

## **International Rotation Planning Checklist** (Adapted from Harvard Humanitarian Studies Initiative for Residents)

### **One year ahead**

- Start research on international rotation sites.
- Tell your Program Director about your intention to rotate overseas.
- Meet with your faculty mentor to discuss your specific rotation plans.
- Speak to Chief Residents about arranging your block schedule.

### **Six months ahead**

- Make sure your passport is valid for at least six months AFTER your return date. Apply for a renewal if necessary (see references).

### **Three months ahead**

- Apply for visas if needed.
- Register for International Medical Evacuation Insurance (see references).
- Visit a Travel Clinic or your doctor to arrange for vaccinations and prophylaxis.
- Complete the UNOPS online security course at [www.usops.org/security](http://www.usops.org/security).

### **Two months ahead**

- Book plane tickets. Using a travel agent can help you get the lowest price and give you someone to call if you are stranded because of a missed flight (see references).
- Arrange for payment of your rent, utilities, loans, insurance, and other bills. It may take several weeks to set-up automatic deductions from your checking account.
- Finalize any shift swaps necessary to clear your clinical schedule.

### **One month ahead**

- Set up an email account that is accessible worldwide.
- Check with your bank to make sure your ATM card will work abroad. Many foreign banks limit passcodes to four digits. Also, make sure you know your passcode in numbers—foreign ATM keypads often do not have letters.
- Contact your MasterCard or Visa (American Express and Discover are not widely accepted) credit card company for a PIN number. This must be pre-arranged for you to withdraw cash from an ATM in an emergency.
- Arrange for the care of pets and plants.
- Call your wireless phone company to turn on international wireless service. Find out rates and whether your phone will work in your destination country. Unlock your phone if you plan to use local SIM cards abroad (see [www.gsmworld.com/roaming](http://www.gsmworld.com/roaming)).
- Create a Skype or other internet telephony account and get a simple Skype headset.
- Find the AT&T USADirect international access number ([www.usa.att.com/traveler](http://www.usa.att.com/traveler)) for your destination country in case you need to call home with a credit card.
- Buy special travel items (mosquito net, electrical adapters, phrasebooks).
- Arrange with your primary field contact to be picked up at the airport.

### **One week ahead**

- Give a copy of your passport, visa, plane tickets, and itinerary to a friend or relative.

- Email yourself scans of your important travel documents.
- Back up your hard drive if traveling with your laptop.
- Make copies of your medical school diploma and medical license to take along.
- Copy receipts of expensive items (laptop, camera) to prove you purchased them at home and avoid US Customs trouble on your return.
- Call ATM and credit card customer service to let them know when and where you are traveling so your accounts won't be frozen by the fraud protection system.
- Request a hold on mail delivery at [www.usps.gov](http://www.usps.gov).
- Put a vacation stop on newspapers and magazines.
- Store valuables in a safe place.
- Fill prescriptions.
- Arrange a ride to the airport.
- Confirm that someone will meet you at the airport when you arrive in-country.

### **Two days ahead**

- Pack (see packing list and references).
- Empty the refrigerator of perishables.
- Get cash. Make sure you carry only the newest currency designs (e.g., peach-colored 20's, the new 10's) and that the bills are fresh and unmarked.
- Check camera, laptop, and cell phone batteries.
- Set light timers in your home.
- Leave house key and itinerary with a neighbor.
- Set up an 'out of office' reply on your email accounts.
- Check long-range weather reports for your destination.
- Reconfirm international flights, especially on smaller airlines.

### **One day ahead**

- Take out half of what you packed and leave it at home.
- Put your water heater on 'vacation' setting and turn off furnace/air conditioner.
- Kennel your pets, water your plants.
- Print your boarding pass.
- Lock all doors and windows.

### **After you return**

- Continue to take your anti-malarials as prescribed.
- Send a thank-you note to your overseas co-workers.