

V-Aid (Virtual Aid)

Staying Safe Overseas Policy



**Staying Safe Overseas Policy approved by
Trustees on 18/12/25**

The policy will be subject to an annual review.

Signed: *Christin Lau* (Christin Lau on behalf of Trustees)

Staying Safe Overseas

Approval for Visits

Volunteers may only travel to a high risk area if this is essential, and the work cannot be carried out remotely. Any such travel requires the prior approval of the Board.

Before Travelling

Anyone travelling to a high risk location should ideally have previous experience of working in the country affected and, if applicable, speak the language or have the tools to assist communicating.

He or she must be at least 18 years old and be sufficiently resilient and confident to travel and work in the location.

Medical treatment may be difficult to access or basic, so volunteers must not have long-term, or chronic health conditions that may require medical intervention.

If you do take regular medications, ensure you have sufficient supplies for the duration of your visit, in case these are not available locally.

Ensure that you are aware of any potential threats in the location(s) you are visiting by checking the [FCO website](#), in-country Government websites (if available), monitoring news channels and seeking the advice of contacts in the area you will be visiting.

Carry out a thorough risk assessment and take any appropriate action, but do not travel, if there are any significant risks involved.

This must as a minimum include an extraction plan to safely leave the area and/or country at short notice.

Travel insurance does not usually cover travel to a conflict zone, so make sure you have adequate cover.

Check that your passport is in-date and ensure you have any [visas](#), Health cards (GHIC)(EHIC) and [driving permits](#), as appropriate.

Make a record of key contact details, such as your local office, hotel and the [British Embassy or Consulate](#).

Ensure that your devices have adequate security installed and be aware of the cyber threat in using open Wi Fi networks; consider installing a VPN and/or encryption software.

Ensure that the charity is given details of your itinerary, including dates/times/locations and check in on arrival.

For key documents, such as your passport and local contact/emergency numbers, make hard copies and also store these on your phone and laptop.

Ensure that your laptop and phone security is fully enabled.

Virus and other security systems are fully up to date.

Back up your hard drive to the cloud, if not already enabled, or to an external hard drive.

Check that PIN and/or face/fingerprint recognition locking has been activated.

Disable blue tooth, or at least use it in 'hidden', rather than 'discoverable' mode.

Disable Wi Fi auto-connect.

Disable location tagging/tracking on your phone and social media.

Install a Virtual Private Network (VPN).

Whilst Travelling

If hiring a car on arrival, carry out simple checks, such as driver's licence, seat belts and the vehicle appears to be in a road worthy condition.

If driving yourself, ensure you're not overly tired from travel and time difference. Ensure you have correct paperwork and book your car via a reputable company.

Carry out basic vehicle checks, such as its condition, and any equipment provided.

Where possible, only carry essential equipment, valuables and money and be inconspicuous where possible.

Carry a small amount of cash in your wash bag or body belt as an emergency backup.

Whilst In-country

Carry a battery pack and a dual sim mobile phone with your own and a local sim card.

Do not use open public Wi Fi, or other unsecured networks. Use your VPN.

Ensure that you have your passport and any local identify card with you at all times.

At your accommodation, ensure you are aware of evacuation routes from the building, such as fire exits.

Ensure that you are aware of and comply with local Government/military instructions, including carrying identity and not entering forbidden locations.

Join local What's App and/or Telegram groups and monitor these for news of any security threats and sign-up for Government security alerts and/or monitor any relevant website.

Never take photographs of on-duty military personnel or military, or other potentially sensitive locations, such as power facilities, airports or Government buildings.

Avoid the consumption of alcohol and do not express views, verbally or online, on an issue that may be perceived as sensitive.

At checkpoints, or similar, ensure you keep your hands in sight, looked pleased to see the people who have stopped you and always remain polite and courteous, even if provoked.

Always ensure that your contacts are made aware of your travel plans, including location, timings and whom you will plan to meet.

Do not post your location on social media, or plans and, ideally, do not post at all whilst in country.

If you do post, double check that location tagging has been switched off and, ideally, post a day or more after you have left the location.

Never pick up any kind of military ordnance, such as spent shells or ammunition, and do not enter damaged buildings or facilities.

If in an area that is known, or might have been mined, do not leave concrete pavements and roads, and;

Watch out for warning signs, which may be as crude as rags or tins hung on fences, or red paint on rocks

Vary your routes and timings to and from work and arrange meetings at your work location, or in a public space, if at all possible.

Do not agree to meetings or travel to known risk areas, or isolated locations or with people whom you do not know or are unable to verify.