

US Citizen Members Stranded Abroad

In these challenging times, there are so many unique and difficult situations facing our organizations. Sharing should this be helpful to your organization.

Alpha Phi has heard from members, collegians and alumnae, who are overseas in countries who are closing their borders and/or find themselves unable to find a way home due to cancelled flights. I've heard several of you are experiencing similar issues and wanted to share the below info.

As some of you are aware, I work for the U.S. Department of State, Diplomatic Security Service. The State Department has a Repatriation Task Force that is working around the clock, in conjunction with US Embassies around the world, to return citizens to the United States. Should you have a member who is stranded overseas, the first step is to immediately register with the State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (<https://step.state.gov/step/>) so the USG can account for the individual. The Task Force (referenced in the article below) is arranging flights by the hour/day so the sooner an individual completes the registration, the better so she can be accounted for in the planning process.

I would also encourage the individual to contact American Overseas Citizen Services which may be reached at 888-407-4747 or from overseas at 202-501-4444.

You can also send me (jackeeschools@gmail.com) the member information (Full name, location, contact information, and as much information as you may have) and I will ensure it gets to the Task Force. HOWEVER, that does NOT guarantee information will be in the system and I would reiterate to the individual the immediacy of STEP registration and contacting the above phone numbers.

Here are a few resources if you need them:

<https://www.state.gov/coronavirus/>

<https://thehill.com/policy/international/488655-state-department-sets-up-task-force-to-bring-home-americans-abroad>

I hope you are all staying safe - while social distancing to flatten the curve - and while I would love to connect with each of you, fingers crossed your members aren't facing this particular challenge. But if they are, rest assured, many people are working 24/7 to bring them home.