



## Nigeria Travel Warning

LAST UPDATED: AUGUST 8, 2014

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The Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the risks of travel to Nigeria and recommends that U.S. citizens avoid all travel to Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states because of the May 14, 2013 state of emergency proclamation for those three states by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The security situation in the country remains fluid and unpredictable. The U.S. Department of State strongly urges U.S. citizens in Nigeria to keep personal safety and health in the forefront of their planning. This Travel Warning replaces the Travel Warning for Nigeria dated January 8, 2014.

The ability of the Mission to provide assistance to U.S. citizens remains severely limited. The Department continues to recommend against all but essential travel to the following states due to the risk of kidnappings, robberies, and other armed attacks: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Kano, and Yobe States. The Department also advises travelers to exercise additional caution while traveling in Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Edo, Imo, Jigawa, Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, and Zamfara States. Based on safety and security risk assessments, the Embassy maintains restrictions for travel by U.S. officials to those states listed above; officials must receive advance clearance by the U.S. Mission for any travel deemed as mission-essential. U.S. citizens should be aware that extremist groups could expand their operations beyond northern Nigeria to other areas of the country.

The U.S. Mission advises all U.S. citizens to be particularly vigilant around government security facilities; churches, mosques, and other places of worship; locations where large crowds may gather, such as hotels, clubs, beer parlors, restaurants, markets, shopping malls; and other areas frequented by expatriates and foreign travelers. Security measures in Nigeria remain heightened due to threats posed by extremist groups, and U.S. citizens may encounter police and military checkpoints, additional security, and possible road blocks throughout the country.

Boko Haram, an extremist group based in northeast Nigeria and designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the Department of State, has claimed responsibility for many attacks, mainly in northern Nigeria. This includes two recent vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices detonated in Nyanya, a suburb of the capital of Abuja, that resulted in approximately 100 combined deaths in April and May of 2014. The first months of 2014 have seen a continued increase in Boko Haram attacks and clashes with Nigerian government security forces in northern Nigeria. Boko Haram has also targeted women and children for kidnapping, reportedly kidnapping women in northern states for marriage as "slave brides," and kidnapping more than 200 school girls from a private school in Borno state. Boko Haram is known to descend on whole towns, robbing banks and businesses, attacking police and military installations, and setting fire to private homes. In 2013, extremists also targeted both Nigerians and foreign nationals involved in polio eradication efforts in northern Nigeria, leaving several U.S. government partner agencies working on public health development activities in northern Nigeria to curtail their vaccination efforts. Furthermore, U.S. citizen missionaries in northern Nigeria have received specific written threats to their safety and well-being.

Various curfews are intermittently in effect in several states in the North. All U.S. citizens should remain aware of current situations including curfews, travel restrictions, and states of emergency in the areas you are in or plan to visit. This information is commonly announced via the news media, but at times it can change with very little notice. Please take the time to find out this information for your area.

Kidnappings remain a security concern throughout the country. Since the beginning of 2013, there have been multiple reports of kidnappings involving U.S. citizens. Kidnappings of foreign nationals and attacks against Nigerian police forces in Lagos State and the Niger Delta region continue to affect personal security for those traveling in these areas. Criminals or militants have abducted foreign nationals, including U.S. citizens, from off-shore and land-based oil facilities and maritime vessels, residential compounds, and public roadways. Ansaru, an offshoot of Boko Haram, has specifically targeted foreigners in the north for kidnap in the past few years with lethal outcomes.

Violent crimes occur throughout the country. U.S. citizen visitors and residents have experienced armed muggings, assaults, burglaries, armed robberies, car-jackings, rapes, kidnappings, and extortion. Home invasions also remain a serious threat, with armed robbers accessing even guarded compounds by scaling perimeter walls, accessing waterfront compounds by boat, following residents or visitors, or subduing guards to gain entry to homes or apartments. Law enforcement authorities usually respond slowly or not at all and provide little or no investigative support to victims. U.S. citizens, other foreign nationals, and Nigerians have experienced harassment and shakedowns at checkpoints and during encounters with Nigerian law enforcement officials. The Department advises against traveling outside of major cities after dark because of crime and road safety concerns.

Cell phone service has, at times, been disrupted in Nigeria, particularly in areas where a State of Emergency has been declared. Extremists have also been known to attack cellular telephone towers, leading to further disruptions. U.S. citizens should attempt to arrange for multiple means of communication in case of need during emergencies.

The Embassy is not able to offer medical treatment to travelers; however, it can provide a list of medical facilities that may be able to treat U.S. citizens with medical emergencies. In July 2014, the U.S. Embassy in Abuja reported confirmed cases of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in Nigeria. Since that time, new reports of deaths and confirmed and suspected cases of persons with EVD or Ebola-like symptoms have been reported. For further information on the Ebola virus, U.S. citizens should consult the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention website and also visit the U.S. Embassy website to review Security Messages addressing the Ebola virus in Nigeria. On August 5, the CDC issued a Travel Notice advising enhanced health and hygiene precautions for travelers to Nigeria due to the Ebola virus. On July 31, the CDC issued Travel Notices warning against nonessential travel to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone due to the Ebola virus.

The Department strongly advises U.S. citizens who travel to or reside in Nigeria to enroll in the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). U.S. citizens without internet access may enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

The U.S. Embassy in Abuja is located at:

Plot 1075 Diplomatic Drive, Central District Area, and can be reached by telephone, including after-hours for emergencies, at 234(9)461-4000. The Embassy is open Monday - Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Friday 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The U.S. Consulate General in Lagos is located at: 2 Walter Carrington Crescent, Victoria Island, and can be reached by telephone, including after-hours for emergencies, at 234(1)460-3600 or 234 (1) 460-3400. The Consulate is open Monday - Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. U.S. citizens should contact the U.S. Embassy in Abuja or the U.S. Consulate General in Lagos for up-to-date information on any restrictions.

Current information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444 if calling from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). You can also stay up to date by bookmarking our Bureau of Consular Affairs website, which contains the current Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts as well as the Worldwide Caution. Follow us on Twitter and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on Facebook as well.

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