



## Peru 2014 Crime and Safety Report

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Burglary; Carjacking; Kidnapping; Assault; Murder; Counterfeiting; Financial Security; Fraud; Left-wing; Narcoterrorism; Riots/Civil Unrest; Earthquakes; Floods; Landslides and mudslides; Aviation; Drug Trafficking; Bribery

Western Hemisphere > Peru; Western Hemisphere > Peru > Lima

5/28/2014

### Overall Crime and Safety Situation

#### Crime Threats

Crime is a constant problem in Lima and most other parts of Peru. The Regional Security Office (RSO) considers the following neighborhoods to be relatively safe: Miraflores, San Isidro, Barranco, La Molina, Camacho, San Borja, Monterrico, and the eastern section of Surco.

Street crime is prevalent in most urban areas, especially in Lima. Pickpocketing, purse snatching, "smash and grab" robberies, the theft of items from unoccupied vehicles, and the theft of vehicle parts (mirrors, lights, etc.) are common crimes. Electronics (especially cameras, laptops, GPSs, smart phones, I-Pods, etc.) rank high on the list of items that criminals target. All U.S. and foreign visitors are vulnerable to crime, as they are often perceived to be wealthier than the local populace and more likely to be carrying greater amounts of cash and other valuables.

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Residential burglaries, mostly of single-family homes, occur on a regular basis. While U.S. Embassy personnel and foreign residents normally reside in affluent areas where private security and local police are more effective, they can still find themselves victims of crime. Residential burglaries are most common during the day, on weekends, or holidays when houses are left vacant. Thieves often gain entry by exploiting unsecured entryways, tricking domestic employees, or forcing access to perimeter doors when the home is vacant (or appears vacant).

Violent crime has increased over the last few years, especially crimes of opportunity such as robbery, carjacking, vehicle thefts, and kidnapping. Armed robberies, assaults, express kidnappings, carjackings, burglaries and petty theft are a daily fact of life. While gratuitous violence committed against foreigners is infrequent, according to Peruvian National Police (PNP) statistics, assaults and robberies involving violence have been on the rise over the last five years. Peru's murder rate is also climbing with a total of 1,669 murders committed in 2013, approximately 248 more than 2012 and 420 more than 2011.

Counterfeit currency is a significant problem, to include Euros, Nuevo Soles, Bolivianos, and Pesos Chilenos. According to the U.S. Secret Service, Peru ranks as one of the top producers of counterfeit U.S. currency in the world. The PNP seized close to \$23 million in counterfeit U.S. dollars in the past two years.

Credit card fraud is rampant, and many travelers have reported the theft of their card numbers while traveling in Peru.

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## Overall Road Safety Situation

### Road Safety and Road Conditions

The U.S. Embassy prohibits night time travel via road for U.S. government personnel and contractors outside the greater Lima area and other cities due to poor highway safety and the threat of criminals and domestic terrorism. This prohibition applies to any road travel between towns or cities for both official and personal travel. Employees are permitted to travel at night on the Pan-American Highway south from Lima to Paracas or north from Lima to Huacho.

Crime occurs on roads, particularly at night and outside urban areas. Clandestine, impromptu roadblocks can appear, even on major highways, where bus and automobile passengers are robbed. The risk is greater on rural roads after dark.

In addition, numerous Americans have reported the theft of passports, cameras, and other valuables on overnight bus rides by thieves taking advantage of sleeping passengers or accessing their stowed luggage in the cargo area underneath when opened during scheduled stops for passengers to disembark or enter the bus.

There are a number of radio-dispatched taxi services, all of which provide generally reliable service in late model sedans, available in Lima. These "radio taxis" offer a higher degree of security since criminals, operating in groups or individually, have been known to pose as taxi

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drivers and prey on unsuspecting individuals. It is the RSO's recommendation that all U.S. citizens visiting Arequipa also use dispatch taxi companies. Some of these include:

Taxi Turismo Arequipa 054-45-8080

Taxi Alfredo Pimental 054-23-5050

Taxitel 054-45-2020

Taxi Megatur 054-40-4040

Taxi Maldonado 054-28-6933

Panataxi 054-42-7878

Taxi Turismo Cayma 054-45-8989

Fono Taxi 054-45-3737

Arequpa Movil Taxi 054-26-5959

Imperial Tours 054-27-3434

American Express 054-45-6464

Inca Tour 054-45-2121

Taxi Libre 054-45-1515

The use of taxi cabs with telephone/radio dispatch does not guarantee the safety of the passenger. It is, however, a means of risk mitigation to decrease the probability of being the victim of an express kidnapping or other crime associated with unlicensed taxi cabs.

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Sport utility vehicles and sedans with expensive upgrades are the most common types of vehicles targeted by carjackers. Vehicle theft (including carjacking) and theft of parts from parked vehicles occur frequently.

The Embassy has seen a rash of crimes in which thieves smash the car windows of slowly passing or stopped vehicles and steal items of real or perceived value, such as purses, laptops, backpacks, and luggage, from unsuspecting travelers.

Criminal gangs are known to use roadblocks and rob passengers in passing cars and buses. Furthermore, highways and other roads are in overall poor condition, creating a serious safety threat to drivers. Peru has one of the highest road fatality rates in Latin America. Information on road conditions and road safety can be found on Peru's Country Specific Information sheet at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_998.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_998.html).

## **Political, Economic, Religious and Ethnic Violence**

There is little anti-American sentiment in Peru; however, certain sectors of Peruvian society, including illegal coca growers, resent U.S. counternarcotics policies. Others blame U.S. foreign and economic policies for their difficult economic situation.

## **Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns**

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The government has made strides in its fight against domestic terrorism, but the threat of attacks still exists. The Embassy's RSO advises visitors to take every precaution to avoid traveling to these particular areas whenever possible. Embassy personnel must abide by the Embassy's Restricted Travel Policy.

The government continues its campaign to eliminate violent terrorist groups. In 2013, the government arrested members of Sendero Luminoso (SL, Shining Path), Peru's largest and most active domestic terrorist group, which is now entwined with narcotics trafficking. In July, law enforcement arrested 24 nationals for cocaine trafficking offenses and for providing material support to the SL. Of note were the inclusion of a former congresswoman and members of the Coca Farmers Union. In August, law enforcement and armed forces killed three SL terrorists – including Comrades Alipio and Gabriel, two of the organization's top military commanders – delivering a tremendous blow to the organization in the VRAEM (Valley of the Apurimac and Ene River). Gabriel claimed responsibility for shooting down a U.S.-owned, but PNP-operated, helicopter in April 2012, killing the PNP co-pilot and wounding the crew chief.

There were no significant terrorist attacks in any other major city or tourist destination in 2013. However, there were a total of 54 documented terrorist activities primarily focused in the Departments of Ayacucho and Cusco. This is a drop in the total of 86 in 2012. While a majority of these activities consisted of raids of small villages in order to obtain supplies or to prosthetize for SL's recruitment, 19 involved small arms attacks against fixed installations, Peruvian army units, or PNP units. A total of two police officers and one soldier were killed in counter-terrorism operations conducted in the VRAEM, and another five were wounded.

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The last noteworthy SL terrorist attack in Lima occurred in March 2002, when a car bomb detonated in the parking lot of a shopping mall across the street from the U.S. Embassy in the Monterrico district.

The terrorist group Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (MRTA), is not considered a militarily viable terrorist organization. Its last major action resulted in the 1997 Japanese Embassy hostage crisis in which 14 MRTA members occupied the Ambassador's residence in Lima, holding 72 hostages for more than four months. Following this hostage-taking, the majority of their leadership was killed in 1997, and no major activity has been reported since.

## Civil Unrest

Unrest and civil disorder usually last from a few days to a few weeks and is usually manifested by political demonstrations that, at times, become violent. In 2013, there were several national protests against the government or their policies by a variety of labor and indigenous groups.

Most demonstrations in Lima take place in and around the historic downtown area near the Presidential Palace and Congress, although some do occur elsewhere. Marching groups of demonstrators often force the temporary closure of streets. Political demonstrations take place throughout the country, sometimes paralyzing road traffic for a few days. Demonstrators often block areas of the Pan-American Highway, the main north-south thoroughfare located along the western coastal area of the country. The RSO is normally notified in advance if the police expect road closures during protests.

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Travelers are reminded of the possibility of spontaneous protests and that public demonstrations occur frequently in cities in the interior of the country. Transportation strikes can occur at a moment's notice and can affect travelers for short periods. Occasionally, marching demonstrators have forced the temporary closure of some of Lima's busiest streets.

## Post-specific Concerns

### Environmental Hazards

Earthquakes are common throughout the year, and visitors should be prepared to deal with these and other natural disasters. There have been several devastating earthquakes throughout Peru's history, and Peru has the highest rating for seismic activity assigned by the U.S. Department of State. In August 2007, the southern part of Peru experienced an 8.0 earthquake that killed 510 individuals and injured thousands. As a result, telephone communications were disrupted, and drinking water and electricity services were interrupted in many cities, including several locations in Lima. According to the Instituto de Defensa Civil del Peru (INDICE), in 2013, there were 219 recorded seismic events with the largest being a 5.1 magnitude earthquake in June with the epicenter in Lima. In 2012, there were 225 recorded seismic events with the largest being a 6.4 magnitude earthquake in August with the epicenter in Pucallpa.

The most basic advice for earthquake preparedness includes three steps: Plan, Prepare, and Practice. For disaster readiness, residents should think about what supplies, tools, information, and resources they will need in the event of an earthquake. There are six basic

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elements people should have as part of their preparedness kit: water, food, first aid supplies, clothing/bedding, tools/emergency supplies (e.g., candles, gloves, hard hats, pry bar, flashlights, matches, sanitation supplies), and specialty items for medical conditions. When developing an emergency plan, take the time to write down exactly what you will do and make a record of critical information (addresses, contact numbers, bank information, etc.). Two tools that can be downloaded and used to help you plan effectively – the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit and the Personal Disaster Preparedness Guide – are available at <http://www.operationhope.org/smdev/lf1.php?id=187>. A final reminder is to keep track of the food and water supplies you have on hand and rotate them on a regular basis. It is essential to be familiar with how to prepare and store the food you have selected as part of your emergency supplies. A useful reference is an article entitled Preparing an Emergency Food Supply, Short Term Food Storage at <http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/html/FDNS-E-34-2.html>. The article outlines important tips for purchasing emergency supplies by focusing on how you should be planning to store the food once you have begun to use it.

#### Additional References

FEMA – <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/earthquake/index.shtm>

Drop Cover Hold On - <http://www.dropcoverholdon.org/>

Terremotos – (in Spanish) <http://www.terremotos.org/>

Red Cross – [http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0\\_583\\_,00.html](http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_583_,00.html)

Red Cross – (in Spanish) <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/foreignmat/earthspn.html>

Floods and mud/landslides are another issue when travelling in Peru. They occur with frequency during the rainy season and often result in road closures for extended periods. Although the west coastal region does not receive much precipitation, the mountainous Andes

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and jungle regions to the east experience significant precipitation during the rainy season. One only needs to look at the massive floods that left thousands stranded in Aguas Calientes (base of Machu Picchu) in January 2010 to understand how quickly the weather can turn dangerous.

### Industrial and Transportation Accidents

The Embassy is aware of at least 10 airplane emergencies nationwide resulting in 17 deaths since December of 2007, with the most recent event taking place in October 2010.

### Economic Espionage/Intellectual Property Thefts

Counterfeiting and piracy are illicit businesses in which criminal networks thrive. Items produced and distributed by counterfeiters are often substandard and can even be dangerous, posing health and safety risks that range from mild to life-threatening. Counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available. These items may be illegal in the U.S. and contribute negatively to social and labor issues.

### Regional Travel Concerns and Restricted Travel Areas/Zones

Many areas are considered dangerous due to potential domestic terrorist and/or criminal activity. Traveling by road at night is especially hazardous. As a result, the U.S. Embassy in

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Lima enforces a Restricted Travel Policy, which is based on the government's declared emergency zones. This policy governs the travel of official U.S. government employees and restricts or prohibits their travel to certain area. The following areas have regular security problems and are considered restricted for Embassy employees, who need prior approval for travel, and should be avoided:

#### Ayacucho:

Restricted: Provinces of La Mar and Huanta. Road travel from Ayacucho City to San Francisco City.

Permitted: Daylight road travel from Ayacucho City to Huanta City. Staying within the city limits of Huanta. Daylight road travel from Pisco City (Department of Ica) to Ayacucho City.

#### Cusco:

Restricted: 20-kilometer swath of territory contiguous to the Apurimac River and Ayacucho Department (specifically: the districts of Kimbiri, Pichari, Vilcabamba, and Echarate in the Province of La Convención).

Permitted: Everywhere else including the Machu Picchu area and City of Cusco.

#### Huancavelica:

Restricted: Provinces of Churcampa, Acobamba, and Tayacaja.

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Permitted: Train travel from Lima to Huancayo City (Department of Junin) and Huancavelica City. Daylight road travel from Lima to Huancayo City. Daylight road travel from Pisco City (Department of Ica) to Ayacucho City (Department of Ayacucho).

Huánuco:

Restricted: All zones; no ground travel is permitted without the approval of the DCM.

Permitted: Flying into and staying within the city limits of Huánuco City and Tingo María City.

Junín:

Restricted: Province of Satipo. In the Province of Concepcion, travel east of the cities of San Antonio de Ocopa and Santa Rosa (located northeast of Concepcion city). The Districts of Santo Domingo de Acobamba and Pariahuanca in the Province of Huancayo.

Permitted: Daylight travel from La Merced City to the Satipo provincial boundary.

Loreto:

Restricted: 20-kilometer swath of territory contiguous to the Colombia border. Travel on the Putumayo River.

San Martín:

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Restricted: Provinces of Tocache, Mariscal Caceres, Huallaga, and Bellavista.

Permitted: Flying only into and remaining within the city limits of Tocache City, Saposoa City, Juanjui City, and Bellavista City.

Ucayali:

Restricted: Provinces of Padre Abad and Coronel Portillo west of Pucallpa City and west of the Ucayali River. Road travel from Pucallpa City to Aguaytia City and all cities west of Aguaytia.

Permitted: Flying into and remaining within the city limits of Pucallpa City and Aguaytía City. The province of Coronel Portillo east of the Ucayali River.

Nighttime travel via road outside the greater Lima area and other cities is prohibited for government personnel and contractors due to poor highway safety and the threat of criminals. The only exceptions to this regulation are:

- Travel by commercial bus on the Pan-American Highway is permitted for official or personal travel during nighttime hours, and
- Travel by personal or official vehicle on the Pan-American Highway south from Lima to Paracas or north from Lima to Huacho during nighttime hours.

A popular attraction is the Nazca Lines. The best way to view this site is by plane. Due to safety and security concerns, the Maria Reiche Airport in Nazca has been declared off-limits to all personnel working at the Embassy. Consular and RSO advise U.S. citizens desiring to

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fly over the Nazca Lines to use the airports in either Ica or Pisco.

## Drug-related Crimes

Narcotics production and trafficking continues to be a problem; Peru is the world's number one producer of cocaine. The vast majority of the refined product is exported, but the widespread production of cocaine in the Huallaga and VRAEM areas has contributed to a growing illegal drug presence in the cities. Moreover, the high productivity level has created a steady supply of the cheaper intermediate product, cocaine paste, for sale domestically. Cocaine paste, also known as coca paste or "paco" (short for pasta de cocaína), is a collective name given to several different cocaine products. Cocaine paste includes crude, intermediate stages of the cocaine preparation process and their freebase forms, as well as "crack cocaine" prepared from pure cocaine hydrochloride. Often combined with marijuana and smoked like a cigarette, it provides a cheaper and shorter-lived drug-induced high. The increased drug use may contribute to a higher incidence of petty theft and violent crime.

In 2013, the government eradication agency, CORAH, focused on San Martín, Huánuco, and Pasco regions, which encompass the Monzón River Valley. Peru eradicated an unprecedented 23,785 hectares of illicit coca in 2013, exceeding the 14,171 hectares eradicated the previous year. Law enforcement destroyed 311 maceration pits found at eradication sites, far exceeding the 142 pits found in 2012. Plans are underway to eradicate in the VRAEM, a region accounting for as much as 40 percent of Peru's total potential pure cocaine production.

## Kidnapping Threats

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The number of kidnappings for ransom country-wide is underreported, based on anecdotal information received at the U.S. Embassy. The targets are usually the wealthy or assumed wealthy persons residing in affluent areas.

“Express kidnappings,” primarily short-term and geared toward robbery of personal possessions and ATM/bank withdrawals, are a problem throughout Peru. Often the criminals perpetrating these kidnappings are taxi drivers working as part of an organized criminal group. In Arequipa, express kidnappings have become such a problem that all U.S. Embassy personnel are prohibited from hailing taxis off of the street; U.S. Embassy personnel on TDY or on personal travel to Arequipa must utilize cabs from well-established dispatch taxi companies.

## **Police Response**

Peru has a national police force with nationwide jurisdiction. The Peruvian National Police (PNP) averages 103,000 members between officers and non-commissioned officers. This number is insufficient to cover the internal security of the country and its more than 30 million inhabitants. At the conclusion of 2013, the PNP had 51 general officers. There were seven generals dismissed in 2013. Three general officers were dismissed for involvement in corruption tied to protection of individuals associated with the Fujimori administration. A total of 90 coronels, 168 lieutenant coronels (comandantes), and 293 majors forcibly retired at the conclusion of 2013. The largest number of forced retirements in PNP history for suboficiales (chief petty officer) occurred in 2013. A total of 832 suboficiales were forcibly retired to make room for new suboficiales as part of a “renovation” policy within the PNP.

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With the exception of several specialized units, the PNP lacks professionalism by comparison to U.S. standards. Many police are eager to serve but do not have the training and equipment to do so effectively. Morale is poor, pay is low, and corruption is rumored to be extensive, all of which has created an overall negative image of the police in the minds of the populace. Police have been known to either solicit bribes in order to supplement their salaries or accept bribes when offered. Police response to reported crimes is slow and, in many cases, largely ineffective. There is a police presence in all major cities and towns, but they are often unable to respond to calls for service, and they can be unable to deter, investigate and reduce crime.

Under Peruvian law, all persons must carry one form of valid photo identification. Additionally, some type of valid original photo identification, such as a driver's license, must also be carried.

#### Where to Turn to for Assistance if you Become a Victim of Crime

Any circumstance involving a violation of the law, including traffic accidents, must be reported to the local police station. Police will not initiate an investigation of any incident until a report has been filed. According to many crime victims, the police often limit their response to taking crime reports and are incapable or unwilling in most instances to conduct meaningful investigations and rarely arrest perpetrators. There are also allegations that payoffs to corrupt police officers can be a "get out of jail free card" for criminals who are arrested.

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Foreign visitors who become victims of a crime should contact the Policia de Turismo (tourist police) whenever possible. The tourist police, which can be found in major tourist areas, are among the more knowledgeable and helpful of police units and are more likely to speak English. The Tourism Police Division, in charge of the crime prevention and investigation of crimes against foreign tourists, is assigned to the main tourist areas and hotels in Lima and also in the principal provinces of Peru. These officers receive training on how to interact with tourists, and some of them are fluent in English and other languages.

In case of emergency a 105 line (similar to the U.S. 911 system) is available 24 hours, however, the response time is not optimal due to the lack of personnel, vehicles, and coverage.

American Citizen Services Cusco Consular Agent

Emergency Hotline: 618-2000 Emergency Number: 984-621-369

## Police Emergency Numbers

Central 105

Office: 332-3222

Fax: 431-1668

Suat & Bomb Squad (Udex): 431-3040, # 421846

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Lima Tourism Police

Command Post: 460-1060

Tourism: 423-3500 (North Downtown Police)

VII Lima South

Central Operations: 431-1668

Fax: 4317859

Police Stations in Lima

San Isidro 441-0222

Orrantia 264-1932

Miraflores 445-7943

Monterrico 435-0688

La Molina 368-1871, 368-1789

Santa Felicia 348-7213, 349-2370

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Chacarilla 372-6614, 372-6596

San Borja 225-5188, 225-5181, 225-5184

Barranco 2471383, 2471160

Trujillo

Región: (044) 222-034

Patrol Division : 221-908

Fax: 207-054

Police Department: 044-232-811

Criminal Investigative Division 044-231708

Iquitos

Región: (065) 232-509

Police Department: 065-231-852

Cusco

Región: (084) 242-611

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Fax: (084) 227-783

Comisaria de Cusco: (084) 249-654

Turismo: (084) 235-123

Police Department: 084231788

Chiclayo

Región: (074) 235-740

Fax: 235-534

Central: 235-534

Turismo: 206-366

Police Department: 074-235-740

Cajamarca

Subregión: (076) 340-584

Fax: (076) 362-832

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Huaraz

Región: (043) 421-592, 427-814

Fax: (043) 422-920

Police Department: 043-427-814, 422-920

Chimbote

Región: (043) 321-651

Fax: (043) 329-205

Huancayo

Región: (064) 200-091

Fax: (064) 234-651

Ica

Región: (056) 218-456

Ilo

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Provincial: (053) 481-331

Fax: 481-212

Huánuco

Provincial: (062) 513-262, 513-480

Fax: (062) 781-220

Piura

Región: (730) 305-455, 326-071

Police Department: (073)326-071

Tumbes

Police Department: 072-523-515, 523-888

Arequipa

Command Post: 054-252-688,

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Regional Director: (054) 251-277

Ayacucho

Police Department: 066-312-055, 311-907

Puno

Police Department: 051-353-988

Various Police/Security Agencies

The Criminal Investigative Directorate unit is tasked with investigating cases involving violent crimes including homicide, kidnapping and sexual assaults, organized crime, carjackings and vehicle theft, fraud, counterfeiting, cyber crimes, and other complex criminal investigations.

The Serenazgo Service, composed of municipal security officers and assisted by off-duty police officers who work in most districts of Lima, do not have law enforcement authority (i.e., the ability to make arrests, etc), but they do play a significant role in maintaining order and deterring crime in Lima and are often the first line of defense in case of emergencies.

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There are several competent private security businesses operating in Peru, many of which offer a wide variety of services: executive protection, private investigations, guard services for large events, armored car services, and physical security for both work and residential locations.

## Medical Emergencies

Emergency medical service is generally not reliable. The U.S. Embassy health unit recommends the use of private ambulance services whenever possible. Telephone numbers for these services can be found in local telephone directories. The quality of medical facilities also varies, and U.S. health insurance is almost never taken. For this reason, treatment may be held up until proof of ability to pay is shown, either by cash or credit card.

## Contact Information for Recommended Local Hospitals and Clinics

The following is a list of clinics, many of which have staff who are familiar with American health care and speak some basic English:

Clínica Anglo American

Tel: 616-8900

Av. Salazar s/n

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Cuadra 3

San Isidro District

Clínica San Felipe

Tel: 219-0000

Av. Gregorio Escobedo 650

Jesús Maria

Clínica San Borja

Tel: 702-4300

Av. Guardia Civil 337

San Borja District

Clínica El Golf

Tel: 631-0000

Av. Aurelio Miro Quesada 1030

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San Isidro District

Clínica Anglo American Urgent Care Center

Tel: 616-8990

Av. La Fontana 362, La Molina

Clínica San Felipe Urgent Care Center

Tel: 219-0000 Ext. 718

Av. Javier Prado Este 4841

La Molina

Peruvian National Police's High Mountain Rescue Unit ("USAM")

Tel: 51-1-575-4696, 51-1-575-4698, 51-1-575-1555

Fax: 51-1-575-3036

E-mail: ceopol\_diravpol@hotmail.com

Cusco and Iquitos clinics can be found at:

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[http://photos.state.gov/libraries/peru/5/resources/2012-10\\_doctor\\_list.pdf](http://photos.state.gov/libraries/peru/5/resources/2012-10_doctor_list.pdf)

## CDC Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

For vaccine and health guidance, please visit the CDC at:  
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/peru>.

## Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

### Best Situational Awareness Practices

There is no guarantee that crime will not occur in generally safe areas and care must still be exercised, particularly at night.

Travelers should maintain a low profile where possible. They should attempt to dress down and avoid carrying large sums of cash, credit cards, ATM cards, cameras, and wearing expensive jewelry.

It is recommended that money be changed at local banks or at established hotels, rather than through the numerous money-changers that operate along city streets. Many of these

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money-changers deal in counterfeit currency. The Embassy recommends that travelers limit their use of credit cards to paying only for hotel expenses or purchases at well-established businesses; most reputable locations have portable card devices and slide the credit card in full view of the card owner. Travelers should keep their credit cards within their sight while making transactions. Travelers should exercise caution when withdrawing money from ATMs. Criminals have been known to stake out banks and after identifying an individual who has withdrawn cash, either immediately assaulting them or following them to another location before committing a robbery.

Due to the large trade in stolen U.S. passports, travelers are cautioned to avoid carrying their passports whenever possible. Original passports should be locked in a hotel safe or another secure location. Travelers should carry a photocopy of the data/biographic page, the page containing the visa (if needed), and a copy of the Peruvian immigration form received at the port of entry.

Tourists should try to travel in groups whenever possible and use radio-dispatched taxicabs rather than public transportation. Particular care should be exercised when traveling to and from Jorge Chavez International Airport in Lima. Caution should also be used when placing valuables, specifically electronic items, into checked luggage when traveling through the airports, as several U.S. visitors have reported items being stolen from their checked luggage.

While demonstrations are often peaceful, they can quickly escalate into violent confrontations. U.S. citizens are advised to avoid large crowds and demonstrations and are strongly encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance, maintain awareness of local events and their surroundings, and take the appropriate steps to bolster their personal security. It is illegal for foreigners to participate in demonstrations. U.S. citizens who have been caught up in political demonstrations have been detained and expelled.

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Incidents involving incapacitating agents have been reported in the Lima area. This tactic is used by criminals to debilitate the victim, allowing them the opportunity to steal belongings and/or sexually assault the victim. It is advised to purchase one's own drink and never leave it unattended. If for any reason the beverage is left unattended, drinking it is strongly discouraged.

## **U.S. Embassy Location and Contact Information**

### Embassy Address and Hours of Operation

Avenida La Encalada Cdra 17- Monterrico, Lima

### Embassy Contact Numbers

Regional Security Officer: (011)- (511)-618-2469, fax 011- 511- 618 -2278, email: [RSOLIMA@state.gov](mailto:RSOLIMA@state.gov)

Embassy Operator: 618-2000

Consular Affairs: 618-2518

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Political Section: 618-2410

Economic Section: 618-2410

Marine Post One: 618-2436

The RSO is available to discuss security concerns with U.S. organizations contemplating a trip to Peru, provide information on security companies, or to otherwise be of assistance to OSAC members while in country.

For further information regarding security issues in Peru, visit the Regional Security Office's at [http://lima.usembassy.gov/regional\\_security\\_office.html](http://lima.usembassy.gov/regional_security_office.html). More information is available by calling the U.S. Department of State's consular information number (202-647-4000) or visiting its website at <http://travel.state.gov/>. Travelers should be sure to consult the U.S. Embassy's Consular Information Sheet, either through the U.S. Department of State's webpage at <http://www.state.gov/> or the Embassy's webpage at <http://lima.usembassy.gov/>.

## **OSAC Country Council Information**

There is an active OSAC Country Council in Lima that encourages all eligible companies to join. Prospective members can obtain further information on how to enroll by contacting the OSAC Country Council at the American Chamber of Commerce at 011-511 241-0708.

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