Rio de Janeiro Safety Information

**Rio de Janeiro Emergency Phone Numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulance</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Department</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Police</td>
<td>(21) 3213-1400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Police</td>
<td>(21) 3399-7170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Police</td>
<td>511-5112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident Program Coordinator (24 hours a day):</td>
<td>(55-21) 982-78-8923</td>
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</tbody>
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**Safety while in Brazil**

Many students and their families have concerns about safety and security abroad. Study abroad, like most other things in life, does involve the possibility of risk. UCEAP cannot guarantee the safety of participants or ensure that risk will not at times be significantly greater than on a UC campus. UCEAP cannot monitor the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants any more than is the case on the home campus. However, UCEAP takes reasonable efforts to establish and ensure a safe environment in its programs abroad, and to counsel students on potential risks and necessary precautions.

You and your family have a role to play in minimizing potential dangers and UCEAP expects you to participate actively in minimizing your risks while abroad.

Pay careful attention to the following information regarding safety in Rio. Flexibility and an informed perspective will be critical to help you adapt to your new environment. An understanding of the social reality and close attention to your surroundings may help you to avoid potential problems.

With a population of more than 12 million people, Rio de Janeiro presents the unavoidable aspects of dense urban living: increased crime, pollution, sexual harassment, social disparities (more than 20 percent of Rio’s population live in favelas) and standards of living that are not comparable to life at UC. The tension, disappointment, and adjustment involved in dealing with these differences should not be underestimated, but should not discourage you from going abroad.

From a recent Annual Report:

*Rio de Janeiro is a violent and dangerous city. Most hillside slums—called favelas—are dominated either by heavily armed drug gangs, or by paramilitary groups called milícia. Many of the milícia members are retired police and other law enforcement officials. The violence results from battles between different drug gangs, between gangs and the milícia, or between either of these and the police. Once in control, the milícia impose taxes and generate revenue for themselves by selling goods and services such as cable TV or cooking gas. They also ensure a safer neighborhood (unless you oppose them) than would be the case under a drug gang. Thus, most of the worst violence is in geographically isolated neighborhoods. There is also a considerable amount of robberies and theft caused by drugs, poverty and social exclusion. Rio is a city in which the potential for serious harm is probably a higher than in most large cities.*

**Be Responsible for your Personal Security: Avoid Becoming a Victim**

- Distraction is a favorite method of pickpockets. Criminals may work in pairs or small groups, staging elaborate scenes designed to get your attention.
- Practice good safety precautions and avoid putting yourself in an uncomfortable or unsafe situation.
Many residents and visitors find that renting or purchasing cellular phones can be very useful. Cellular phones are widely available, inexpensive and generally highly reliable -especially in the major cities.

You will put your safety at risk if you enter crowded venues with digital cameras, cell phones, and wallets full of credit cards and cash. If you must carry expensive items, conceal them until you arrive at your destination.

Traveling in groups of three or more persons reduces your chance of being targeted. As risk increases substantially at night, avoid walking alone. Stay alert to what is happening around you and be aware of your personal safety at all times.

Do not wear flashy watches, jewelry of real or apparent value, obviously expensive clothing, or carry large purses that will attract the attention of thieves. Carry as little of value as possible.

Take special care with your purse, wallet, and backpack in all public places, such as marketplaces and discotecas. Do not leave belongings unattended.

Wear a flat money belt that fits underneath your clothes. Use this to keep your money, credit card, etc. Backpacks are some of the easiest targets for pickpockets.

If you choose to carry a bag, also carry a small amount of money in your pocket or money belt. This way, if your bag is stolen, you still will have some money to get home or make a phone call.

When in bars/clubs, never drink too much and do not leave your drinks out of sight. Be aware of Boa Noite Cindarella (date rape) drugs that can be slipped into your drink.

Be aware of the street environment and avoid contact with those who may be looking for crime targets. Seek a safer location. Go into a store or bank or simply cross the street.

Do not walk on the beach or in parks after dark. Assaults are common in these areas.

As in all big cities, you must take appropriate precautions to avoid dangerous situations and to ensure your safety. The general rule among cariocas (inhabitants of Rio) is that the closer to favelas, downtown, and the north part of town (Zona Norte), the greater the probability of assault.

Vary your routes and times, and make sure that your residence is sufficiently protected (doors should be substantial and equipped with deadbolts and a peephole).

Avoid high-risk areas and learn to look and act like a street-smart local (speaking in Portuguese will help reduce being labeled a tourist). Seek out and take the advice of Rio residents about areas and situations to avoid.

If you are confronted by a robber, give them what they ask for without resisting; do not pursue the thief or respond aggressively. Most victims of crime are unharmed if they surrender personal belongings and comply with instructions from armed criminals. Fifty percent of all victims who resist their assailant are killed or injured. The determination and sophistication of these criminals illustrates the vulnerability that we all face.