SITUATION: VICTIM OF CRIME (e.g. loss of personal possessions)

PROTOCOLS:

Prior to departing on your semester or interim experience, please prepare by completing the following:

- Contact the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate and ask for a safety briefing while in the host country.

- Share with the group how to avoid difficult situations (e.g. don’t travel alone, etc).

- Help students understand the importance of completing an incident report form if they are a victim of a crime.

Responding to a Victim of Crime

- If you or a student is a victim of a crime overseas, contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Contact information for U.S. Embassies and consulates overseas can be found at www.usembassy.gov. Consular assistance to American Crime Victims includes the following situations:
  - Replace a stolen passport;
  - Obtain appropriate medical care;
  - Address emergency needs that arise as a result of the crime;
  - Explain the local criminal justice process;
  - Obtain information about your case;
  - Connect you to local and U.S. resources to assist victims of crime; and,
  - Provide a list of local lawyers who speak English.

- The Embassy or Consulate can not:
  - Investigate crimes;
  - Provide legal advice or represent you in court;
  - Serve as official interpreters or translators; or,
  - Pay legal, medical, or other fees.

- Contact the local police department to report the incident and get immediate help. Remember to request a copy of the police report.

- Make a list of the items stolen and cancel all credit cards and traveler’s checks.
• Contact Calvin’s Off-Campus Programs (OCP) Office. The OCP Office can assist with any help needed.

• Monitor the victim. How individuals react to being the victim of a crime will vary from person to person. Reactions are affected by:
  o How the victim handles stress;
  o The nature and duration of the crime, the physical safety of the victim, and the number and type of support systems available.

• Reactions to a crime may be immediate or delayed. The physical, emotional, or cognitive (involving thinking ability) symptoms a victim may experience could include nausea, headaches, fatigue, hyperventilation, or sleeping problems. Some victims report feelings of anxiety or fear, hyper-vigilance, guilt, anger, or isolation. Some experience difficulty making decisions, short-term memory problems, difficulty concentrating, or recurring memories of the crime. It is important to realize that these are normal feelings, behaviors and reactions to an abnormal event. One of the first things to pay attention to is the student’s need to feel safer. Addressing safety concerns and receiving emotional support can help. For most victims, the reactions described above diminish with time. If these reactions persist and are disrupting the student’s life or are getting worse after three or four weeks, you should recommend that the student consider seeking professional assistance.

• Fill out an Incident Report Form and submit it to the OCP office.

Follow-Up Protocols upon Return from Semester or Interim

• Make sure those involved get the services they need upon their return to Calvin.

• The director should meet with the Off Campus Programs Director to review/evaluate how the situation was handled and if any additional policies or procedures need to be put into place.

SPECIFIC RESOURCES

Important Phone Contacts at Calvin:
  o Don DeGraaf, Off-Campus Programs Director – 616-526-6225 (office) – 616-558-7245 (cell) – ddegraaf@calvin.edu
  o Broene Counseling Center – 616-526-6123
  o Calvin Campus Safety (24/7 line) – 616-526-6452
  o Calvin Off-Campus Programs Office – 616-526-6382
  o Student Life – 616-526-6453

• Incident Report Form

• Victim Assistance Online (www.vaonline.org): An international victim assistance organization that provides contact networks for victim assistance overseas.
• Directory of crime victim services (www.ovc.ncjrs.org/findvictimservices/): Resource designed to help service providers and individuals locate nonemergency crime victim service agencies in the United States and abroad.

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