I. BACKGROUND AND POLICY

Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) recognizes the importance that international travel plays in advancing global health, the EVMS Mission, and the personal and professional development of medical students, residents, staff, and faculty. However, all international travel carries inherent risks and, in some cases, individuals traveling abroad to certain destinations have an increased risk of being subjected to war, terrorism, political unrest, outbreaks of disease, and natural catastrophes.

In order to ensure that EVMS has information in the event of an emergency and to mitigate health risks to others when travelers return, it is the policy that all international (travel outside the United States) EVMS travel be approved in accordance with this Policy. EVMS Travel is defined as any travel by EVMS faculty, staff members, students, or residents that is for EVMS business, sponsored by EVMS, or related to EVMS activities. EVMS Travel does not include travel by any individual to his/her home country solely for the purpose of vacation or other personal reason and not funded by EVMS or in any way related to EVMS activities.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Submission of Travel Forms to Risk Management.

1. At least six weeks prior to the proposed travel date, the traveler, or, if for a group trip, the coordinating faculty or staff member, must submit the EVMS International Travel Form (Travel Form) to the Office of Risk Management. The Travel Form must be:

   a. Approved and signed by: the traveler’s department chair/director (for faculty), the Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education (for residents), the Associate Dean for Education (for MD students), or the educational program director (for HP students). Note that all international travel that is being paid for, or reimbursed by, EVMS must also have the appropriate financial approvals by the EVMS Business Office in accordance with the EVMS Travel Policy.

   b. Returned to the Office of Risk Management fully completed with all required signatures.

2. Potential travelers should review all Travel Alerts, Travel Warnings, and Consular Information for the country in question (located at http://travel.state.gov/travel) as well as the CDC Traveler’s health site (located at http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/). Risk Management will review the Travel Form and determine whether proposed travel by EVMS staff members,
students, or residents, or faculty members organizing travel for, or traveling with, one or more EVMS staff, students, or residents, is to a country with a Travel Alert, Travel Warning or CDC Outbreak Notice. Any such proposed travel must be submitted for committee review as set forth in Section B below.

3. International Travel that does not require committee review shall be reviewed by the Director of Risk Management.

4. Until such time as the Travel Form is approved, individuals should not pay or commit to pay for any travel arrangements.

B. EVMS International Education Safety Committee Review.

1. The EVMS International Education Safety Committee (Committee) is a standing committee appointed by the Dean to assess the safety of the proposed site for EVMS travel.

2. The Committee shall be composed of the following individuals:

   a. Director, Office of Risk Management (Committee Chairman)
   b. Director, Office of Community Outreach
   c. Associate Dean of Medical Education
   d. Associate Dean of Graduate Medical Education
   e. Dean of School of Health Professions or his designee
   f. One or more faculty members with significant international travel/medical/research experience
   g. Ad hoc members as necessary

3. Any proposed travel by EVMS staff members, students, or residents, or faculty members organizing travel for, or traveling with, EVMS staff, students, or residents, to a country with a Travel Alert, Travel Warning or CDC Outbreak Notice must be approved by the Committee.

4. The Committee shall review the Travel Form, the risks described in any Travel Warning or Travel Alert, and shall consider a number of factors to include:

   a. The purpose of the proposed travel (study, medical mission, humanitarian aid, etc.).
   b. The traveler’s familiarity with the travel site (home country, repeated visits, etc.).
   c. The potential health risks that the international travel may pose to EVMS students, faculty, residents, staff, and/or patients upon the traveler’s return.
d. Any community or government relations issues that may result from certain international travel locations (ex. Travel embargos, etc.).

5. Upon completion of the review and vote by Committee members, the Committee shall make a recommendation of “approve” or “deny” to the Provost and Dean.

C. Review by the Provost and Dean

1. Travel Forms that have been reviewed by the Committee shall be sent to the Provost and Dean by the Committee, along with the Committee’s recommendation, for final review.

2. The Provost and Dean shall make the final determination of “approve” or “deny” for all international travel and may accept or overrule any Committee recommendation.

D. Approval.

1. If the Provost and Dean approves the EVMS Travel, such approval is contingent upon the traveler signing a Travel Liability Release Form, provision/signature of documents, and/or payment of any fees (i.e. foreign traveler’s coverage fees for students) as required by the Office of Risk Management prior to the travel.

2. Failure to complete any Office of Risk Management requirements will result in previously approved travel being deemed “denied.” It is the responsibility of the traveler to ensure that all paperwork and payments are received by the Office of Risk Management and that any such paperwork is legible.

3. Upon signature of all required documents, the Office of Risk Management will process each traveler’s foreign travel insurance coverage and provide an insurance card for each traveler, along with copies of any travel forms.

E. Denial. If travel is denied for any reason and the individual(s) choose to pursue their travel plans:

1. The travel will not be deemed “EVMS Travel” and, as such will not be eligible for educational credit (student or resident) or reimbursement by EVMS;

2. Any travel arrangements made or purchased using EVMS funds must be refunded by the traveler; and
3. Any traveler whose travel is denied out of concerns for health and safety of other members of the EVMS Community (i.e. traveling to a country with a severe outbreak or high rates of disease transmission), may be subject to a health screening or other clearance prior to resuming duties at EVMS. Travelers are solely responsible for any program time or wages lost as result of a delay in clearance.

III. FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to comply with this policy will result in the travel being non-reimbursable to the traveler and/or may be subject to disciplinary action when actions are deemed to be an intentional circumvention of this Policy, when repeated failure to comply with this Policy occur, or where failure to comply with the policy results in a health or safety risk or injury to others.

IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Office of Risk Management serves as the liaison for all international travel. Questions about this policy or upcoming international travel should be directed to Director, Office of Risk Management, 358 Mowbray Arch, Suite 108, Norfolk VA 23507, 757-446-6009, lamaradm@evms.edu.