



## Tips to help you prepare for your international trip

### 1. Health Preparations:

If time allows, begin your travel health preparations well in advance of your departure. Among things to consider are:

- Arrange for medical and dental check-ups before you go to help mitigate the possibility of seeking emergency or unplanned treatment during your assignment.
- Ask your doctor if there special immunizations or vaccinations required or suggested based on the destination to where you are traveling. You can also log into the AI member website and research vaccination and immunization requirements by country.
- If you have a chronic illness or require the care of a specialist, you may want to search for a provider before your trip using AI's online provider directory. The directory will give you contact information as well as detailed profiles including the doctor's education, specialties, languages spoken and more.
- Make sure your prescriptions are up to date and that you have enough to last through the duration of your assignment, or that you know how to obtain prescription refills in your country to where you're going. If pharmacy is part of your plan of benefits, you may be eligible to receive up to a 12-month prescription in advance of your trip. Contact AI member services for more information.
- Contact AI's International Health Advisory Team (IHAT) for personalized pre-trip planning assistance, especially if you have specific health needs such as a chronic illness or if you require special medical equipment.

### 2. Do some research.

Adjusting to a new culture, society and lifestyle can be challenging, so be sure to read up on cultural, sociological and economical issues relevant to the destination to where you are traveling. The more familiar you become with your new environment before you leave, the easier it will be for you to adjust.

AI's Global Health Information is a good place for you to start. This online information source provides you with profiles on international cities and includes general health information, vaccination and emergency contact numbers and embassy information, notable medical facilities and links to additional travel resources.

### 3. Focus on your family.

If you have family accompanying you on your assignment, be sure you explore what this change means to them. Strengthen family relationships as much as possible before you depart. Turn your family into a

“support group.” Explain goals and expectations of your assignment to all family members before you leave, but be sensitive of the effects that this change may have on them, especially children.

Global mobility surveys count “family dissatisfaction” among the top reasons for assignment failure. If you or a family member is experiencing difficulty adjusting to your new surroundings, you might consider the use of a counseling service such as AI’s International Employee Assistance Program before you depart to assist you in preparing for potential barriers or dealing with potential adjustment issues that you or your family members may face on your assignment.

#### **4. Make a pre-trip planning checklist.**

As you plan for your departure, keep a running list of items that you will need to bring with you. Keeping a list will help to make your packing and preparation easier and more efficient. Also, write down any questions that you have about your assignment or travel as soon as they come to you. Then, do your best to get answers to all of those questions before you depart.

If you know you’ll need local currency upon arrival, try to do so before you leave. Always be aware of the conversion rate and use well-known, reputable financial institutions when converting money. You can also reference AI’s online global health information which contains information on local currencies.

#### **5. Don’t forget the essentials.**

Make sure you pack your day-to-day essentials, such as prescription medications, eye wear (more than one pair of glasses), and required identification or paperwork that you will need. Just as important, be sure to bring along a few items that remind you of home, so that if you are ever feeling a little homesick, you can bring out those items and help lift your spirits.

#### **6. Consider any financial obligations that you’re leaving behind.**

You may be leaving the country for a temporary period of time, but your bills will still be there. If you have monthly expenses such as a car payment or loan, you should make arrangements to either have your monthly bills sent to your new location or set-up online payments. You might also consider appointing a trusted person at home to keep your financial responsibilities up to par while you are away.