



Chaperone Guidelines

Dear Chaperone,

Welcome to the Belo USA Travel Team! It's a great pleasure to be sharing this experience with you!

This manual describes the procedures for various daily activities on our trip. In order for this trip to be a success, we count on the commitment from all members of our team to follow these guidelines and to always use common sense.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the Trip Coordinator and/or contact the Belo USA Travel office. We are happy to offer our assistance.

Sincerely,

The Belo USA Travel Team

PROGRAM / TRIP SCHEDULE

If you have not yet received your copy of the Schedule, please contact Belo USA Travel and we will provide you with one. Please read through it carefully.

RECEPTION OF STUDENTS

The reception/first greeting of the students is one of the most important moments of the trip, as it is when the students gain their first impression of the organization. With that in mind, trip monitors will be present to facilitate student arrival.

- Trip Coordinator and Monitor Uniform: Belo Staff t-shirt/nametag/black or khaki pants or jeans/tennis shoes.
- Chaperone Uniform: Chaperone t-shirt/nametag/black or khaki pants or jeans/tennis shoes.

1. Bus Station Reception Monitor Duties

- We will have a system of on-duty monitors in place at the Bus Station with a four hour rotation. The plan for monitor shifts will be handed out and decided upon at the monitors' meeting one day before the arrival of the students. This shift plan will be handed out along with a schedule of student arrival times.
 - At peak times there will be two monitors at the bus station who will wait for the students at the bus arrival doors, always checking in with the information counter to see if the bus has already arrived. In the event that two buses arrive at the same time, each monitor will attend to one student. It is important to mark the arrival of each student on the Arrival List. To make sure there is no confusion, there will be only one list at the Bus Station. At the end of each shift, this list must be passed on to next monitor assuming responsibility for arrivals.
 - In the event that a bus arrives and the student is not present, the monitor must call the student's host parents and find out if the student missed his or her bus. The Trip Coordinator must also be called and informed if a student does not arrive on his or her scheduled bus.
 - At the bus station at least one of the monitors will have a cell phone available for use. The charging of the cell phone is the monitor's responsibility. The cell phone can NEVER be left uncharged.
 - Both monitors will also have walkie-talkies to communicate with each other in the bus station. Again, the walkie-talkies MUST be charged, and the charging of the radios is the monitors' responsibility.
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2. Airport Reception Monitor Duties

- Reconfirm each student's arrival schedule. Don't forget to verify the airport.
- Wait for the student at the arrivals gate with the small Belo USA sign.
- Mark the student's name on the arrival list.
- In the event that the student's flight is delayed, the monitor must wait until the flight arrives. It is prohibited to leave the airport unless authorization is obtained from the Trip Coordinator.
- Again, the monitor will have a cell phone available for use. Charging the cell phone is the monitor's responsibility.

3. Monitor Duties During Transport to Lodging

- The monitor will accompany the student to the arrivals parking lot where a van will be waiting to take the student to his or her hotel.
 - Students will be reminded to never leave their bags unattended.
 - The airport monitor (s) will not travel with the student by shuttle to the hotel. Instead, there will be another monitor already waiting at the hotel to meet and greet.
 - If there are any problems, the monitor is encouraged to call the Trip Coordinator.
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CHECK-IN

Upon arrival to the hotel, the student must check-in with the coordinator/monitor/chaperone:

- Each student must sign the arrivals list.
 - The coordinator/monitor/chaperone must verify that the list of documents and payments is in order, marking each student that hands in a document or payment (write the student's name on each receipt). If any student is missing a document, he or she must provide it before the beginning of the trip, or he or she will not be traveling with the group.
 - Hand out luggage tags and demonstrate how to attach these tags.
 - Hand out the t-shirts. Ask each student to write his or her name on the tag of the t-shirt, as they are all the same.
 - Hand out name stickers which will be placed on the students' cameras or other electronic devices.
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MUSIC CDs

Only the coordinator, monitors and chaperones are authorized to play CDs. They should encourage the students to listen to American music the majority of the time on the bus. Use the CDs provided in the Belo USA CD case.

DVDs

Only the coordinator, monitors and chaperones are authorized to play DVDs. Always consult with the group to see what they would like to watch. Always place the DVDs back in their cases and put them away when a film has ended.

LOST AND FOUND

The students forget many things on the bus, at stops, during excursions, on the beach, in the hotel, etc. So:

- Monitors must always perform a quick search when the group is about to leave a place to which it will never return. However, be discrete when doing this while the students are still present so that they do not begin to depend on the monitors to pick up after them.
 - Anything recovered should be placed into the lost and found bags, and these bags should always be returned to the buses.
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SCHEDULES

- When leaving from any location and departing for another, Belo staff should alert their group 30 minutes prior to the departure time so that everyone can be organized and prepared to leave on schedule.
 - Monitors should remind everyone that it is always easier to get up early after having gone to bed early the night before. The return time for an evening activity is always planned according to the activities of the following day. We have the flexibility to change the return time; however, the decision must always be made by the Trip Coordinator or whoever is in charge of the activity. In the event that the monitors suggest a schedule change, the Trip Coordinator must always be contacted first before making a final change.
 - Changes to the schedule can happen at various times; however, they are only made official when approved by the Trip Coordinator. Upon approval, the Coordinator will then inform all monitors and chaperones as to the changes. Never pass on schedule change information to another person without first verifying that it has been approved.
 - Try and remain relaxed, as the trip schedules have been set according to our company's extensive experience with other trip.
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DELAYS

We work with the philosophy that every person is responsible for him or herself, which teaches each student responsibility and discipline. We are extremely strict with the fixed schedules.

- The drivers should always open up the buses 10 minutes before the scheduled departure and turn on the air-conditioning so that the bus is already cool when the students arrive.
- Before departing the hotel each morning, the entire team should be available 20 minutes before the scheduled departure time near the bus or other predetermined meeting place (i.e. the hotel lobby).

- The bus should always leave at the fixed time. In the event that a student misses the bus at the hotel or during a daily activity, a monitor will wait for the student and then take a taxi to catch back up with the group. The student is then responsible for paying for the taxi.
 - If the student arrives late when the bus will be leaving one city for another, and this system of taxi use is not viable, the group must wait for the student. The Trip Coordinator will bring the student's error to his or her attention in a discrete manner and not in front of the entire group.
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ROLL CALL / ATTENDANCE CHECK

Roll call is of extreme importance for the proper running/organization/safety/control of the trip.

- The Trip Coordinator and each monitor will receive a clipboard with various roll call sheets for the small groups, in addition to having a general trip roll list.
- The monitor should leave the clipboard in a pre-determined spot inside of the bus in order to prevent misplacing it, etc. Do not draw or doodle on the roll call sheets.
- A count must be done by the monitor every time the group comes back from an activity and boards the bus. Do not wait for the Trip Coordinator to ask to count the students.
- The monitor will always do the roll call/attendance check when the majority of the group has already boarded the bus. Ask that everyone be seated before calling roll.
- Once the students are seated, start counting. Do not play around or make jokes during the roll call.
- If possible, use the bus microphone to make the roll call, as it appears more official to the students.
- The buses will not leave for a different city if a student is missing. Be observant and take initiative to find any missing students. Do not swear or complain. Remember, the group is on vacation!
- The Trip Coordinator will supervise the roll call by going from bus to bus or by walkie-talkie.
- In the event that the entire group does not go to the same place, the monitor must do a roll call before anyone leaves to find out who will be coming back with each group.
- Only the Trip Coordinator can give the buses the go-ahead to leave, not the monitors, chaperones or bus drivers.
- In the event that a driver, monitor, chaperone or coordinator is late, assume a spirit of leadership and take the necessary actions to ensure the normal running of the trip. Never criticize or make fun of the person who is running late.



CHAPERONE AND BELO STAFF BEHAVIOR

- Always be cordial, polite, relaxed, honest, and primarily, a friend to all trip participants. Remember: YOU ARE PART OF A TRIP THAT WILL BE A LIFETIME MEMORY FOR THESE STUDENTS! Make this trip a dream, since you will always be remembered by the students.
- This is an extremely complex trip since we are trying to combine fun and work at a fairly young age for our participants. There will be moments when your adult side will be needed, and other moments when you will need to call on your ex-student/youthful side.
- Utilize this time to discipline yourself, and always be available to assist without being overbearing. Develop your own leadership abilities as well as those of the participants.
- In life we can never fully know everything. We are constantly learning. In the event that a student asks you a question that you do not know, have the humility to say that you do not know and that you will go ask someone who does.
- If you wake up in the morning and feel sad, the group will feel this negativity and will be sad too. If you wake up happy and positive, your energy will be naturally felt by all.
- Never yell, mock others, gossip, tease or horseplay. Whatever you give out will come back to you. It has been proven with over years of experience that the respect of the students is gained with friendship and hard work, not with punishment and impositions.
- Know what role you play on the trip, and do not overstep your boundaries. If the Trip Coordinator senses that you are having trouble with your role, he or she will correct you.
- Everyone recognizes the importance of our work. Do not worry about highlighting how much work we do to make this trip happen.
- Flirting is avoided if you do not leave room for it to happen. Be smart and steer clear of this, as the consequences are always unpleasant. In the event of student persistence, politely explain to him or her that you have a special function on the trip and those sorts of relations do not form part of it.
- The consumption of alcoholic beverages by the monitors, coordinators, chaperones and drivers is strictly prohibited. In this way there will be no room for student comments.
- Your behavior will be under constant scrutiny by the students. Remember that you are on the trip to monitor and make sure that the students have fun.
- In the event that your behavior on the trip is unacceptable, you could be dismissed and would return to your home city at your own cost. Aside from missing out on the rest of the trip, you would not be invited back to participate in any other Belo USA sanctioned tours.



CULTURAL SHEETS

Belo USA Travel has created cultural sheets to give to the students for each city/region that we visit so that they have an informational document in hand. Each cultural sheet should be handed out inside the bus and read aloud by a monitor or by one of the students who speaks English clearly.

MEDICINE AND FIRST AID MATERIALS

Certain trips count on the participation of a nursing student (the Trip Nurse) who will assist any student who becomes ill during the trip. The purpose of this person is to always aid the students in preventing any sickness.

In the event that a student becomes ill, he or she will be taken to the doctor accompanied by the Trip Nurse as well as a monitor.

The group has a first aid kit which should always remain with the Trip Nurse.

WATER/SOFT DRINKS INSIDE THE BUS

We offer water and soft drinks inside the bus during the travels from city to city, but not during short drives to daily activities. The bus coolers should be stocked by the drivers under the direction of each bus's monitor. Before any departure, it is the monitor's duty to always make sure that there is sufficient water and soft drinks in the cooler and that the cooler is in fact cooling properly. Remember to store the plastic cups in the small cubby near the cooler.

CLEANING OF THE BUS

We have plastic bags to be placed at every two seats. On the first day of the trip the monitor should show the students how the bags are placed as well as where to find extra bags when they are needed. The bus drivers are responsible for the removal of full trash bags at each city or whenever necessary. Please be meticulous in the cleaning of your bus.

HOTELS/ROOM LISTS

All of the room lists are completed in the Belo USA Travel Chicago offices, so copies of every room list for every city can all be found in each staff member's binder.

The criteria for the division of students into rooms are: sex, country of origin, language and region where the student resides within the U.S. We try to create the maximum mixture of diverse students in each room so that there is a true cultural exchange.

The room list is passed out at an appropriate moment before the arrival to each hotel and is also posted inside the bus cabin with the room numbers next to each set of names. Any last minute questions or doubts are resolved by the Trip Coordinator by cell phone, and this information is passed on to monitors/chaperones.

The first name on the list for every room is responsible for getting the room key at each hotel, while the other students will go directly up to their assigned rooms. This will prevent confusion at reception and simplifies check-in.

The monitors will only go up to their rooms after all of the students are already settled in.

Be polite with the employees at the hotel reception desks and write down their names on your check-in sheet so that you can call these people by name in the event of a problem or other issue.

MEALS

- If necessary, the group will be divided into various shifts to prevent long lines at restaurants during the trip. Each staff member will be instructed to go with a group. Upon arrival to the restaurant, all students should sit down at the tables and the monitor will start calling them up gradually to serve themselves at the buffet. Since every restaurant is different, the Trip Coordinator will explain the proper procedure for each restaurant to the monitors.
- Students are not allowed to enter the restaurants without a shirt or shoes.

BEACH

- The Trip Coordinator will inform the group what each visited beach will be like, paying particular attention to safety, amenities and leisure options. The monitors and chaperones should encourage the students to explore and enjoy the natural surroundings instead of wasting time and money on touristy knick-knacks in the many shops that tend to line the beaches.



- Remind the students to be mindful of overexposure to the sun. Many of the health problems encountered by students in the summer are brought on by an excess of sun.
 - At the beach the monitors should place themselves at a strategic point where the students swimming can be easily observed. Always keep an eye on them.
 - The monitors/ chaperones are NOT responsible for keeping track of each student's personal belongings. The students should be reminded that every person is responsible for his or her own bags, etc.
 - It is expressly prohibited for students to get permanent tattoos or piercings in unconventional places (tongue, chin, eyebrow, nipple, bellybutton, etc.) unless the student has received written approval from his or her natural parents.
 - Encourage the students to avoid fried foods or food sold on the street. Remind them to be careful with street vendors, as these people are sometimes the same individuals who steal from beach-goers.
 - Be mindful of strangers who approach offering free rides, etc. The students should never get into a car with a stranger.
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On behalf of all of at Belo USA Travel, we thank you for your commitment to our program. Without our chaperones, this trip would not be possible, so we appreciate your collaboration and wish you the best of luck on the trip!