



OSAC Country Security Report

Lebanon

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This report is intended to supplement the U.S. Department of State Lebanon Travel Advisory and [Lebanon Country Information Page](#).

Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

U.S. Embassy Beirut:

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OSAC Country Chapter

The Beirut Country Chapter meets quarterly.

Contact [Middle East & North Africa team](#) with any questions.

Lebanon Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State [Travel Advisory](#) at the date of this report's publication assesses travelers should not travel to Lebanon due to crime, terrorism, civil unrest, kidnapping, unexploded landmines, and the risk of armed conflict.

Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Beirut as being a **MEDIUM**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The Department has included a Crime "C" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Lebanon, indicating that there may be widespread violent crime and/or organized crime present in the country, and/or that local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.

Crime: General Threat

Violent crime and sexual assault incidents against expatriates are rare but do happen.. The Embassy receives regular reports of domestic abuse from dual U.S.-Lebanese citizens. Petty theft like pickpocketing and purse snatching is on the rise from 2024's reports in metropolitan Beirut, where criminals often target victims, such as the elderly or unaccompanied females, based on perceived vulnerability. Burglaries are likely to continue to increase as economic

conditions worsen. Police are responsive, but are often unable to affect a positive outcome, particularly in rural areas. There are security companies and entities that provide security for private-sector visitors throughout Lebanon.

Reported crime rates in Lebanon are steady compared to 2024's reports overall. Several criminally oriented families, clans, and gangs continue to operate in Lebanon. Police enforcement action against these families is difficult due to the geographically isolated areas in which many of the syndicates operate, and the limited police presence and resources in areas outside of Beirut and its surrounding governorates. Baalbek and Hermel are two locations that suffer from this issue. The families participate in car thefts, narcotics trafficking, and kidnappings, and are likely responsible for a number of homicides. Criminal gangs may be responsible for many of Lebanon's unsolved crimes. Since the fall of the Assad regime in Syria, the police and military have increased their patrols along the border to detect and disrupt many of these illicit trades, but still lack the means and overall capabilities to make a large-scale impact due to limited training and resource constraints.

Crime: Areas of Concern

Avoid travel to refugee settlements. Violence within Palestinian and Syrian refugee settlements is common, with incidents ranging from petty crime to shootings and explosions. Clashes between Lebanese authorities and criminal elements continue to occur in areas of the Bekaa Valley and border regions. Palestinian groups hostile both to the Lebanese government and the U.S. operate autonomously in formal and informal refugee settlements throughout the country.

Review OSAC's reports, [All That You Should Leave Behind](#), [Hotels: The Inns and Outs](#), [Considerations for Hotel Security](#), [Taking Credit](#), and [Our Two Cents: Petty Crime Basics and How to Minimize the Risk](#).

Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has included a Kidnapping "K" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Lebanon, indicating that criminal or terrorist individuals or groups have threatened to and/or have seized or detained and threatened to kill, injure, or continue to detain individuals in order to compel a third party (including a governmental organization) to do or abstain from doing something as a condition of release.

Kidnapping, whether for ransom, political motives, or family disputes, has occurred in Lebanon but has become less frequent in recent times. Suspects in kidnappings sometimes have ties to terrorist or criminal organizations. The U.S. government has limited ability to help U.S. citizens kidnapped or taken hostage. U.S. law makes it illegal to provide material support to terrorist organizations. Kidnappings linked to carjacking and taxi robberies have been reported.

Additionally, there are reports of armed groups from Syria kidnapping or attacking Lebanese citizens living in border areas.

Review OSAC's reports, [Kidnapping: The Basics](#) and [Active Shooter and Kidnapping Response Tips](#).

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Beirut as being a **CRITICAL**-threat location for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Terrorism "T" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Lebanon, indicating that terrorist attacks have occurred and/or specific threats against civilians, groups, or other targets may exist.

There is potential for death or injury by terrorist attacks in Lebanon. Violent extremist groups operate in Lebanon, including U.S. government-designated terrorist organizations Hizb'allah, ISIS, Hamas, and the Abdullah Azzam Brigades (AAB). ISIS and affiliated groups have claimed responsibility for suicide bombings in Lebanon historically. U.S. citizens have been the targets of terrorist attacks in the past. The threat of anti-Western terrorist activity persists, as does the risk of death or injury as a non-targeted bystander. The ongoing Israel-Hizb'allah conflict has inflamed anti-Western sentiment in Lebanon. The U.S. Embassy was attacked by a lone ISIS-radicalized gunman in June 2024.

Those living and working in Lebanon should carefully consider the risks of remaining in the country. Remain aware of the potential for terrorist attack, and take precautions (e.g., varying routes/times, avoiding demonstrations) to remain safe. Internal security policies limit, and may prevent, access by U.S. Embassy officials to certain areas of the country. The Lebanese government cannot guarantee protection against sudden outbreaks of violence. Armed clashes have occurred along the Lebanese borders and in Beirut.

Hizb'allah maintains a strong presence in the Bekaa Valley, in addition to areas in southern Lebanon and south Beirut. In addition to the threat of Hizb'allah conducted terrorist activity, Hizb'allah has been the target of attacks by other extremist groups for their support of the Assad regime in Syria.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Beirut as being a **HIGH**-threat location for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Civil Unrest "U" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Lebanon, indicating that demonstrations, protests, and/or strikes occur frequently, and/or that local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond adequately. Civil unrest can develop quickly without prior notice, often interrupting logistics and services. Avoid demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

Elections/Political Stability

In January 2025, Lebanon's parliament elected Joseph Aoun as president, ending a political deadlock that had paralyzed the country since October 2022. Despite this breakthrough, Lebanon continues to face deep economic distress and political fragmentation that undermine government stability and its ability to respond effectively to unrest. Demonstrations remain frequent and can quickly turn disruptive, with protesters—often mobilized by political factions—blocking major roads and intersections by burning tires, particularly in Beirut and other urban centers. Banks, ATMs, government offices, political party headquarters, and the residences of political figures remain common protest targets. As economic conditions remain poor and reform measures stall, additional demonstrations and spontaneous unrest are likely.

Protests & Demonstrations

There is regular protest activity throughout Lebanon due to the ongoing violations of the November 2024 cessation of fire agreement between Lebanon and Israel. Protest activity results from a broad range of topics to include but not limited to the following: the Israel-Hamas conflict; the Israel-Hizballah conflict, the Syrian refugee crisis; a lack of reliable power; the pace at which authorities are bringing to justice those responsible for the Port of Beirut blast; the worsening exchange rate; and government inability to affect change for the betterment of society, and at times, statements released by U.S. delegations.

Protest activity will likely continue until the political and economic situations stabilize.

Review OSAC's report, [Surviving a Protest](#).

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

The threat of terrorist activity against U.S. citizens continues and has been exasperated by the recent Israel-Hizb'allah conflict. Current information suggests that ISIS, its affiliates, and other violent extremist groups continue to plan terrorist attacks against areas that Westerners frequent. Extremists may elect to employ various methods to attack, including suicide bombings, conventional bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings.

Law Enforcement

The emergency line Lebanon is **112**.

The Internal Security Forces, under the Interior Ministry, are responsible for law enforcement. The Directorate of General Security, also under the Interior Ministry, is responsible for border control but also exercises some domestic security responsibilities. The Lebanese Armed Forces, under the Defense Ministry, are responsible for external security but have the authority to arrest and detain suspects on national security grounds. The Lebanese Armed Forces also arrest alleged drug traffickers, manage protests, enforce building codes related to refugee shelters, and intervene to prevent violence between rival political factions. The General Directorate of

State Security, reporting to the prime minister through the Higher Defense Council, is responsible for investigating espionage and other national security matters. The Parliamentary Police Force reports to the speaker of parliament and protects parliament premises as well as the speaker's residence in Ain al-Tineh. Both the ISF and the Lebanese Armed Forces provide units to the Parliamentary Police Force.

Civilian authorities maintain control over the armed forces and other security forces, although Palestinian security and militia forces, Hizb'allah, and other extremist elements operate outside the direction or control of government officials. Members of security forces have reportedly committed abuses.

Police Response

The U.S. government maintains excellent relations with Lebanese law enforcement and security elements. Security services address urgent security concerns immediately. Overall, police are responsive, though they may have difficulty responding to reports of crime depending on the time of day and location.

Armed Conflict

Armed conflict in Lebanon remains a key concern despite the November 2024 ceasefire between Hizballah and Israel. The truce reduced large-scale hostilities but has given way to a low-intensity conflict marked by sporadic rocket fire, Israeli drone and artillery strikes in southern Lebanon, and continued Hizballah presence near the border. The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) have expanded deployments south of the Litani River and begun implementing a government-led Hizballah disarmament plan, though progress remains limited and politically sensitive. Unexploded ordnance, weapons stockpiles, and intermittent security operations continue to pose risks to civilians and travelers, particularly in southern and border districts. While full-scale conflict has halted, localized escalations or accidental clashes remain possible, and security conditions near the Blue Line can shift rapidly.

Some key events in 2025 include:

- **November (Current):** Israeli military activity continues with heavy airstrikes on southern Lebanese towns like Tayr Debba and Abbasiyeh. Israel issued evacuation warnings for some locations, claiming to target Hezbollah's rebuilding efforts
- **October 30:** A Lebanese civilian was killed during an Israeli operation in Blida, Lebanon prompting Lebanese President Aoun to order the LAF to interdict any Israeli penetration in the southern lands of Lebanon, a notable shift in LAF posture.
- **August 28:** The UN Security Council voted to terminate the mandate of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) at the end of 2026, a significant development regarding the international monitoring presence in the region
- **August 9:** An explosion at a Lebanese Army munitions depot near Zibqin killed six soldiers inspecting a Hizballah weapons cache.

- **June 27:** A Hizballah rocket misfire in southern Lebanon killed one and injured several civilians.
- **June 6:** Israeli strikes occurred in Beirut and the south.
- **May–June 2025:** A series of Israeli drone and airstrike operations hit Hizballah positions across southern Lebanon, resulting in multiple casualties.
- **March 28:** Israeli airstrikes targeted a suspected Hizballah site in a southern Beirut suburb, killing several.

Transportation Security

Road Safety

Visitors must have an international driver's license to drive legally. Driving can be difficult, as local drivers often maneuver aggressively and pay little attention to traffic lights/signs. High rates of speed, erratic traffic patterns, poorly marked merges/addresses, inconsistent police enforcement in the greater Beirut area, and little/no enforcement in other parts of the country make driving conditions hazardous. In certain areas, pedestrians have minimal access to sidewalks and are forced to walk along poorly lit sides of busy roadways.

There is a lack of electronic traffic control signals, resulting in erratic traffic patterns and vehicle accidents. Police rarely respond to vehicle accidents. Insurance companies employ private accident investigators who respond to accidents and may have bias toward the insured party. Parties involved in traffic accidents usually settle matters among themselves, unless significant injury or material damage is involved. Emergency services are adequate in the event of a serious accident.

In case of a road accident, emergency numbers are **140** for the Red Cross and **125** for the emergency civil police.

The Interior Ministry has been attempting to implement a new traffic law enacted in 2015, to include the prohibition of cell phone use (calling or texting) while driving. This has resulted in an uptick of traffic stops in the Beirut and Mount Lebanon regions. However, the frequency of such traffic enforcement is inconsistent and is of questionable efficacy, as approximately over 500 people die on Lebanon's roads each year.

Review OSAC's reports, [Road Safety Abroad](#), [Driving Overseas: Best Practices](#), and [Evasive Driving Techniques](#); and read the U.S. Department of State's [webpage on driving and road safety abroad](#).

Public Transportation Safety

U.S. citizens assigned to the U.S. Embassy may not use public transportation in Lebanon.

There is limited public mass transit. There are some government-run buses in Beirut. Outside of Beirut, privately owned minivans, minibus, or shuttle companies offer some scheduled services. Use extreme caution when aboard public transport.

Call for taxi service from a reputable taxi company or a car-for-hire service rather than flagging down passing taxis or service cars. Uber and Careem are present and in wide use. Because of the risks inherent in using unknown transportation, be wary of so-called service cars, and carry the number of a reputable taxi company in case of emergencies. Ensure the car service you choose vets its drivers. Consider taking a photograph of the taxi plates or registration number as you set off, forwarding it and your itinerary to a contact.

Aviation Concerns

Local media reports expressed concern over the quality of security at Beirut Rafiq Hariri International Airport (BEY). Embassy personnel use the airport for official and personal travel. In 2017, BEY began the implementation of the Advance Passenger Information/Passenger Name Record program. In 2019, the airport added additional passport control counters and upgraded its baggage handling and screening system to reduce congestion and wait times.

In recent years, there have been several incidents of stray bullets hitting airplanes while landing or parked at BEY. Minor material damage has been reported. During the ongoing Israel-Hizballah war, many commercial airlines canceled flights into BEY due to airstrikes in areas near the airport.

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has not assessed the government of Lebanon's Civil Aviation Authority for compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards. Commercial aircraft are at risk when flying over conflict regions.

Review OSAC's Report, [Security in Transit: Airplanes, Public Transport, and Overnights](#)

Maritime Security

Mariners planning travel to Lebanon should check for maritime advisories and alerts on the United States Maritime Administration (MARAD) [website](#). Vessels operating in the Eastern Mediterranean have reported instances of GPS interference, including in the vicinity of Beirut. Mariners should be alert to the potential presence of human smuggling operations conducted at sea, principally between northern Lebanon and Cyprus.

The Lebanese Navy's ability to conduct search and rescue operations and welfare interdictions is limited. The U.S. Coast Guard has concerns about the safety practices in the Port of Beirut and finds that the Lebanese Ministry of Public Works and Transport has not fully implemented the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. As a result, the U.S. Coast Guard conducts additional screenings of ships that have stopped in Lebanon prior to arrival in the United States. Assessments by the U.S. Coast Guard indicate that Mariners and passengers traveling through the Port of Beirut should exercise caution.

Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Lebanon, review the local laws and circumstances on the Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [Lesbian and Gay Travelers](#)
- [Accessibility Needs](#)
- [Studying Abroad](#)
- [Faith-Based Travel](#)

Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention “D” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Lebanon.

The government continues to lack control over rampant corruption and government officials engage in corrupt practices with impunity on a wide scale. There is limited parliamentary or auditing oversight of revenue collection and expenditures. Various government initiatives intended to limit corruption have not been successful. The most common types of corruption include political patronage; judicial misconduct, especially in investigations of official wrongdoing; and bribery at multiple levels within the national and municipal governments.

The country suffers from endemic corruption. Although the law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, the government has not implemented the law effectively, and officials reportedly engaged in corrupt practices with impunity on a wide scale. Government and security officials, customs agents, and members of the judiciary were subject to laws prohibiting bribery and extortion, but the lack of strong enforcement limited the law's effectiveness.

Although the constitution provides for an independent judiciary, authorities subject the judiciary to political pressure, particularly through negotiations among political factions regarding the appointment of key prosecutors and investigating magistrates. Defendants involved in routine civil and criminal proceedings sometimes solicit the assistance of prominent individuals to influence the outcomes of their cases. The law prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention and provides for the right of any person to challenge the lawfulness of arrest or detention in court; the government generally observes these requirements. The law requires judicial warrants before arrests except in cases of active pursuit. Nonetheless, NGOs and civil society groups allege some incidents of the government arbitrarily arresting and detaining individuals -- particularly protesters, refugees, and migrant workers. Typically, these detentions were for short periods and related to administrative questions associated with the residency or work status of these populations, often lasting between several hours and one or more days.

Health Concerns

Emergency numbers are **140** for the Red Cross and **125** for the emergency civil police.

Lebanon's most populated areas have some emergency medical infrastructure capable of stabilizing a patient for medical evacuation particularly in the case of common life-threatening trauma or illness, but the overall medical system is fragile, and capacity is not uniformly reliable. Larger urban centers have several tertiary care facilities with ICU units, emergency departments, advanced imaging, surgical staffing, and in some cases specialized clinicians such as emergency physicians and critical-care specialists; and due to Lebanon's history of conflict and civil unrest, some of these facilities are more practiced in mass-casualty and trauma management than one might expect in a country of its size. However, systemic strain during larger-scale crises is common, and not every facility is equal, access to an appropriate hospital, fragility infrastructure, and logistical delays can significantly affect outcomes. In reality, only Beirut offers care roughly comparable to other developed nations, and complications in other tourist or remote areas include traffic congestion that delays time to care, fuel shortages, and general security constraints. EMS (Red Cross) or pre-hospital services do exist but are often overloaded, volunteer-based, unevenly trained, and frequently lack advanced life support capability. During periods of violence, Beirut's isolation, combined with limited commercial flights and the difficulty of moving essential medications and supplies, further highlights how vulnerable and strained the system can become.

Find contact information for available medical services and available air ambulance services on the U.S. Embassy [website](#). The U.S. Department of State strongly recommends purchasing international health insurance before traveling internationally. Review the U.S. Department of State's [webpage](#) on health insurance overseas.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Health "H" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Lebanon. Review the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) country-specific [Travel Health Notices](#) for current health issues that impact traveler health, like disease outbreaks, special events or gatherings, and natural disasters.

See OSAC's [Guide to U.S. Government-Assisted Evacuations](#); review OSAC's reports, [The Healthy Way](#), [Shaken: The Don'ts of Alcohol Abroad](#), [Health 101: How to Prepare for Travel](#), and [Fire Safety Abroad](#); and visit the U.S. Department of State's webpage on [Your Health Abroad](#) for more information.

Vaccinations

The CDC recommends Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Rabies, and Typhoid vaccines.

Review the CDC [Travelers' Health](#) site for country-specific vaccine recommendations.

Issues Traveling with Medications

Given the fragile state of Lebanon’s healthcare system, U.S. citizens with special medical needs should understand the risks of remaining in country and plan accordingly, particularly if they are unable to arrange travel out of Lebanon for care. Individuals with chronic conditions or those dependent on specific medications should be aware that the supply of pharmaceuticals is unreliable, and Lebanon does not always have the same medications available as in the United States. The ongoing economic crisis further contributes to shortages because pharmacies are often required to purchase medications in U.S. dollars rather than Lebanese lira, reducing availability and affordability. For these reasons, those with known medical vulnerabilities should closely assess their individual risk tolerance and ensure they have sufficient access to treatment locally, or a clear plan for evacuation.

Review OSAC’s report, [Traveling with Medication](#).

Water Quality

Lebanon’s water is not potable, and this presents an escalating threat to health. Years of financial strain, conflict, and neglect have left the country with non-operational wells, damaged canals and pumping systems, and deteriorating distribution networks. These structural failures are further magnified by the worst drought in recent history, drastically reducing already limited freshwater sources. Recent hostilities have also damaged sections of water and wastewater infrastructure, leaving many areas without reliable access to safe drinking water. Even where networks remain partially functional, prolonged electricity shortages prevent water from being pumped into households. Inadequate waste disposal creates highly unsanitary conditions that facilitate disease transmission. Unsustainable water use practices, poorly managed wastewater, and persistent failures in treatment capacity have further reduced the availability of safe drinking water. Much of Lebanon’s infrastructure remains outdated and fundamentally incapable of providing reliable, safe water service delivery.

Review OSAC’s report, [I’m Drinking What in My Water?](#)

Natural Disasters

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Natural Disaster “N” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Lebanon.

Lebanon faces significant environmental and natural disaster challenges, particularly in Beirut and other major cities where air pollution levels consistently exceed WHO standards for acceptable particulate matter, deteriorating the health of urban populations and underscoring the need for well-planned mitigation strategies. The country is also highly vulnerable to a range of natural disasters, including wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and landslides, which pose substantial risks to communities and infrastructure. Lebanon has experienced recurrent wildfires, especially in the dry months of October and November. As Lebanon lies within a seismically active zone, earthquakes remain a persistent threat, and building codes designed to reduce risk are unevenly enforced. Seasonal heavy rainfall creates flooding risks across areas with inadequate drainage, while mountainous terrain increases the likelihood of landslides,

especially after fires that destabilize soil. These hazards have historically caused substantial human and economic loss floods.

Cybersecurity

Credit card skimming, email phishing, cyber-attacks on local banks, and other cyber and financial scams occur, although no Embassy personnel have reported issues with credit/bank card compromise in the last year.

Email scams are frequent and have affected local and foreign businesses. Scammers have attempted to identify themselves as legitimate U.S. government entities to extort money from unwitting victims. Use caution when reading an email from an unknown individual or organization.

Review OSAC's reports, [Cybersecurity Basics](#), [Best Practices for Maximizing Security on Public Wi-Fi](#), [Traveling Abroad with Mobile Devices](#), and [Guide for Overseas Satellite Phone Usage](#).

Import/Export Restrictions

Travelers must clear all drones, firearms, and ammunition with the Government of Lebanon upon importation. There are restrictions on the importation of medical and satellite phones/telecommunications equipment, which must be approved by the Ministries of Health and Telecommunications respectively.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).