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Learn your potential

# STUDYING ABROAD WITH CEA

STUDENT PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE





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Learn your potential

Dear Friends,

Congratulations on making the decision to study abroad with CEA! We're looking forward to taking this journey with you, and we're eager to help you prepare for this life-changing experience. The pre-departure guide will provide you with helpful information about health, safety, communication, using money abroad, packing, and more. Planning ahead before you arrive onsite will help set you up for a success. If you have any questions about the information in this guide, please reach out to your Site Specialist.



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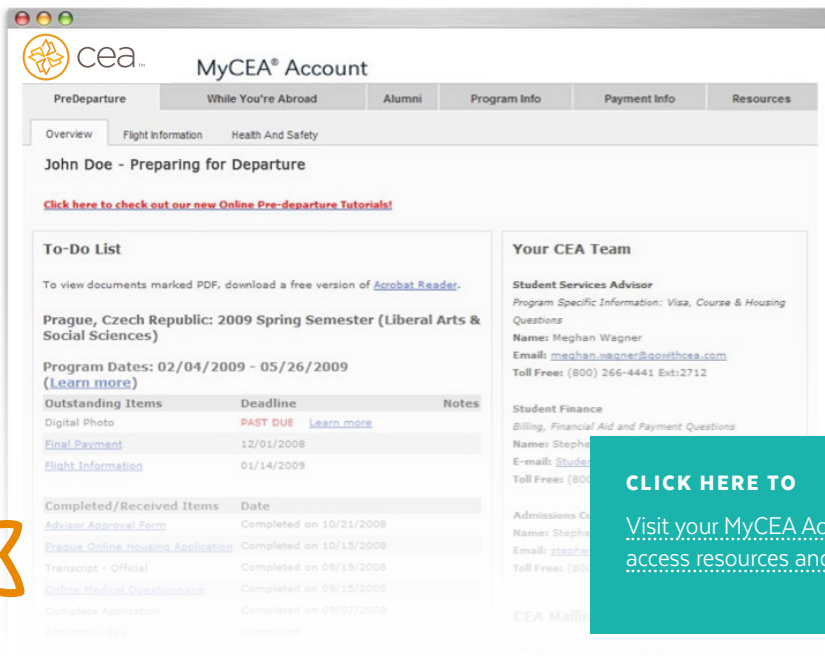




# MyCEA ACCOUNT

Your MyCEA Account is full of useful information and resources to help you before, during, and after your study abroad adventure.





**CLICK HERE TO**  
 Visit your MyCEA Account to  
 access resources and features

## PRE-DEPARTURE

- To-Do List
- Your CEA Team and Advisor Contact Information
- CEA Mailings, a Printable Program Info Packet

## WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD

- (available 14 days prior to program start)*
- Housing Assignment Address
  - CEA Arrival Card
  - CEA Onsite Staff Contact Info

## ALUMNI

- Re-Entry Evaluation Link
- Security Deposit Info
- Program Transcript Info

## PROGRAM INFO

- Program Summary
- Sample Budget
- Itinerary/Calendar of Program
- Course Outlines

## PAYMENT INFO

- Payment Summary
- Online Payment Page
- Printable CEA Account Statement

## RESOURCES

- Program and Destination Info
- Visa Guides
- Tutorial Links
- Destination-Specific Guides/Resources
- Health Insurance



# HEALTH

Fill out your Required Health Information in your MyCEA Account and contact us if you require special accommodations.





## STAYING HEALTHY ON SITE

Good physical and mental health should be a top priority while you're overseas. Being healthy allows you to make the most of your program and succeed in all areas of life abroad.

Follow these simple tips to promote your own well-being:

- » Cope with jet lag at the beginning of your program through healthy eating and staying hydrated. Give yourself about a week to adjust to your new time zone.
- » Maintain a proper sleep schedule appropriate for your time zone throughout your program. Sleep is a huge factor in good health!
- » Check out the [wellness resources in your MyCEA Account](#) and take advantage of the wellness activities available onsite, which may include organized running or hiking groups, intramural sports, and more. It's a great way to meet your fellow CEA students!
- » If you need medical services or counseling, CEA onsite staff will help you make appointments. They are your best resource once you are onsite!

### If a physical or mental health concern arises while you're abroad:

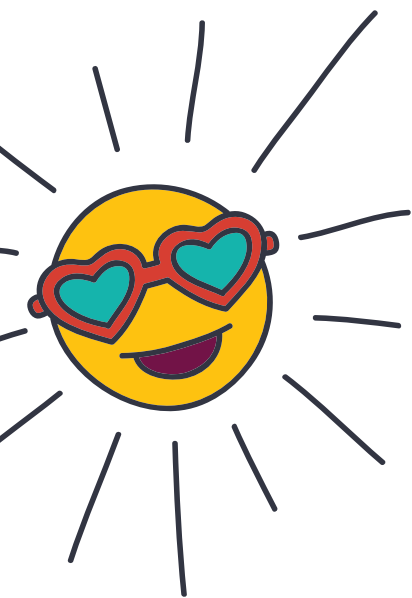
Contact your onsite CEA staff first if you're in your host city.

Contact AXA/Travel Assist if you need help when traveling outside your host city (see page 9).

[Learn more](#) about how CEA can support your health while abroad!

## QUICK TIP

*Learn about your health insurance and additional resources in case you need medical care abroad.*



## MEDICATIONS

If you take a daily, weekly, or even monthly medication, it's important to make sure your regimen isn't interrupted while you're abroad. Please be aware that customs regulations do not allow medications to be mailed internationally, and it's highly unlikely you'll be able to have a prescription filled by a local pharmacy once you're onsite.

- » Pack enough medication to last you for the duration of your program. Let your doctor know you're going abroad as soon as you enroll to allow for enough time to work out a long-term supply prescription.
- » Pack your medications in your carry-on bag or suitcase to avoid going without them if your checked baggage is delayed or lost.
- » Leave medications in original pharmacy bottles with labels intact and bring a doctor's note listing your prescribed medications, their uses, and their generic names.
- » Remember to pack any over-the-counter medicine you normally use! You might not be able to find the brand you prefer abroad, so if brand preference is important to you, pack the one you want.

## VACCINATIONS & IMMUNIZATIONS

Prior to your departure from home, review the [CDC's recommendations](#) for vaccinations in your host country, in case you need any you haven't already received. Make sure your standard immunizations are up to date. Ask your doctor about flu shots; it might be flu season in your host country.

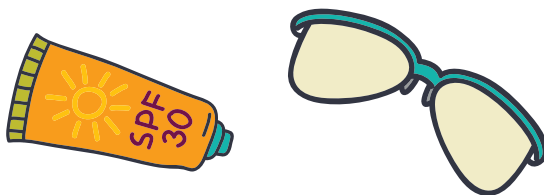
### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Stay Balanced Abroad](#)

[Adapt & Thrive Abroad](#)

[Stay Healthy While Abroad](#)

[Keep Active While Abroad](#)





## QUICK TIP

*Meet with your doctor and get any prescription medicines filled for your entire program length.*

## CISI MEDICAL INSURANCE

You'll have CISI Student Travel Insurance from your program's start date through your program's end date. For more information on the CISI Student Travel Insurance, go to the "resource tab" in your myCEA account. One to two weeks before your program's start date you will receive an email invitation to log into the CISI portal where you can find your insurance membership number, claim forms, and information on AXA/Travel Assist for any time you need help traveling away from your host city.

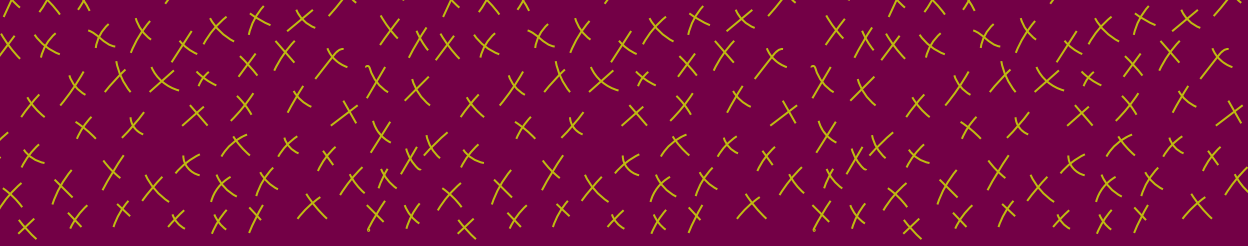
You'll pay for medical services at the time of treatment, then submit your receipts with a claim to CISI for reimbursement. Be sure to budget for unexpected medical expenses!

CISI covers pre-existing conditions up to \$2,500. CISI does not cover injuries sustained as a result of certain high-risk activities. Ask your current insurance provider if you have additional international coverage. Mental health treatment coverage is included, as being abroad may bring up mental health challenges. Plan to talk to CEA staff in the event you experience mental health issues. Please speak with your current health care provider or insurance provider if you will require regular treatments or additional coverage.

## AXA/TRAVEL ASSIST

If you need medical services while traveling outside of your host city, AXA/Travel Assist can help you find treatment, doctors who speak English, and other services. Check out the CISI portal for more information.





# SAFETY

Your safety is our priority, but it's up to you to make smart, safe decisions.



## QUICK TIP

*Don't carry more than \$100-200 of currency at a time; when taking money out of your wallet/ an ATM, be discreet.*

## BEFORE YOU LEAVE

- » Register with the U.S. State Department's Safe Traveler Enrollment Program and review their travel safety tips for students.
- » Provide CEA with your emergency contact information, a.k.a. the person CEA will contact if you're injured/hospitalized, in your MyCEA Account.
- » Make two copies of your passport, credit/debit cards, serial numbers for electronic devices, your phone's IMEI, and login/password for EuropAssistance/GGA; give a copy to your parent/guardian and keep a copy for yourself.
- » Leave valuable items at home; ask your personal insurance provider about coverage for personal belongings while abroad.





## WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD

Per CEA policy, you must provide CEA staff with an active cell phone number where you can be reached at all times. **In case of any serious emergency, contact CEA onsite staff immediately.** Notify our onsite staff of your trip details when you travel away from your destination city during your time abroad. You can let them know via email or your CEA Facebook group.

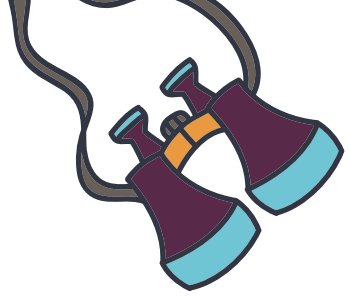
Be mindful of theft while you're abroad. Never leave your bags, laptops, or cell phones unattended. When at restaurants and cafes, do not leave your phone out on the table, as it could be swiped. Pickpockets are capable of cutting holes in your bags or reaching into your bags and pockets undetected. When in crowded and touristy areas, carry purses in front of you and keep wallets and cell phones in your front pocket.



### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Safety Tips](#)

[CEASecure](#)



## CEA EMERGENCY PROTOCOL

In the event of an emergency, please follow these steps:

### STEP 1

#### **SEEK SHELTER IN PLACE OR GET TO A SAFE LOCATION**

Don't leave your current location unless you are under threat. If you are in danger, go to a safe location nearby.

### STEP 2

#### **CONNECT WITH YOUR EMERGENCY CONTACT**

Let your emergency contact know you are safe.

### STEP 3

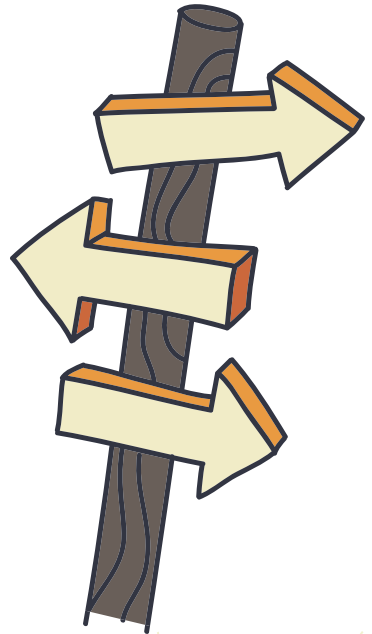
#### **CONNECT WITH CEA**

Check in with your onsite staff so they know you are ok.

### STEP 4

#### **FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND CEA**

Local authorities know best in these situations; follow their directions, which may include steps such as an evacuation, a lockdown, or a curfew.



# COMMUNICATION

## *How to Stay Connected While Abroad*

You're going to miss your family and friends back home (and they're going to miss you), but it's important to set realistic communication expectations.



## QUICK TIP

*Don't just talk to your family when you're upset – communicate with them when things are going well, too!*

## CELL PHONES

**CEA requires all students to have an active cell phone with local or international service while abroad. You must provide CEA staff with your local phone number within five days of your program's start date.**

If you don't have a phone or don't give CEA staff your number, it will make it difficult for the CEA staff onsite to reach you in case of an emergency. Review our cell phone policy [here](#).

## CELL PHONE OPTIONS

Do your own research before you travel, and choose the best option for you:

### OPTION 1

#### **Current cell phone with foreign SIM card**

- » Some phones accept foreign SIM cards. Ask your current provider if you can use your phone overseas; they must unlock it before you travel.
- » Once you arrive you will purchase a pre-paid SIM card.
- » Purchase credits when needed.

### OPTION 2

#### **Pay-as-you-go phone**

- » You can purchase a pay-as-you-go phone upon arrival in your destination city.
- » Smart phones and cheap flip phones are available, depending on your needs.
- » Purchase credits when needed.

### OPTION 3

#### **Current cell phone with an international plan**

- » Some cell phone providers offer international plans; check with your current provider. This may be convenient, but it can be expensive.
- » Research your options with local providers before making any decisions.

## QUICK TIP

*Time zones make it difficult to talk as frequently as you're used to, but staying up late to Skype won't help you adjust to your new time zone.*



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Keeping in Touch While Abroad](#)

[CEA Student \(MOJO\) Blog](#)

## COMMUNICATION APPS

If you take a smart phone/tablet abroad, consider the following communication apps. Be sure to download before you go:

- » Viber or WhatsApp: Call/text over WiFi
- » Skype or FaceTime: Video chat

## WI-FI

**CEA does not recommend relying on WiFi for communication; it's not always dependable and doesn't ensure that CEA staff can reach you in an emergency.**

- » You will have Internet access at your housing, on campus, or both.
- » In most places, the Internet is as fast as at home but WiFi coverage may not be as widespread.
- » Plugging in too many devices at once/downloaded files may result in slow Internet (e.g., you and your roommates may not be able to Skype and watch YouTube at the same time).
- » Most sites have WiFi, but you can bring an Ethernet plug to connect to the Internet (if you have an older laptop) or an [AirPort](#) or [Hotspot](#) as back-up.
- » Internet cafes are prevalent abroad, but usually aren't open 24/7.



## QUICK TIP

*When communicating, a bit of politeness goes a long way – say “hello,” “please,” and “thank you.”*

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow you to keep in touch with family and friends back home while creating a digital record of your time abroad.

## KEEPING LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN

While you are abroad, it's essential to check your email regularly. CEA will use email to communicate with you. **Remember, onsite CEA staff is your first (and best) point of contact.** If you have a problem with your roommate, teachers, health, etc., contact your onsite staff immediately. Having your parent/guardian contact CEA headquarters is not an effective way to find solutions.



# MONEY ABROAD

Money culture abroad differs from what you're used to. Research the differences in your host country before you travel.

**PRO TIP:**

CREATE A BUDGET BEFORE YOU LEAVE AND BE THOROUGH IN YOUR FINANCIAL PLANNING.



## QUICK TIP

*Always have more than one form of payment available: cash, credit, or debit.*

## PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

Plan to exchange about \$150-200 in small bills before you leave. You can order bills from your bank or find a currency exchange bank at [www.local.com](http://www.local.com). Do this before you get to the airport, where exchange costs are generally higher.

To look up current exchange rates, check out [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com). Check these rates often, before and during your time abroad, as they may change by the hour!

## CASH-BASED SOCIETIES

Many countries are cash-based; carry money in smaller increments, as much as you'll need for the day. Smaller businesses such as cafés, vendors, shops, and bars may not accept cards.

To avoid potential fees, reserve cards for larger purchases such as hotels, flights, or large shopping trips. Traveler's checks are not commonly exchanged or accepted abroad.



## QUICK TIP

*Keep money in separate places/pockets on your person, but never carry all of your money at once.*

## CREDIT & DEBIT CARDS

Visa and MasterCard are the most widely accepted cards internationally. (Overall, Visa is the most widely used.) American Express and Discover are less common.

Your credit, debit, and ATM cards will work in most overseas ATMs but there may be higher fees internationally. Some banks don't charge international fees; check before you head overseas!

Most countries use chipped cards, which require pin numbers.

It may be more efficient to take out larger amounts of cash per transaction to minimize ATM transaction fees. It's common for students to withdraw money about once every two weeks. Even with the fees, using a secure ATM to withdraw bills is usually the most affordable way to exchange money abroad.

### **Before you leave, speak with your bank/card issuer to:**

- » Inform them that you'll be leaving the country and tell them the dates you'll be abroad. Let them know what other countries you may be traveling to during your trip.
- » Check to verify ATM fees and the most affordable options while abroad.
- » Make sure you know the card's pin number and have emergency contact information for your bank.

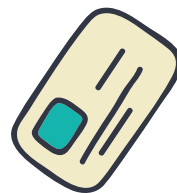
Many banks and credit cards also have online apps that make it easy to manage your account with a smart phone while abroad.



## MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Find sample budgets in your MyCEA Account for both low- and high-end estimates. Build extra money into your budget for additional expenses you may encounter along the way. We recommend having an “emergency medical fund,” because unexpected circumstances sometimes come up. It’s best to be prepared. It’s also a good idea to have a credit/debit card reserved for emergency use only.

If you do need money from home, you can have it wired to you via wire transfer. Western Union is a commonly used and reputable company.



# PACKING

Packing light makes traveling easier! Remember, you must carry and store your own luggage; we recommend bringing one suitcase and one carry-on.

**PRO TIP:**

CISI INSURANCE DOESN'T COVER PERSONAL PROPERTY; CONSIDER PURCHASING PERSONAL PROPERTY INSURANCE.



## SAMPLE PACKING LIST

### Official Documents and Program Necessities

*Photocopy each of these items and keep the copies separate from the originals. Bring one copy abroad and leave another copy with a family member.*

- Passport
- Airline ticket
- Cash, credit cards
- CEA Arrival Card

### Clothing/Dress

*Take comfortable clothes you can mix and match. Most countries follow a smart casual dress code. Bring good walking shoes; locals walk more than you may be used to.*

- Pajamas
- Slippers/shower shoes (most floors are tiled, not carpeted)
- Jeans
- Slacks
- A couple of nice outfits (skirts, dresses, or nice pants)
- Short-sleeve shirts/blouses
- A couple of long-sleeve shirts/sweaters
- All-purpose jacket
- Bathing suit and beach towel
- 1 pair each of comfortable walking shoes and nice shoes/sandals

### Health Needs

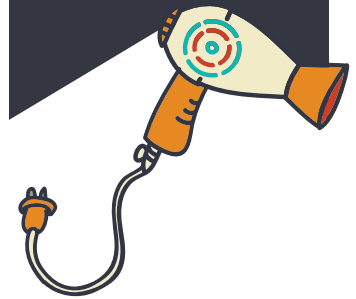
- Copies of prescriptions
- Sufficient medication marked with the generic name and dosage
- Insurance card
- Health kit containing vitamins, aspirin, antacid, Band-Aids, antiseptic, and safety pins
- Extra contact lenses/cleaning supplies and/or extra eye glasses
- Sunglasses and sunscreen

### Miscellaneous

- Guidebook on your host city/country
- Money belt
- Camera and memory card
- Travel alarm clock
- iPod/MP3 Player, batteries, and favorite music
- Computer for school work
- Backpack
- Phrase book and/or language dictionary
- Adaptor/converter if you plan to use electrical appliances overseas
- Travel-sized basic toiletries packed in sealed Ziploc bags
- Umbrella

## QUICK TIP

*Carry personal documents, money, and credit cards on your person using a money belt or pouch tucked under your clothes.*



## WHAT NOT TO BRING

- Iron or ironing boards
- Expensive jewelry (may become a target of theft.)
- Heavy items (your arms and back will thank you!)
- Hairdryers and curling irons (even with a converter, they may overheat/burn out – buy these items once you arrive.)
- Items that cannot be replaced!

# ARRIVAL

## *Expectations for Your First Days Abroad*

Have you asked yourself...

*What will my life look like once I get off the plane? What should I expect in my day-to-day routine? Who can I go to if I need something when I'm abroad?*

Read this section to find the answers!





## QUICK TIP

*If you have any questions prior to departure, please reach out to your Site Specialist.*

## BEFORE YOU LEAVE

### **Complete the CISI Information task on your MyCEA To-Do List.**

- Print your CISI Insurance info and keep it with you.
- You'll use CISI to get reimbursed for medical costs you pay while abroad (this works differently than the U.S. healthcare system.)

### **Enter your arrival information in your MyCEA Account.**

- If your flight is delayed or cancelled, call the Emergency Phone number.

### **Ensure your travel documents are in order.**

- Do you have your passport, visa, and any embassy documents? Keep them in your carry-on.
- Make copies of important documents.
- Bring emergency phone and contact info in case of travel plan changes.

### **Create a communication plan with family/friends**

- Communicating with family and friends while abroad takes more effort; set realistic expectations for yourself and your loved ones.



“  
When you travel, remember that a foreign country is *not* designed to make you comfortable. It is designed to make its own people comfortable.”

—CLIFTON FADIMAN

## A CHANGING MINDSET

From the moment you get off the plane, things are going to be different. Embrace it. Remember, you are not bringing American life to your new city... you're there to explore a new culture! [Learn about Cultural Adaptation.](#)

## HOUSING

- » Your housing will likely be in a local neighborhood with diverse residents living around you.
- » Respect nighttime quiet hours—many destinations have quiet laws; you may incur fines or even get kicked out of housing if you violate quiet hours.
- » Energy and water may cost more abroad; switch off lights, gas, heat, etc. when you leave.
- » Lock your doors.
- » Most students share a bedroom and bathroom.
- » Your housing may be smaller than you're used to, so pack lightly.
- » Not all housing is the same; CEA provides you with housing, but it's up to you to make it into a home!
- » Don't lose your keys while you're out and about.



## GETTING AROUND

- » Public transportation is convenient, widespread, and easy to use.
- » Expect to walk a lot; bring comfy shoes because a 20-30 minute walk/commute isn't uncommon.
- » In many older cities, you may encounter cobblestones (not super friendly to high heels).
- » When walking or using public transport, use a day bag with straps that cross in front and that closes securely.



## WHAT SKILLS WILL YOU GAIN?

- » Tolerance for different levels of efficiency
- » Understanding of how other people live
- » Ability to make things work even if it's not perfect
- » Ability to make a home for yourself in a new place
- » Responsibility and respect

## CEA ONSITE TEAM: YOUR NEW MAIN CONTACTS

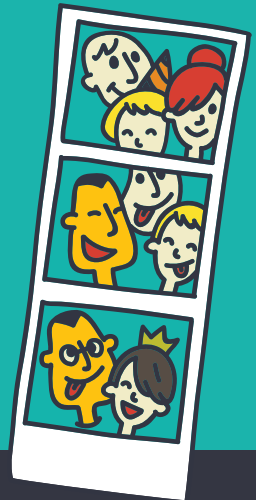
**If you have questions or concerns while abroad, turn to your onsite CEA team—they'll be your first and best point of contact during your program.**

During your first few days in your new home, your onsite team will conduct an in-depth orientation to help you understand how to navigate your new school and country. They will help with housing, academics, cultural activities, health and safety, medical facilities, restaurants, tips for travel and more.





# ENJOY YOUR TIME ABROAD!



cea™  
Learn your potential

No matter where you find yourself, CEA will be there...  
helping you experience new cultures, navigate new cities,  
meet new people, and make memories that'll last a lifetime.

