizens to avoid this area. A few years ago, hostilities between Israel and Hizballah flared in the Golan Heights and Shebaa Farms area, and the potential for wider conflict remains. There have been sporadic rocket attacks from southern Lebanon into Israel. These attacks, normally consisting of rockets fired at northern Israel, often provoke a prompt Israeli military response against attackers at the point of origin of the attack. The rocket attacks and responses can occur without warning. Landmines and unexploded ordnance pose significant dangers throughout southern Lebanon, particularly south of the Litani River. Travelers should watch for posted landmine warnings and strictly avoid all areas where landmines and unexploded ordnance may be present.

Avoid travel to refugee settlements: Violence within refugee settlements has resulted in shootings and explosions. U.S. citizens should avoid travel to refugee settlements. Palestinian groups hostile to both the Lebanese government and the United States operate autonomously in formal and informal refugee settlements in different areas of the country.

Crime: While reported crime rates in Lebanon are moderate, both car theft and burglaries occur. Violent crime and sexual assault are rare, but do happen. For instance, a diplomat from the United Kingdom was sexually assaulted and murdered in December 2017 by a driver for a ride sharing service. Criminal groups have abducted U.S. citizens for ransom and other motives, on at least one occasion using the lure of a business meeting. The embassy receives regular reports of domestic abuse. Petty theft -- such as pickpocketing and purse snatching -- is common in crowded public areas. Police are responsive but often unable to affect a positive outcome.

There have been incidents involving a theft ring that appear to target foreigners using service cars. Service cars are privately owned vehicles bearing red license plates that act as public transportation for multiple passengers at once. Because of the risks inherent in using any unknown transportation, U.S. citizens should be wary of these service cars, use only those service cars that vet their drivers, and carry the number of a reputable taxi company in case of emergencies.

Do not buy counterfeit and pirated goods, even if they are widely available. Not only are the bootlegs illegal in the United States, but you may also be breaking local law.

See the [Department of State](#) and the [FBI](#) pages for information on scams.

Victims of Crime:

- Report crimes to the local police at 112. U.S. citizen victims of sexual assault should also contact the U.S. Embassy at +(961) 4-543600.
- The local equivalent to the "911" emergency line in Lebanon is 112.

- Remember that local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting the crime.
- See our webpage on [help for U.S. victims of crime overseas](#).

U.S. Embassy Beirut can:

- replace a stolen or lost passport
- help you find appropriate medical care
- assist you in reporting a crime to the police
- contact relatives or friends with your written consent
- explain the local criminal justice process in general terms
- provide a list of local attorneys
- provide our information on [victim's compensation programs in the U.S.](#)
- provide an emergency loan for repatriation to the United States and/or limited medical support in cases of destitution

Domestic Violence: U.S. citizen victims of domestic violence may contact the Embassy for assistance.

For further information:

- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Call us in Washington at 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).
- See the [State Department's travel website](#) for [Worldwide Caution](#), and [Travel Advisories](#).
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) and visit the Embassy's [website](#).
- See [traveling safely abroad](#) for useful travel tips.