



Youth Ministry

International Trip Toolkit

Diocese of Pueblo
Safe Environment Office

Revised 2025 - Subject to Periodic Review and Update

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Letter from the Bishop

Dear brothers and sister in Christ,

Youth ministry activities within our diocese play an important role in this work as we invite young people to encounter Christ in a more profound way. When we perform these activities, we must be mindful of the gift that these children represent to our Church and do our part to care for and protect them.

This need is most acute when preparing for, and coordinating, international youth ministry trips. These activities require careful planning, as well as diligence on the part of everyone involved, including clergy, parish staff, volunteers, parents, children, etc. Such responsibilities are upheld by **Canon 519**, which details the responsibility of pastors to care for their parish and the people thereof, and **Canon 231**, which obliges lay ministers who provide services to the Church to form themselves so that they may execute their role “conscientiously, eagerly, and diligently.”

This toolkit has been developed to support youth ministers in planning, managing, and executing international youth ministry trips for our diocese. This work is important, and the guidance surrounding these activities is not static. For this reason, the document will be periodically reviewed and edited to incorporate the most accurate information to support your youth ministry trip. I invite you to contact the Diocesan Safe Environment Office prior to any international youth ministry trip to verify that you have the most recent version of this document.

This resource represents a starting point for your efforts to plan and execute a youth ministry trip, and my team is here to support you. Specifically, Brian Nufer, the Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator, is your first contact at the diocese to answer common questions related to youth ministry activities, and ensure that the youth we serve are protected. You can reach Brian at 719-544-9861 ext. 1111 or bnufer@dioceseofpueblo.org.

I am grateful for the work that you perform to evangelize and catechize the youth in our communities, and I am confident that this document will be an exceptional resource in helping you to plan international youth ministry trips.

Know that you and continually in my prayers,



+ Bishop Stephen J. Berg
Bishop of Pueblo

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in organizing an international youth ministry trip!

Youth ministry trips are an excellent opportunity for the youth of our parishes, missions, and Catholic schools to experience the faith in a unique way by traveling to inspirational locations.

The key to any successful Youth Ministry program is finding an effective – yet safe – way to connect with kids. Youth ministers are charged with the profound responsibility of engaging young people within the Catholic Church, while keeping those who participate safe from harm. Not only are youth ministers responsible for safety, but the young people themselves and their parents must also play a role.

The Diocesan Safe Environment Program plays a role in supporting the safety and protection of the participants in youth ministry programs. By completing this program, those who work with youth are screened for their suitability for ministry, and receive training about abuse/neglect prevention, as well as the proper reporting process.

The following guidelines have been developed to assist you in your role as a youth minister while planning and executing an international youth trip, and answer some of the most common questions related to these trips. If you have any questions regarding the measures mentioned in this toolkit, please reach out to the Diocese of Pueblo for assistance.

Thank you for all your efforts to keep safety at the forefront of your youth ministry trip.

Getting Started

We are excited to support you in planning and executing your international youth ministry trip! Please review the following information to get started.

Contact Information

The Diocese of Pueblo and our partners are here to support you as you manage youth ministry international trips. Please reach out with any questions.

Diocese of Pueblo Safe Environment Office: Brian Nufer Safe Environment Coordinator 719-544-9861 ext. 1111 bnufer@dioceseofpueblo.org	Diocese of Pueblo Finance Office 719-544-9861
Catholic Mutual Group (Insurance): Jake Livingston Account Manager (800) 228-6108 Ext. 2304 jlivingston@catholicmutual.org	Catholic Mutual Group (Loss Control): Peyton Edwards Loss Control Representative (402) 514-2319 pedwards@catholicmutual.org

The Diocesan Safe Environment Office

The Diocese of Pueblo Safe Environment Office is your resource for all questions regarding Diocesan Safe Environment program implementation and administration.

For resources and support related to your youth ministry program, please visit the Diocesan Safe Environment Webpage: www.diopueblo.org/safe-environment, or contact us at 719-544-9861 ext. 1111.

Safe Environment Program Requirements

The Diocesan Safe Environment Program consists of three components outlined by diocesan policy:

- Criminal background screenings for clergy, religious, lay employees, educators and covered volunteers. Background screenings shall be completed before the person begins his or her service, and again every five years thereafter.
- Adult safe environment training which is designed to educate clergy, religious, lay employees, educators, and covered volunteers on recognizing and reporting abuse. Training shall be completed in full and shall be repeated every five years.
- Youth safe environment training which is designed to help children and youth establish and maintain their own personal safety. The program is to be taught in Diocesan schools and parish religious education programs each year.

Consult the Diocesan *Guidelines for Implementing Your Safe Environment Program* on the Diocesan Safe Environment Website for additional resources and support:
<https://www.diopueblo.org/safe-environment>.

Documents and Resources

In preparation for your trip, you will need to access the following documents:

1. **Youth Ministry Forms:** (available at: www.diopueblo.org/youth-volunteers):
 - a. The Parent/Guardian Consent Form.
 - b. The Diocesan Youth Participant Code of Conduct.
 - c. The Youth Ministry Manual.
2. **Volunteer Forms** (available at: www.diopueblo.org/adult-volunteers):
 - a. Adult Volunteer Application.
 - b. Driver Information and Acknowledgement Form (if needed).
3. **Diocesan Policies and Guidelines** (available at: www.diopueblo.org/safe-environment):
 - a. The Guidelines for Implementing Your Safe Environment Program.
 - b. The Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Policy.
 - c. The Guidelines on Interacting with Children and Young People.
 - d. The Code of Pastoral Conduct.
4. **CMG Connect CARES Resources** (available at: pueblo.cmgconnect.org/).

Chaperone Information

Chaperones play an important role in any youth ministry activity as they support the overall safety and wellbeing of youth participants. To support chaperones in the performance of their duties, the following guidelines are to apply:

Requirements

- All chaperones must be 21 years of age or older, or 25 for events that include an overnight stay. These individuals must complete adult Safe Environment training and a background check.
- Those between 18 and 21 years of age may volunteer to assist but may **not** serve as chaperones. These individuals must complete adult Safe Environment training and a background check.
- The recommended adult-to-youth ratio is two or more chaperones to the initial ten children/youth.
- For each additional one to six youth, an additional adult chaperone is recommended.

Depending on the needs and abilities of the youth, and the nature of the activity, you may need to have more adult chaperones than the minimum. Conduct a risk assessment to determine appropriate levels of supervision for each activity.

When chaperoning events within a secured facility, adults should designate places and times where youth participants can locate group leaders throughout the day. Generally, chaperones of both genders should be present with youth groups.

For additional chaperone information, including requirements regarding gender, please see the *Guidelines for Interacting with Children and Young People*.

Application and Onboarding

Adult volunteers and chaperones play an important role in youth ministry trips and activities. By completing these application steps and onboarding processes, volunteers are better prepared for ministry, and to give of their time and talent to the ministries of the Church.

To complete the application and onboarding process, volunteers will need to complete the following steps. These resources and forms are available on the Diocesan Safe Environment webpage.

- **Adult Volunteer Application:** this form asks for basic information about the volunteer and is a formal application for volunteer service within the diocese.
- **A Criminal Background Check:** volunteer chaperones must complete a criminal background check before ministry, and again every five years thereafter if they are still performing ministry. Contact your background check administrator for more information.
- **Adult Safe Environment Training:** volunteer chaperones must complete adult safe environment training before ministry, and again every five years thereafter. Contact your CMG Connect administrator for more information.
- **Driver Requirements:** If an adult volunteer will be transporting a youth group at any time before or during the trip, they must complete:

- The Driver Information and Acknowledgement Form located on the diocesan website.
- CMG Connect Defensive Driving Curriculum.
- A Motor Vehicle Record Check (MVR).

Training and Orientation

Chaperones play a vital role in helping young people have successful experiences. Help your chaperones be familiar and comfortable with the activities and tasks for which they will be responsible during the activity. Regular daily responsibilities for chaperones include the following:

1. Ensure students are present on the bus or other means of transportation every time transportation is used.
2. Ensure the students are in their room at curfew.
3. Ensure students are awake on time.
4. Ensure students understand daily itinerary.
5. Ensure students do not consume alcoholic beverages or illicit substances during the trip.
6. Be watchful for suspicious behavior that might involve breaking the rules or loud, obnoxious, and/or rude behavior.
7. Assist in medical emergencies and contact the person in charge immediately.
8. Be aware and sensitive to any individual medical issues with the group.
9. Ensure the students or chaperones do not leave the group for unauthorized excursions.
10. Encourage participants to take ownership of their luggage and belongings and to check for things left behind.
11. Address dress code violations.

All information regarding the trip should be provided to all chaperones, parents and youth ministry trip leaders to support the safety and supervision of the youth participants. Chaperones should also view the *Youth Ministry: Everything Matters and Everyone Has a Role* online training available from the Catholic Mutual website at www.catholicmutual.org.

General Timeline

In general, international trip coordination and planning should occur according to the following schedule:

- **Trip planning:** no later than 18-12 months before the trip.
- **Booking the Trip:** no later than 12-10 months before the trip.
- **Trip Promotion and Preparation:** At least 9 months before the trip, though promotion and preparation can begin as soon as the trip is booked.

Planning the Trip

In any youth ministry activity, careful planning is required to identify risks, promote safety, and develop a successful and spiritually moving experience. This planning should include the following:

Recognizing Your Responsibility

It is the primary responsibility of youth ministers and chaperones to support the safety and protection of all participants who represent precious children of God.

Gauging Interest

To effectively gauge the interest in the trip from parishioners and families, hold informational meetings, use online platforms or distribute paper surveys with parents, youth, and parish volunteer groups. This interest should drive the decision to move the trip forward.

Risk Assessment and Management

A risk assessment should be conducted to determine what hazards or risks may be present and carefully assess the safety and security of all participants. Consider the risks that may be involved and what steps need to be taken to ensure the safety of all participants:

- Will additional security need to be provided onsite?
- Where is the nearest U.S. Embassy?
- What is the distance to the nearest medical facility?
- What medical services are available?
- Where is the nearest police station?
- Will the participants require additional vaccinations depending upon the location of the trip?
- How many chaperones will be required if participants need to be separated from the group? (See *Chaperone Information*)
- Are there criminal activities that may be common at this location that the group should be aware of? (e.g. pickpocketing, purse snatching, etc.)

Create a plan of action to respond to any emergency. Even the worst-case scenario should be thought through to plan a response.

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Resources

The diocesan insurance agency, Catholic Mutual Group (CMG), has a variety of useful resources available to support youth ministry and mitigate risk. Many of these resources are available in the CARES Resource Library available through the CMG Connect portal.

For questions regarding the CMG Connect portal or available resources, please contact the Diocesan Safe Environment Office.

Travel Advisories

Travel advisories from the U.S. Department of State should be reviewed prior and throughout your trip. These advisories should be heeded and inform the planning for the trip to ensure that it is a safe and fruitful experience for all participants.



Travel advisories from the U.S. Department of State can be found here: travel.state.gov/content/travel.html.

Transportation

- Please consult, review, and adhere to all diocesan transportation policies and guidelines. These may be located on the Diocesan Safe Environment Website.
- Commercial carriers (i.e. commercial airlines, trains, or buses), or contracted transportation is the most desirable method to be used whenever possible. The use of private passenger vehicles is discouraged and should be avoided if possible. If commercial carriers are used, no further information is required. However, if transportation is contracted, signed contracts should be executed with an appropriate hold harmless agreement protecting the parish/school and the Diocese of Pueblo.
- Contracted carriers should provide proof of insurance with minimum limits of liability of \$2,000,000 CSL (Combined Single Limit).
- Often, travel agencies coordinate transportation for international youth trips. Parishes/schools should work with their travel agency for transportation needs.
- Please contact the Diocese of Pueblo with any questions.

Prohibition of 11-15 Passenger Van Use

The use of 11 (including drivers) to 15 passenger vans is strictly prohibited.

Volunteer Drivers

The use of volunteer drivers for international youth trips is **highly discouraged**. International travel poses unique safety hazards for those who are unfamiliar with the driving laws of the country.

If emergent situations requiring volunteer drivers arise, the driver should have a signed diocesan Driver Information and Acknowledgement Form on file and have completed a Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) check, as well as Defensive Driving training through CMG Connect. **All** driving laws within the destination country must be adhered to.

Travel Agency Selection

All international youth trips are to be booked through a travel agency. As part of the planning process, travel agencies should be researched and a reputable one selected to develop and execute a fun, safe, and engaging trip for the youth group.

Lodging Considerations

Most travel agencies will prepare lodging accommodations for a parish or school travel group. Work with the travel agency to ensure that accommodations are appropriate for your specific youth trip. Parents who are serving as chaperones may be permitted to stay with their children if special accommodations are made for the family group. These individuals may not stay in a room with non-family members.

Receiving Approval

All youth ministers should consult with their pastor or principal to receive approval to move forward with an international youth trip. The pastor/principal should remain involved in, and informed about, trip planning, preparation, and execution.

Diocesan Notification

All parishes, missions, schools or other diocesan entities are to notify the Vicar General's Office of all international trips that are to be undertaken. Notification should include the dates of the trip, travel locations, travel agency that will be used, parishes/locations participating, name of the trip planner/coordinator, etc. Please send notification to dscott@dioceseofpueblo.org.

Priests/clergy who will be traveling with their parish group on an international trip should notify the Vicar for Clergy's office with details of their travel plans so that clergy absences from the parish/mission can be planned. Please provide notification to knufer@dioceseofpueblo.org.

Booking the Trip

Once a strong plan has been developed, the parish/mission/school is ready to book the trip. During this process, consider the following:

Use a Travel Agency

All international youth ministry trips should be booked through a reputable travel agency. Utilizing these travel agencies supports the scheduling and coordinating tasks associated with travel, and link parishes and schools with knowledgeable personnel who can provide support in preparing for the trip.

Trip Itinerary

Work with your travel agency to develop an itinerary that will interest your travel group and provide a great travel experience. Options may vary, so select an itinerary that is both inspirational and safe, for the travel group.

Contract Review

There may be occasions when a travel agency, facility over, or other organization asks the parish/mission/school to sign a written agreement or contract. This agreement or contract must be reviewed by Catholic Mutual Group prior to signing to ensure it does not contain any unfavorable language that could impact the diocesan insurance program. Please contact the Diocese of Pueblo for information regarding this contract review. Allow for at least three weeks to complete contract review.

Insurance

Trip organizers should review their liability insurance coverage under the diocesan insurance policy before any youth ministry trip. Please contact the diocesan Catholic Mutual Group representative for questions regarding diocesan insurance coverage.

Travel insurance should be purchased for **all** international trips, and can generally be purchased through a travel agency. Please contact the diocesan Catholic Mutual Group representative to have them review specific contracts related to an international trip and ensure proper insurance coverage is obtained (See *Contract Review*).

All participants, their families, and chaperones should check with their health insurance provider to understand their coverage while abroad, as many domestic plans don't cover medical expenses internationally. Contacting the insurance provider directly is the best way to confirm if emergency medical coverage extends to the destination, or if supplemental travel medical insurance is available.

Common Travel Insurance Types

Travel insurance plans can vary in coverage depending on the travel agency used, insurer, and insurance package purchased. Travel insurance often includes trip cancellation and delay coverage, baggage loss or delay, medical expenses/emergency evacuation, death and dismemberment and/or liability coverage. Additional coverage may be available. Work with your travel agency on policy specifics and contact Catholic Mutual Group to review travel contracts and assess coverage needs.

Confirmation of Arrangements

Upon booking the trip, ensure you receive confirmation for all travel and lodging arrangements, and keep a copy of these confirmations with you during the trip.

Trip Promotion and Preparation

Once an international trip has been booked, parishes and schools should properly prepare for the trip. During trip preparation and promotion, consider the following:

Promotion and Communication

- Communication from youth ministers through texting, blogs, email, social networking sites, etc. must be appropriate and represent the views/teaching of the Catholic Church. This communication should be constantly monitored.
- All communication from a youth minister should be open and transparent. Nothing should be communicated that should not be seen by others. Remember, there is no such thing as a private email or instant message.
- It is best not to communicate directly with one individual through electronic communication but send communications to all youth within the program.
- Texting, emailing or chatting with youth through social networking sites should never be done privately with an individual youth.
- Parents should be copied in on all correspondence that a youth minister sends to their child.
- Social networking sites established for Youth Ministry must be constantly monitored to ensure any inappropriate material is immediately removed.

- At least two adults should have administration access to the account site.

Communication is of the utmost importance when preparing a youth ministry trip. Ensure parents are informed in writing with all details regarding the trip. This includes but is not limited to:

- Type of activities they will be participating in.
- Cost (if any).
- Departure and arrival dates and times.
- Location and contact information where the group can be reached in case of emergency.
- Names and contact information of chaperones.
- Mode of transportation (i.e. airplane, bus, etc.).
- Accommodation information.
- Parent/legal guardian responsibility.
- Passport and travel document requirements (See *Passports and Required Travel Documents*).

Preparation Meetings

Parishes, missions, or schools should arrange meetings with all participants and youth participant's parents/legal guardians to fully explain all details of the youth ministry trip clearly and specifically as well as answer any questions. During these meetings:

- Have each youth participant and parent/guardian sign the Youth Participant Code of Conduct.
- Provide information about any documentation needed to travel abroad, such as a passport. See *Passports and Required Travel Documents*.
- Discuss any travel insurance that has been purchased for the trip by the parish, mission, or school so that participants know what is, and is not, covered under this policy.
- Provide a copy of the Diocesan *Sexual Misconduct Policy*, *Guidelines for Interacting with Children and Young People*, and *Code of Pastoral Conduct* to chaperones and parents.
- Provide a packing list that includes commonly forgotten items, prescription medications, etc.
- Discuss local customs which may be encountered during the trip (see *International Customs*).

Enlist the support of the parents/guardians by encouraging them to complete the *Youth Ministry: Everything Matters and Everyone Has a Role* online training available through CMG Connect. This training helps identify the roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in youth ministry to support communication and safety during the trip.

Enlistment of Chaperones

During the preparation stage, trip coordinators should enlist qualified chaperones for the international trip. For more information, see *Chaperone Information*.

Participant Payment/Deposit

Deposits may need to be submitted to the travel agency or the organization offering the trip package. Often, payment is submitted to the travel agency with a signed reservation application form. Work with the organization or travel agency regarding the submission of payment.

If deposits are to be made to the parish, mission, or school, work with your bookkeeper and/or office manager on how to receive these deposits correctly in accordance with diocesan money handling guidelines.

There may be times when a youth requires a refund for a trip due to illness or a family emergency. The eligibility and process for obtaining a refund will depend on the specific circumstances and the policies of the organization and travel agency running the trip.

Refund policies often have a set of dates that dictate the size of the refund that can be received. It is important to understand the terms and conditions of the company or travel agency.

Communicate with participants and parents if any portion of the deposit or additional funds are non-refundable due to purchasing non-transferable flights and excursions.

Fundraising

Fundraising for a youth ministry trip is often an important part of preparing for a youth ministry trip and procuring funds with which to advance the faith through youth ministry. These fundraising efforts also offer a great opportunity for youth participants to actively support the trip and engage in meaningful stewardship of their time and service.

General Considerations and Communication

Prior to fundraising efforts, parishes and schools should work to determine the amount of funds needed and set a fundraising goal. Fundraising efforts should be communicated to the parish or school community in parish bulletins, via websites, social media pages, at announcements during Mass etc.

Designated Donations

Funds raised or donated for specific purposes at the parish ***must be used for the intended purpose of the funds only; using these funds for other purposes is not permissible***. For example, donations specifically designated for youth ministry programs at a parish must be used only to support youth ministry programs. Please contact the Diocesan Finance Office for any questions on designated donations.

Risk Assessment and Management

In every fundraising activity, some amount of risk is present, though some fundraising activities involve more risk than others. Perform a risk assessment regarding the fundraising activity to help determine what activities are acceptable for participants based upon the age and condition of each individual.

All risk which may occur during the activity should be managed properly by youth ministers and/or adult chaperones. During all youth ministry fundraising activities, youth participants

should be supervised by adult chaperones to ensure safety. For further assistance assessing your risk, or ideas for best practices, reach out to the Catholic Mutual Loss Control representative.

Participation in Fundraising

Generally, all participants in a youth ministry trip should join in fundraising efforts to support stewardship and discipleship. Parishes and schools should be flexible and work with participants' specific situations regarding fundraising activities to ensure that they are able to participate in fundraising.

Financial Controls

During any fundraising activity, proper financial controls should be used to reduce the risk of fraud or embezzlement, including:

- From receipt to deposit, all monies, whether cash or checks, should be handled by two people.
- Upon the completion of the fundraising event, all funds collected should be provided to the parish or school finance department for accounting and processing.
- All checks received should be immediately endorsed to the appropriate church, school, or other designated account. A self-inking endorsement stamp can be obtained for this purpose.
- All regular money handlers should be bonded after a careful background check has been completed. In requiring a background check of all prospective money handlers, no one individual will be embarrassed by being singled out for special scrutiny.

Additional information about proper cash handling techniques can be found in the Catholic Mutual CARES Resource Library available through CMG Connect. ***Always consult with your parish or school bookkeeper or business manager before a fundraising event to ensure proper financial procedures are adhered to.***

Passports and Required Travel Documents

All individuals traveling outside the United States of America **MUST** obtain a valid passport and any required travel documents. Proof of valid passports must generally be submitted to the travel agency prior to the trip. Contact your travel agency for specific information.

First time passport applicants should apply as soon as possible as response times vary. Many Post Offices have facilities to assist in obtaining passports. Check with the US department of State for the processing time for a new passport.



For information of obtaining a passport, visit:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html/>

Participants and their parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining and paying for passports and/or any documents required to travel. Parishes may keep a copy of these documents during the trip.

Some locations may also require visas to travel in addition to a valid passport. Please work with your travel agency on meeting visa requirements.

Language and Translation

If the trip is to a non-English speaking location, arrange to have someone that speaks the local language travel with you to translate. Moreover, it is helpful to teach trip participants and volunteers with common expressions and questions that they may needed during the trip in the local language (e.g. “My name is _____”, “please”, “thank you”, “hello”, “goodbye”, “I’m sorry”, “where is the restroom?”, “I need help”, “Call an ambulance/the police”.)

Participant and Parent/Guardian Information Collection

Pertinent information for all youth participants and their parent/guardians should be collected prior to the trip. This information may be collected using the Parent/Guardian Consent Form.

A copy of this information should be kept on file at the parish, but another copy should be kept by the trip leader to ensure it is available should it be required.

Medications

Consult CMG Connect CARES resources regarding medications that youth participants will need during an international trip or youth activity.

Please refer to the Parent/Guardian Consent form which requests medication information for youth participants.

Participant Documentation

Prior to any youth ministry trip, the following forms should be completed:

Youth participants and their parents/guardians must complete the following forms. More information is available on the Diocesan Safe Environment webpage.

- **Trip Agreement/Contract/Application:** When booking through a trip/travel agency, participants may be provided with a trip agreement or contract related to payment, liability etc. Contact your travel agency for more information.
- **Parent/Guardian Consent Form:** This document contains important information about each youth participant, and contains liability releases.
- **Youth Participant Code of Conduct:** This document contains the standard code of conduct of all youth participants of any youth ministry activity.

During the Trip

The following provides practical guidance regarding steps that should be taken during a youth ministry international trip.

Exercise Good Judgement

Those responsible for the care and supervision of minors during a youth ministry trip should exercise good judgement. Be cautious about the wellbeing of youth participants and support them in maintaining their own safety even when issues arise.

Best Practices

- Proper supervision must be provided at all times. What is considered “proper” could vary according to the age of participants and the type of activity. The greater the ratio of supervision, the better.
- Participants should be divided into smaller groups with a designated adult leader.
- A binder with medical release forms and emergency contact names/numbers for each individual should be carried by the designated group leader at all times in case an injury occurs.
- Participants should dress appropriately and according to the customs and dress standards of the country in which you are visiting.
- Rest breaks should be given to participants as needed. Meals should be provided as well as an adequate number of fluids to ensure proper hydration.
- Be aware of the conditions of local tap water. Boiled or bottled water as well as bottled or canned beverages are safest. Select food carefully and avoid raw foods that can’t be peeled or boiled.

International Traditions and Customs

Trip planning should consider international traditions and customs which may be different than those of the United States. Examples of local customs that may be taken into consideration include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Some countries allow minors to consume alcohol. Chaperones should be aware of this and ensure youth **do not** consume alcoholic beverages. Likewise, youth participants should be made aware of these customs and maintain good behavior in keeping with the Youth Participant Code of Conduct.
- Many foreign countries have strict rules about proper attire and behavior while visiting a church. Participants and leaders should respect these customs.
- Some hand gestures common in the United States are considered obscene in foreign countries. Be aware of these cultural differences.

Youth ministry trip organizers should research the customs of the country to which the youth group is traveling and take appropriate measures to ensure a successful trip.

First Aid

First aid equipment should be readily accessible, both on and off site. A phone or other means to contact emergency responders should also be available. Chaperones should know who to call at the parish in case of an emergency or injury. If an emergency occurs, the CMG Connect

CARES Incident Investigation Report Form should be completed. See the *Youth Ministry Manual*: www.diopueblo.org/youth-volunteers.

Injuries, Medical Events, or Participants Being Sent Home

It is important to know what to do if a youth participant or adult chaperone is injured, in an emergency, or any situation that requires a minor to be sent home. Ensure there are enough adult chaperones to accompany an individual separately from the group should the need arise. Work with your travel agency on travel specifics and consult your travel insurance for information on coverage for return trips.

Weather

Be aware of whether alerts while on international trips and be prepared to cancel any activity that takes place outdoors in case of inclement weather such as lightning, strong winds, etc.

Other Contingencies

Adults supporting youth ministry trips need to be aware of any contingencies that may arise. Plan ahead and be aware during the trip. If contingencies arise, work to manage the situation in a way that supports the safety and wellbeing of all participants.