Living Overseas

Security Orientation

When living in Canada, we tend unconsciously to adopt behaviour that will help protect us from harm. We know our social environment and have confidence in the protective services available to us. When residing in another country, however, we must consciously learn about the environment and develop the daily habits that will ensure our personal safety.

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Living and working in another country can be an enriching and enjoyable experience. Although it may not always be possible to duplicate the sense of security enjoyed at home, the opportunity to live in another culture does not have to be marred by insecurity and anxiety. People who prepare for the differences they may find in a new country, who take basic precautions to ensure their safety and who develop daily habits appropriate to the level of risk will benefit from greater security and confidence.

The following reminders provide a brief orientation to living securely overseas. Each country or city is different: the nature and level of risk varies and may well depend on political or social events. These core principles will undoubtedly need to be adapted to your specific circumstances, but they will help you think about and prepare the security measures appropriate to your situation. The personnel of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, in missions abroad and at Headquarters in Ottawa, are glad to provide advice to Canadians living overseas. They will be pleased to provide information on the particular circumstances in your host country to help you and your family adopt personal safety habits appropriate for the country where you will be residing.

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