

## Bolivia

### Safety, Health, and Security

**Be Prepared: Use International ISOS.** By now, you have registered with International SOS. Prepare for your visit to Bolivia by visiting their website (<http://www.internationalsos.com/>), signing in with Northwestern’s group membership number (11BCAS000003), and reading the **Medical Tools** pages as well as the **Security Tools**.

**ISOS Travel Security Risk Summary on Bolivia:** “Opportunistic theft and violent crimes such as armed robbery and assault are less frequent than in neighboring countries, but are on the rise, particularly in urban centers. Car theft and burglaries of residential and commercial premises occur with increased frequency in cities such as La Paz, Santa Cruz and Cochabamba. Throughout most of Bolivia, violent crimes are rare and seldom occur outside impoverished urban neighborhoods. Bolivian National Police (BNP) operations are limited to the urban areas, and response times are generally slow. The cocaine trade poses few serious security concerns and does not affect foreign business travelers, unless they venture into coca-producing territory. Demonstrations are held regularly in La Paz and Cochabamba, usually involving marches, street rallies and roadblocks; clashes also sometimes occur between protesters and the security forces. Periodic rallies by *cocaleros* (coca growers) in the lowlands and peasant farmers in the highlands can cause significant travel disruption. Bolivia has been relatively free of insurgency and terrorism, though several small-scale bombings have sporadically targeted government offices in La Paz in recent years. These bombings have been largely symbolic, resulting in limited property damage and rarely cause injury. Bolivia is prone to heavy flooding and landslides during the rainy season (November to March); the government often declares a state of emergency in areas that are severely affected by deluges.”

**Please follow these guidelines from ISOS regarding travel:**

- Take basic precautions against street and petty crime.
- Social unrest is common and disruptive. Monitor domestic developments during your stay and liaise with local contacts for the timing and location of planned protests.
- Avoid demonstrations, rallies and picket-lines. Do not try to cross roadblocks as this may prompt hostility.
- In the event of social unrest, where possible to do so safely, return to your accommodation immediately and remain there until the situation stabilizes.
- Police corruption remains a problem; avoid unnecessary contact with the police. Report crimes to the Tourist Police. In the event of a serious incident, contact your embassy for assistance.

Name	Contact Info
FSD Program Director Mauricio Ramirez Parra	Office (591) 4 / 44534599 Cellular ( 591) 77952777 Home (591) 4/ 4409750
FSD Program Coordinator Patricia Sweeney	Office (591) 4/44534599 Cellular (591) 67403682 Home
US Embassy in Bolivia	For EMERGENCIAS <u>involving a U.S. citizen</u> Call 591-2-216-8000 591-2-216-8000 . After hours calls: 715-33713
FSD Bolivia Emergency Number	(591) 71736366
FSD SFO Emergency Number	+1-415-828-8414

**Health.**

General health preparation is covered in your FSD Predeparture Packet. **If you are ill (and it is not an emergency), FIRST please contact the FSD site team and your host family.** In addition, here is a list of medical contacts that you should have with you at all times. Program them into your cell phone.

Name	Contact Info	Services
Dr Wilmer Mendez Merino	Office : Colombia E # 0815 Phone: 4/ 422 6256 Home: 4/ 425 1974 Cellular: 717 20932	General Medicine. Gastroenterology Specialist

Dr Ricardo Trigo	Office: Clinica Santa Casa (Calle Tumusla 453 entre Mayor Rocha Y Mexico) Home : 4525301 Cellular: 72259080	General Medicine. Trauma Specialist
Dra Karina Cartagena	Office: Ed. Cempro (Calle Ecuador 871 casi Oquendo) oficina 6 planta baja Phone: Consultorio Clínica Olivos 4/ 44 08801 Phone: Consultorio clínica San Pedro: 4/ 4254799 Cellular: 722 55557	General Medicine. Gastroenterology Specialist
Dr Remberto Garcia	Office: Baptista 541 Edificio San Vicente Phone: 4/ 425 4353 Home: 4/ 425 4384	General Medicine. _Surgeries Specialist
Dra Ana Lucy Teran	Office: Av. Juan de la Rosa casi Av. America Oeste Phone: 4/ 4325524 4/ 4422924 Cellular: 707 57 934	General Medicine. _Gynecology Specialist
Dr Rolando Aguilier Vargas	Office: Avenida San Martín #285 esq. Sucre Edificio Colibrí 2o piso Oficina 3 Phone: 4/ 450 1711 Home: 4/ 440 1114 Cellular: 722 15 460	Dentist

#### Suggested Clinical Labs:

Name	Contact Info	Services
Laboratorio Clinico España	Ballivián 692 Casi La Paz Phone: 4/ 425 7201	Clinical Analysis
Laboratorio Universo	Plaza Constitución Esq. 16 de Julio Edif. El Clan II Phone: 4/ 452 5265	Clinical Analysis
Laboratorio San Martin	Edificio CEMPRO Ecuador esq Oquendo	Clinical Analysis

#### Suggested Clinics:

Name	Address	Services
San Pedro	Calle Aurelio Meleán S 0154 Phone: 4/ 4232809	Medical Care clinic, emergencies, surgeries, laboratories, health services in general
Los Olivos	Av. Melchor Pérez de Olguín N 0175 Phone: 4/ 440 8801	Medical Care clinic, emergencies, surgeries, laboratories, health services in general
Copacabana	Av. Potosí 1253 Phones: 4/ 424 2362, 428 1125	Medical Care clinic, emergencies, surgeries, laboratories, health services in general
Clinica Santa Maria de Los Angeles	Av Papa Paolo in front of the FSD office	Medical Care clinic, emergencies, surgeries, laboratories, health services in general

**Hospitals Recommended by ISOS in La Paz (for more serious cases):**

- **CEMES:** Avenida 6 de Agosto #2881. **591 2 243 0350 / 0360 / 0370 / 0380**
- **Clinica del Sur:** 3538 Avenida Hernando Siles (Esquina Calle 7) Obrajes. **591 22 784 002 / 750 / 755 / 001 / 003**

**Remember, HTH** can also help direct you to the nearest physician or hospital. Call (collect) **+1.610.254.8771**. **ISOS** can “advise you, help you select the correct doctor and hospital, and make any necessary appointments on your behalf.” Call **+1 (215) 942 8226**.

**Northwestern Contacts.** If any incident arises that involves your on-site administrators and you do not feel comfortable broaching an issue with them (including, but not limited to, discrimination or sexual harassment), please know that you can contact staff members at the NU GESI Office:

- Brian Hanson: [bhanson@northwestern.edu](mailto:bhanson@northwestern.edu), **847-491-5058; cell: 847-660-3771**
- Nicole Patel: [nicole-patel@northwestern.edu](mailto:nicole-patel@northwestern.edu), **847-467-0844; cell: 847-602-3616**

**Mental Health.** Your mental health is critical to your success on GESI and to your overall wellbeing. If there is anything that you think the FSD site team, your host family, or GESI staff might need to know about your mental health history in order to help you stay healthy while you are abroad, don’t hesitate to let us know. As long as you are not a risk to yourself or others, we will keep this information confidential.

While you are in country, the FSD site team is always available to discuss your mental health and to provide you with recommendations for mental health care. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, contact the FSD staff on their cell phones. Alternatively, Northwestern’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) has a crisis counselor on-duty 24 hours a day. During daytime (CST), call **(847) 491-2151**. After hours, call **(847) 491-8100**. Ask to speak to the crisis counselor on duty. They will help you talk through your situation and decide what next steps to take.

The Northwestern University Study Abroad Office and Counseling and Psychological Services has put together a helpful web resource to assist you in caring for your mental health abroad. You can access it here: [http://www.northwestern.edu/studyabroad/health\\_safety/Mental\\_Health\\_Abroad.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/studyabroad/health_safety/Mental_Health_Abroad.html).

**Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

You may already identify yourself as a heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender student, or you may still be exploring these issues. In either case, you will find that the social climate, laws, and personal interactions of your host culture often differ from the U.S.

Gender roles in your host country may differ greatly from those in the U.S. You may choose not to behave in exactly the same ways a local men and women do; however, it’s important to educate yourself about cultural gender roles within your host community in order to make sensitive choices about how you will behave while abroad, and to understand how your personal views and opinions may be interpreted by your host culture.

In preparing for GESI, it will be important for you to research the LGBT climate of Bolivia. You should be informed about specific laws pertaining to sexual behavior and sexual/gender orientation. When doing your research, try to ascertain:

- The legality of same-sex sexual behavior (sometimes male-male sexual behavior while female-female sexual behavior is not)
- The age consent for sexual behavior
- Restrictions on freedom of association or expression for LGBT people
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Sodomy laws

Your FSD Predeparture Packet includes a short summary of attitudes and laws relating to gender and sexuality, but you may want to conduct your own research in order to understand the complete picture and increase your comfort level before arriving in-country.

For more on this topic, visit the NAFSA Rainbow Special Interest Group website (<http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/student.htm>). This is a very comprehensive site on issues of concern to lesbian and gay students abroad. Another site with Bolivia-specific resources (including laws and news relating to LGBT issues) is <http://www.iglhrc.org/cgi-bin/iowa/region/90.html>.