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Safety, Crisis and Emergency Management Procedures

Student safety, security, and well-being are of primary importance to SAI. While neither SAI nor SAI affiliate universities can guarantee a risk-free environment, all efforts are made to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of our students throughout the duration of the program. SAI Safety, Crisis and Emergency Management Procedures are in place in order to ensure that transportation, lodging, medical facilities, communications, and emergency responses are available to best provide a safe environment while abroad.

With this in mind, it is also important to note that all program participants take responsibility for their own safety, security, and well-being while abroad. Pre-departure preparations and on-site orientations cannot replace good judgment. This means using common sense, being aware of one's surroundings, and not putting oneself in compromising positions, particularly in regards to the use and abuse of drugs or alcohol. In short, the same precautions anyone would follow in their home communities in the U.S. should be maintained when studying abroad.

The information in this document outlines the policies in place for SAI programs. SAI's responses to emergencies and crises will be driven by the utmost concern for the health, safety and well-being of program participants and staff, and will be informed by guidelines and standards set forth by education abroad professional organizations. SAI also strongly encourages all participants to stay informed through governmental and private websites to read and learn about their study abroad destination including health, safety and security recommendations.

The procedures outlined below will be revised annually or more frequently as deemed necessary by SAI.

SAI'S COMMITMENT TO HEALTH AND SAFETY

SAI maintains the following preparatory measures to ensure to the best of its ability the health and safety of program participants:

- Prior to the start of each term, students will be given instructions regarding how to register themselves with U.S. Consulates and/or Embassy in Italy. Program Coordinators send the following link to students in their pre-arrival emails: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>.
- The local Program Coordinators and Assistants act as liaisons to the U.S. Consulate or Embassy and are responsible for communicating information considered relevant to all SAI students, including any evacuation plans being considered. Program Coordinators and Assistants must also contact the Consulate or Embassy when students experience extreme medical or police emergencies, as well as in the case of a student death.
- SAI maintains contact with consular and embassy officials also in non-emergency/crisis times in order to establish ongoing communication, which becomes essential if an emergency occurs. SAI staff members have the telephone and fax numbers of the Consulate and Embassy on hand at all times.
- All SAI students are registered with the Italian Police, and will file the appropriate documents to obtain their permit to stay in Italy ("permesso di soggiorno") upon arrival.
- SAI and its host schools are in contact with the local police and other local security personnel. Members of the SAI staff, as well as all program participants, have the local police contact information along with other emergency phone numbers printed on the back of their SAI Student ID card.

- SAI has developed a system of rapid communication with students and program staff. This communication network, used ordinarily for communicating academic and social notices, also enables SAI staff to contact all students and staff at short notice. On-site staff keeps a list of local student addresses and telephone numbers and updates it regularly, and a copy is sent to the host schools
- SAI Orientation includes information about the emergency preparations that have been made, as well instructions regarding procedures for students to follow in case of an emergency. Orientation also includes information and advice on personal security and protection for students in the program.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

A. Emergency Contacts

Every SAI program is managed by on-site staff who are fluent in Italian, have lived or studied in the city in which they work, and are trained by U.S. staff. Program Coordinators and Assistants are prepared to assess risks, respond to emergencies and take appropriate actions. Every SAI program is hosted by a local university or school, where program administrators and staff support the SAI Program Coordinators and Assistants and act as back-up for emergencies should there be a need to assist in times of crisis. Program Coordinators and Assistants communicate with the SAI's U.S. office every day. The U.S. office is staffed by student services and study abroad professionals. In times of emergency, parents or students may reach a member of the SAI Italy staff (24 hours a day) by dialing the number of the Program Coordinator or Assistant in the appropriate city:

Florence: +39 3357146421

Rome: +39 3357146450

Milan: +39 3357146700

London: +39 3357146700

Sorrento: (011) 39 339 187 0807

Siena: (011) 39 348 918 9497

As emergency contact, the SAI on-site Program Coordinators and Assistants are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Only serious medical issues requiring a trip to the emergency room and incidents requiring immediate police intervention are considered emergencies. Students must therefore clearly understand that regular office hours, from 10am to 6pm, are for general information, advising, and basic queries (or emergencies if they occur) and that after hours (evenings after 6pm and weekends) they may contact program staff solely for emergency situations.

SAI also provides all students with cell phones so that they can be in touch with on-site staff, family, and friends at all times. In the case of a genuine emergency, students should contact:

1. On-site SAI Program Coordinator and Assistant (see number above)
2. If not available, on-site Host School Advisor, Dean or Program Director

B. Defining an Emergency

SAI defines an emergency as any event or situation that poses a genuine risk to, or that has already disturbed, the health, safety, security and/or well-being of a program participant or staff person.

Emergencies can take on various forms:

- Safety and security emergencies
 - acts of terrorism
 - natural disasters
 - missing, arrested or victimized students
- Medical emergencies
 - hospitalization
 - life-threatening injury
 - allergic reaction/food poisoning
 - psychiatric issues
 - insect/animal bites
 - personal injuries
- Disciplinary emergencies

C. Emergency Levels

Non-Emergency Events

Examples of non-emergency events include (but are not limited to):

- Flight delays or cancellations
- Loss of luggage
- Lost/stolen passport
- Lost keys/locked out

These events require responses by SAI on-site staff that illicit limited outside assistance. They have no immediate impact on normal program operations or for the group as a whole.

If necessary and possibly involving the home institution, the Program Coordinator (PC) or Program Assistant (PA) will contact the Director of University Relations via e-mail to report the event.

Low-Level Emergency Events

Examples of low-level emergencies include (but are not limited to):

- Assault
- Petty Crime
- Contained Fire
- Minor Medical Issue

The response to a low-level emergency requires limited outside assistance and has no immediate impact on the normal operations of the program or the group as a whole.

High-Level Emergency Events

Examples of high-level emergencies include (but are not limited to):

- Bomb threats
- Minor civil unrest
- Serious life-threatening illness

- Death
- Serious fire
- Severe inclement weather
- Severe communicable disease
- Missing person
- Prolonged power outage
- Sexual assault
- Student arrest
- Suicide ideation, threat or attempt

High-level emergencies affect the group as a whole and responses require outside resources. PCs, PAs, and SAI staff will consult with medical professionals, HTH, the home institution, and parents/legal guardians to determine the proper course of action and provide support to students and families.

The Department of Homeland Security's Threat Condition Alert Levels (see <http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/>) describe the U.S. government's assessment of the probability of a terrorist act within the territorial United States. SAI pays careful attention to changes in the domestic threat condition alert levels.

Events Requiring Program Evacuation/Cancellation

Events requiring program evacuation include (but are not limited to):

- Natural disasters
- Terrorism
- Severe political crises (declaration of war in Italy or an adjacent neighbor, wide-spread civil unrest, violence or rioting)
- Protracted or indefinite closure of the host school, other inability to carry out the academic program
- Prolonged disruption of local public utilities/services
- Travel warnings and/or specific directives by the U.S. Department of State or local U.S. Embassy

In the unlikely event that local or world conditions lead SAI to suspend or cancel a specific study abroad program, every effort will be made to allow students to complete their studies for the current term. If evacuated, SAI will work with the home institution to either continue the program in an alternate location; facilitate the return to the home campus and enrolment in regular courses; or assist students in obtaining a “withdrawal bridge” to the next academic term at their institutions. The decision to suspend or cancel a program is made in conjunction with U.S. embassy and consular officials in Italy, university officials at the host institution in Italy, the SAI U.S. office, and the home schools.

In the case of an evacuation, all staff and participants will leave the city/country as a group, if possible. Communication will be siphoned through SAI’s U.S. office (Director of University Relations communicates with the home institutions; the Director of Communications communicates with external public sources). A written log of all events will be kept.

Financial consequences of a withdrawal are subject to the refund policy detailed in the SAI catalogue. If the U.S. State Department orders American students out of Italy, an emergency refund will be considered. If an evacuation order is not made by the U.S. State Department, but a student chooses to leave Italy anyway, s/he will not receive a refund; such a case is subject to the regular host SAI refund policy.

D. SAI’s Responsibilities for Crisis and Emergency Response

When students face a danger to their health, safety or well-being overseas, SAI's on-site staff and U.S. office discuss appropriate crisis response measures and rely upon decision-making and communication protocol. Each case is treated individually with the appropriate attention and consideration.

E. Student Responsibilities for Safety in Emergency and Crisis Situations

Italy is generally a very safe country. During times of uncertainty, students should continue their normal routines, but also be sure to stay in regular contact with the program staff.

In line with U.S. State Department warnings, SAI students are advised to be respectful and aware of their surroundings. Students are advised to, at all times:

- Avoid crowds and spending time in American "hangouts".
- Avoid speaking loudly in English when walking with groups of other Americans.
- Avoid dressing in an overtly "American" style (e.g. baseball caps on backwards, American college sweatshirts).
- Exercise care when giving information about the SAI program and its location.
- Keep abreast of local news through TV, radio, and newspapers.
- Stay in touch with their families so that they know their children are safe, as well as how to reach them in case of an emergency.
- Act in a respectful manner towards the local population, its customs, and its culture.

Students are free to make their own travel plans on weekends. All students must inform SAI of any overnight extracurricular trip planned. Students should complete the *SAI Travel Itinerary Form* each time you schedule a trip so that Study Abroad Italy knows your whereabouts:

<http://www.saiprograms.com/travel-itinerary>.

Much of the individual safety and security of our students abroad ultimately depends on their behavior and choices. The SAI staff works to keep students informed about world developments and attempts to provide a safe environment in which to complete their studies. However, it is also the responsibility of the students themselves to be part of this process, to stay informed about local conditions, and to act with reason and prudence.

Communication in Times of Emergency or Crisis

- In the event of a crisis situation, if students are unable to contact the SAI Program Coordinator, Program Assistant, or host school staff, they are instructed to use the emergency numbers that are listed on the reverse side of their Student ID Cards (provided at orientation). Students are instructed to carry their Student ID with them at all times.
- If communication lines are down, students may be advised to go a meeting point designated by the Protezione Civile (local government authorities). Whenever possible, SAI staff will communicate emergency meeting points to students at orientation, but often, the points are decided upon on the spot by local officials, so students should always follow their advice.
- If a student is unable to contact SAI or the host school, s/he should attempt to contact the closest U.S. Consulate or Embassy for further instructions. All consulate and embassy information is provided in the SAI Student Handbook. Local radio and television stations may also broadcast emergency information.
- Students should remain calm and stay with other program students or SAI representatives if possible. It is important that they attempt to contact SAI or host school staff; however, it is more important that they remain in a safe environment and follow the instructions provided by the local government authorities.

Emergency and General Medical Care

- Ambulance: Dial 118 (Italy) / 999 (U.K.)
- Taxi Service: Florence (0554242 or 0554390) – Siena (057749222) – Rome (063570, 068822, 064994, 066645) – Sicily (Carmelo Pugliara, tel. 339 889 8752) Milan (026969 or 024040) — London (+44 (0)871 871 8710)
- Students are encouraged to review their medical history and needs before going abroad. Students should attempt to have a checkup prior to their departure in order to be aware of their current medical condition. A personal physician can also advise students on any special precautions they may need to take based on their medical history. Students may need to go to a special travel health clinic to get clear advice on medical care abroad and resolving any problems they may face.
- Special Needs: If students have any special medical needs, they should check with their study abroad administrator to determine how these needs can be met while abroad. Regulations for accessibility may not be as updated in other countries as they are in the U.S. Prospective students should check to determine if accommodations like wheelchair ramps are provided in all modes of transportation and should determine if the housing facilities they are assigned to are equipped to accommodate their particular needs. Mobility International USA (MIUSA, <http://www.miusa.org/>) provides extensive information on accommodations abroad.
- Special Medications: Students are advised to procure before departure any special medications that they will need during their time abroad or to consult their home physician regarding what alternatives there may be abroad. Should a student need to bring a prescription into Italy, they must make sure that the medicine is in its original packing and accompanied by a prescription. Italian customs suggests putting it in checked luggage instead of carry-on bags if the point of entry into the European Union is a country other than Italy; if arriving directly in Italy, medicine should be kept in carry-on luggage. Upon arrival at the airport in Italy, students are advised to go to the customs office to declare the medicine and show the officials the medicine and the doctor's note. If this is not done immediately, students risk being stopped in the exit hall on their way out of the airport.
- Availability of Medical Care: The type of medical care available will vary from city to city and from country to country. In some countries, it will seem similar to the type of care available in the U.S. In others, finding an English-speaking doctor or appropriate medical facility might be difficult. HTH insurance, provided to all SAI students, has a comprehensive list of all English-speaking doctors and medical facilities in the city of their SAI program. Students are encouraged to visit the HTH website before traveling outside of Italy in order to determine if and where English-speaking doctors are available should they need to see one.

F. Parent/Legal Guardian Responsibilities for Communication in a Crisis or Emergency Situation

- SAI strongly recommends that, unless specific situations dictate otherwise, students designate their parents or legal guardians as emergency contacts.
- Students and their emergency contacts should keep in touch with each other throughout the student's time abroad.
- The student's emergency contact should have a passport. In case of an emergency, this individual can come abroad without having to wait days for an emergency passport to be issued.
- Students should make sure their parents and/or emergency contacts have accurate and up-to-date local contact information at all times. Local emergency contact information is provided to students at the SAI orientation. Students are asked to share this information with their families. SAI is aware of the need to stay in contact with family members at home, especially in emergency situations. If a family member needs to contact a student while abroad due to a family emergency, s/he may contact the student directly on his or her cell phone, contact SAI Italy staff, or contact the SAI office in California.

- The SAI US staff will be in contact with the SAI Italy staff and will be able to handle any requests for information. The staff at SAI will make every attempt to contact the appropriate Italy staff member or SAI student. It is essential that detailed information be provided in order to assist SAI in responding to a family member's call.
- The Family Rights and Privacy Act (FRPA) prevents staff members from providing certain information to persons other than the students themselves. It is often necessary to balance the needs of a family with the rights of the students to be treated as adults. SAI's goal is to help provide open lines of communication between students and family members. Families should be assured that SAI staff will do as much as possible to help and provide information in any emergency situation.
- U.S. citizens whose relatives abroad are directly affected by a crisis can also communicate with the Department of State through the Office of American Citizens Services and Crisis Management at 202-647-5225. If a 24-hour task force or working group is established in the Department of State Operations Center to manage the crisis, callers will be directed to the Task Force at 202-647-0900.

G. The Role of the U.S. Department of State

SAI carefully monitors public announcements and travel warnings issued by the US Department of State. All students are registered with local consulates, and our Italy staff communicates frequently with these local offices. SAI will inform students and parents of relevant U.S. Department of State warnings.

We also encourage students to consult State Department advisories on a regular basis. These can be found at the website <http://travel.state.gov>. Additional useful information may be found on the websites maintained directly by embassies around the world: <http://usembassy.state.gov/>

Non U.S. citizens should contact SAI staff for further information.