

Health and Safety



10. Health and Safety

Your safety

The locations of each of the Kings Colleges in the U.S. are generally safe and secure places for international students. As with any large city, in the U.S. and in other countries, there is always a mix of good people and places and bad people and places. It is always good to be aware of the safer and more dangerous neighborhoods throughout a city before you go. And here are some simple rules to ensure you do not put yourself at unnecessary risk:

- Tell your host family where you are going and when you expect to come back home
- Always try to go out with people you know and trust.
- Use well lit, busy roads and avoid short cuts through dark, quiet areas.
- Stay alert – don't use headphones when out walking.
- Never take money or gifts from people you don't know.
- Don't carry a lot of money or valuables and never leave them unattended.
- Don't carry your passport unless absolutely necessary.
- Walk with friends wherever possible and don't walk around alone late at night.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help if you're worried about anything.
- Never tell anyone you don't know or trust any of your personal details.
- Late at night, take a taxi home. Use only licensed taxis displaying official local plates.
- Only share taxis with people you know.
- Always have the number of a friend, your host family or the school to call in an emergency.

Cycling / Driving

If you decide to rent or buy a bicycle while you are in the U.S., please check the laws about cycling and be aware that it can be dangerous. You must wear a helmet and have front and back reflectors or lights. Be aware that in most cities in the U.S., it is illegal for bicycles to ride on the sidewalk, even where there are no bike lanes on the street. If you drive a car in the U.S., you must learn U.S. road laws and have insurance.

Seeing a doctor

In general, if you have a medical emergency, the best bet is to find the nearest hospital and go to its emergency room. If the problem isn't urgent, you can call a nearby hospital and ask for a referral to a local physician, which is usually cheaper than a trip to the emergency room.

You should avoid stand-alone, for-profit urgent care centers, which tend to perform large numbers of expensive tests, even for minor illnesses.

Pharmacies are abundantly supplied, but you may find that some medications that are available over-the-counter in your home country require a prescription in the USA, and, as always, if you don't have insurance to cover the cost of prescriptions, they can be shockingly expensive.

Emergency services

To call the emergency services for police, fire fighters and ambulance or paramedics, the telephone number is 911. You can call the same number for coastguard, mountain and care rescue services. It is important to use this number only in a genuine emergency. It is illegal to use it for non-emergencies.

