



## Ecuador 2016 Crime & Safety Report: Guayaquil

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Kidnapping; Rape/Sexual Violence; Murder; Financial Security; Narcoterrorism; Drug Trafficking; Political Violence; Aviation; Riots/Civil Unrest; Oil & Energy; Volcanoes; Earthquakes; Floods; Employee Health Safety; Fraud

Western Hemisphere > Ecuador; Western Hemisphere > Ecuador > Guayaquil

5/3/2016

### Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: Critical

### Crime Threats

Crimes against U.S. citizens in 2015 have ranged from petty theft to violent offenses (armed robbery, express kidnapping, sexual assault, homicide). Pickpocketing, purse snatching, robbery, bag slashing, and hotel room theft are the most common types of non-violent crimes committed against U.S. citizens in Ecuador. These incidents have increased significantly in recent years. Pickpockets and other petty thieves are particularly active in tourist areas, airports, restaurants, on public transportation, in crowded streets, bus terminals, public markets, and grocery stores. Backpackers and travelers carrying laptop computer bags are frequently targeted for robbery.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



Violent crime has significantly increased over the last few years, with American citizens being victims of crimes including, but not limited to, homicides, armed assaults, robberies, sexual assaults, and home invasions. Armed or violent robberies can occur anywhere in Ecuador. Many travelers have been robbed after using ATMs or when exiting banks. In some cases, robbers have used motorcycles to approach their victims and flee the scene. Tourists have also been robbed at gunpoint on beaches and along hiking trails.

Robberies and assaults against taxi passengers, known locally as “secuestro express” continue to present a significant safety concern, especially in Guayaquil and Manta but also with increasing regularity in Quito. Shortly after the passenger enters a taxi, the vehicle is typically intercepted by armed accomplices, who threaten passengers with weapons, rob passengers of their personal belongings, and force victims to withdraw money from ATMs. Increasingly, victims have been beaten or sexually assaulted during these incidents.

Smash-and-grabs thefts occur when thieves break into parked or slow-moving vehicles or those stopped in traffic, particularly when they observe a woman driving a car alone.

Incidents of sexual assault and rape have increased, including in well-traveled tourist areas. Criminals generally target women who are alone and use alcohol/incapacitating drugs on unsuspecting tourists to rob/sexually assault them. These so-called date-rape drugs, most often rohypnol and scopolamine, disorient the victim and can cause prolonged unconsciousness and serious medical problems.

Since September 2009, at least four U.S. citizens have been victims of murder. In most cases, the victims and alleged perpetrators knew each other personally. The government has

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



established an emergency hotline (1-800-DELITO (1-800-335486)) that callers can use to inform police about murders or contract killings.

Very low rates of apprehension and conviction of criminals – due to limited police and judicial resources – contribute to Ecuador’s high crime rate.

### Cybersecurity Issues

Increasing numbers of U.S. citizens have fallen victim to fraud related to their credit/debit cards. “Skimming,” the theft of credit card information during an otherwise legitimate transaction, is most likely to occur in restaurants, bars, and hotels where the skimmer takes the victim's card out of the owner’s view.

### Other Areas of Concern

Exercise extreme caution in the downtown area and the southern part of the city. Tourist sites such as the Christ statue (Sagrado Corazon de Jesus) on Cerro del Carmen, the Malecon 2000, and Las Peñas, though well-patrolled by police, are still targeted by criminals hoping to prey on unsuspecting tourists. There have been reports of armed robberies at restaurants in the fashionable areas of Urdesa and Samborondon.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



Political violence in Colombia has a spillover effect in northern Ecuador. Security on the border with Colombia, where the majority of Ecuador's oil deposits are located, is particularly tenuous. The area is used as a transshipment point for both precursor chemicals used in illegal drug production and arms/supplies for Colombian insurgent groups and narco-traffickers. Businesses in the area continue to report being extorted for protection money. Kidnappings have occurred, and foreigners have been targeted. Kidnappings are more often economically rather than politically-motivated. Due to the spread of organized crime, drug and small-arms trafficking, and incursions by terrorist organizations near Ecuador's porous border with Colombia, the U.S. Embassy in Quito advises caution when traveling to the provinces of Sucumbíos, northern Orellana, Carchi, and northern Esmeraldas. U.S. government personnel are prohibited from traveling alone or staying overnight in these areas. The military and government agencies are increasing efforts to promote development and provide security in this area.

## **Transportation-Safety Situation**

### Road Safety and Road Conditions

Although some of Ecuador's roads and highways have greatly improved in recent years, road travel can still be dangerous, especially at night. Some roads are poorly maintained or affected by heavy rains and mudslides. Mountain roads may lack safety features (crash barriers, guard rails), and conditions are frequently made more treacherous by heavy fog. Highways are often unmarked and not illuminated and do not have signs indicating destinations. In addition, slow-moving buses/trucks frequently stop in the middle of the road unexpectedly. On the coast in particular, many vehicles are poorly maintained and breakdowns are common. In the countryside, livestock is often herded along roads or grazed on roadsides. Lacking sidewalks, many roads are also used by pedestrians. Road travel after

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



dark is especially hazardous. Motorists should prepare accordingly and should carry a cellular phone and first aid kit in case of an emergency.

Driving practices differ from U.S. standards; drivers often disobey traffic laws and signals. Buses stop without warning to pick up or drop off passengers. Drivers often turn from any lane and rarely yield to pedestrians or cyclists. You might encounter intoxicated drivers, though the chances of a drunk-driving accident are higher on weekends and Ecuadorian holidays.

If you are the driver of a vehicle involved in an automobile accident, even if you are not at fault, you may be taken into police custody, especially if injuries are involved or if you do not have insurance. If injuries or damages are serious, you may face criminal charges.

To avoid carjacking or theft from a vehicle while stopped at intersections, drivers should keep doors locked and windows up. Do not leave anything of value in plain view. Always be aware of surroundings and try to travel in groups.

## Public Transportation Conditions

Intra- and inter-city bus passengers are often targets of crime, including robbery and sexual assault. Numerous bus accidents occur every year, and many buses are overcrowded, poorly maintained, and lack seat belts or other safety features. On buses, luggage stowed below the bus or at a traveler's feet is sometimes stolen.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



In Guayaquil, security on public transportation is a major concern. Armed criminals have been known to board local city buses and rob passengers of valuables. There have been instances in which routes between cities are blocked by criminals, who force the bus to stop and then board the bus to rob passengers.

In the Guayaquil area, one should call to order a known taxi by phone or use a service affiliated with major hotels. It is strongly discouraged to hail a taxi on the street. U.S. officials associated with the U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil are forbidden from hailing taxis on the street. U.S. citizens should never wave or flag down taxis on the street, as this action causes the susceptibility to the threat of "secuestro express." Registered taxis are usually yellow, display matching unit numbers on their windshields and doors, feature a taxi cooperative name on the door, and are identified with an orange license plate. Still, be aware that passengers have been victimized even in taxis that meet these criteria.

### Aviation/Airport Conditions

At the airports in both Quito and Guayaquil, arriving passengers have been targeted by armed robbers who follow them from the airport to rob them. Cases have been reported involving multiple vehicles that cut off and intercept the victim as well as just a single motorcycle rider who robs the victim while he/she is getting out of the car. The perpetrators appear to focus on travelers who are returning from overseas trips laden with gifts and large amounts of cash.

### Terrorism Threat

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



Post Terrorism Rating: Medium

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

Ecuador does not have a tradition of substantial guerrilla activity, nor of frequent violence as a result of demonstrations or political instability. It is against the law for foreigners to engage in political activity that starts or promotes civil wars or international conflicts.

Post Political Violence Rating: High

### **Civil Unrest**

Student, labor union, and indigenous protests against government policies are a regular feature of political life. While disruptive, especially to transportation, violence is usually limited and localized. Protestors often block city streets and rural highways, and public transportation tends to be disrupted during these incidents. Protestors occasionally burn tires, throw Molotov cocktails, engage in destruction of property, and detonate small improvised explosive devices during demonstrations, but fatalities have been rare.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



Pamphlet bombs are sometimes used to disseminate political literature. Pamphlet bombs have been used since 2011 with the most recent case occurring in July 2015, targeting a popular newspaper corporate office. All occurred without serious injury to person/property (although one had the potential to be lethal), and none were aimed at businesses or business interests.

Popular protests in 1997, 2000, and 2005 contributed to the removal of three elected presidents before the end of their terms.

During 2015, Ecuador experienced a number of large scale anti-government protests following the introduction of new economic legislation. Many protesters and protest groups convened in Quito and Guayaquil. Most protests were non-violent; however, some included the use of anti-riot police forces and the deployment of tear gas. A number of police officers were injured, and few arrests were made. In San Cristobal, the airport was temporarily shut down, and tear gas was used against protestors.

## Religious/Ethnic Violence

Some communities have used protests and strikes to obtain promises of increased government spending on social benefits and infrastructure. Some indigenous communities opposed to development have protested to block access by petroleum/mining companies. In September 2009, one individual was killed near Macas during protests by indigenous communities demonstrating against the government's proposed mining and water laws. The government increasingly filed legal charges or opened investigations against protestors who blocked roads or impeded public services. The government charged demonstrators with

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



“terrorism and sabotage,” or similar charges that effectively criminalized protest, for obstructing roads and public services.

## Post-specific Concerns

### Environmental Hazards

Ecuador has many active and potentially active volcanoes, including around Quito and other popular tourist destinations. Three active volcanoes within 100 kilometers of Quito threaten the city primarily with ash fall. Baños, a popular tourist destination, is located at the base of the Tungurahua volcano. Tungurahua has erupted explosively several times in the last decade, including several eruptions throughout 2010, 2011, and 2012 that produced significant ash fall. Travelers to Baños, especially on the western side of town, should be aware that mud/lava flows could pose a significant and immediate threat. If you are in Baños when a volcanic eruption occurs, stay alert to the sirens and instructions from local authorities, and follow the arrows on the street to reach the evacuation shelters in the Santa Ana neighborhood on the main road on the east side of town, toward Puyo.

Other potential environmental threats include flooding, the effects of El Niño, earthquakes, and tsunamis. Earthquakes sometimes trigger deadly tsunamis, which could strike coastal areas of Ecuador or the Galápagos Islands. National authorities put out warnings of potential tsunamis, but the response on the local level is uneven, and on one occasion in 2010 in the Galapagos Islands, there was no coordinated evacuation when a tsunami struck.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



In the event of a natural disaster, transportation, water, communications, and power systems may fail due to damaged infrastructure or heavy ash fall. Roads may close and flights might be cancelled due to adverse conditions. In light of these environmental conditions, it is important to maintain an emergency supply of food and water and establish an emergency plan with family members or fellow travelers.

### Critical Infrastructure Concerns

The government acknowledged that the number of on-the-job injuries was seriously underreported. According to the Social Security Institute, the Ministry of Labor Relations, and the Ministry of Health, approximately 15,000 on-the-job injuries were reported each year. The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated the true number at approximately 160,000. Violations were reportedly common in the banana, palm oil, flower, and gold-mining industries, particularly involving exposure to toxic chemicals.

### Drug-related Crimes

The amount of drugs, estimated to be in excess of 100 metric tons of cocaine per year, flowing through Ecuador has contributed to the rise of all types of crime, to include violent crime.

An example of this violence is the death in March 2011 of an Ecuadorian National Police and DEA Vetted Unit member who was killed by Colombian drug traffickers after being compromised on surveillance in support of an anti-drug operation. The Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO) was working directly with a Mexican Sinaloa cell in Guayaquil. A second

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



Vetted Officer was shot in the head but survived.

Homicide rates have continued to increase over the last 12 years, which has a direct correlation to the increased flow of drugs over this same period. Traditional DTOs, especially those with a propensity for violence, such as the Mexican Sinaloa and Gulf cartels, do operate in Ecuador.

### Kidnapping Threat

At least 13 U.S. citizens are known to have been victims of kidnapping over the past 12 years.

In October 2009, an U.S. citizen was kidnapped in Tulcan and held for ransom. After 21 days, the victim was rescued after an intensive investigation involving Ecuadorian, Colombian, and U.S. law enforcement.

In 2012, two Americans were held against their will, one by an indigenous group and later released and one held for ransom by a paramilitary group near the Colombian border in Sucumbíos, who later escaped.

Two Canadians tourists were held against their will and assaulted in the Cuyabeno National Park near Lago Agrio and later released.

In 2014 a U.S. citizen was kidnapped in Vilcabamba, Loja, where the perpetrators demanded a \$400,000.00 ransom for the release of the victim. The victim was released two days later, following police investigation.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



## Police Response

Police coverage is sparse outside major urban areas. The government increasingly used the military to bolster police patrols in 2012.

Ecuador has a less than one percent conviction rate for major crimes. The threshold for petty crime is US\$600, meaning that little is done for victims whose loss is less than that. Response times vary, but it is common for police to take 45-60 minutes to respond to emergencies. After a criminal complaint, or denuncia, is filed, little is done to recover belongings or to investigate.

While you are traveling, you are subject to Ecuadorian laws even though you are a U.S. citizen. Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different from our own. If you break local laws, your U.S. passport will not help you avoid arrest or prosecution. It is very important to know what is legal and what is not.

## How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment

If you are arrested, under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and customary international law, you have the option to request that the police, prison officials, or other authorities alert the U.S. Embassy/Consulate. If you are arrested, request that the authorities do this on your behalf. Outside of Quito and Guayaquil, awareness of international protocols is uneven. The U.S. government has no authority to intervene in Ecuadorian legal matters.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



If you feel that you are a victim of police corruption, bribery, or harassment, contact American Citizen Services at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate General for assistance.

### Crime Victim Assistance

Dial 911 for all emergencies. Operators typically speak only Spanish; however, English speakers are sometimes available (one per shift) to handle emergency calls. You may also call American Citizen Services at U.S. Embassy Quito (tel.: (02) 398-5000) or the U.S. Consulate General Guayaquil (tel. (04)-371-7000).

If you or someone you know becomes the victim of a crime, you should immediately contact the local police to file a denuncia and inform the U.S. Embassy/Consulate General. The Ecuadorian Tourist Security Service has opened a number of service centers throughout Quito to provide general information and a location to file police reports.

Investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators is the responsibility of the Ecuadorian government, and they do not proceed with the speed and thoroughness we are accustomed to in the U.S. Although the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Consulate General monitor and encourage these investigations, our ability to intervene is extremely limited. If one falls victim of crime, the U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate General can:

Help you find appropriate medical care ,

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



Put you in contact with the police authorities and contact family/friends on your behalf,

Replace your stolen passport,

Help you understand the local criminal justice process and direct you to attorneys or law enforcement officials.

## **Medical Emergencies**

Dial 911 for all emergencies. Operators typically speak only Spanish, although an English speaker may be available.

Medical care is very limited, particularly outside Quito and Guayaquil. Basic medical services are available in Quito, Guayaquil, and many small towns and villages. However, treatment for serious medical issues is often unavailable or available only in Quito. Physicians and hospital personnel frequently do not speak English, and medical reports are written in Spanish. Patients must have good Spanish language skills to utilize local medical resources.

Emergency ambulance services, as well as certain types of medical equipment, medications and treatments, are not widely available. Ambulance services are poor and do not meet U.S. standards. Ambulances are privately-run, expensive, and seldom respond within an appropriate amount of time. In an emergency, patients must drive or ask somebody to take them to the nearest hospital that will accept a patient. This is usually a public hospital unless the patient or someone acting on their behalf indicates that they can pay for a private hospital.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



Travelers should prepare to pay medical practitioners and hospitals at the time of service or even before treatment is given. Payment for medical services is typically done on a cash basis, although the few private hospitals will accept major credit cards for payment. U.S. health insurance plans are not accepted in Ecuador.

#### Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

The Embassy recommends that medical emergencies in Quito be treated at Hospital Metropolitano (tel. +593-2-399-8000 x. 2193) and Hospital De los Valles in Cumbaya (tel. +593-2-600-0911).

In Guayaquil, the U.S. Consulate General recommends using the Clinica Kennedy and the Clinica Alcivar.

Clinica Kennedy, Av. San Jorge entre la Novena y la Decima (close to Polycentro Mall)

Tel. +593-4-228-6963 / 2289-666 and Fax: +593-4-228-4051

Clinica Kennedy (Alborada area)

Tel. +593-4-224-7900

Clinica Kennedy (Samborondon área)

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



Tel. +593-4-209-0039

Clinica Alcivar(Trauma specialty)

Doctora Ma del Carmen Escolano, cell phone +593-9-948-0305

Doctor Marlon Alarcon, cell phone +593-9-961-5960

Travelers are reminded that the facilities at these hospitals are modern and often technologically advanced, but may not meet all U.S. standards.

#### Available Air Ambulance Services

Tel. +593-2-246-8216 or +593-2-246-9902

#### Recommended Insurance Posture

The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and whether it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



## Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

Individuals should ensure that all their routine vaccinations are up-to-date. Yellow fever vaccination is not required for entry unless the traveler has recently visited a country where yellow fever is endemic.

Travelers taking prescription medications should bring an adequate supply with them when coming to Ecuador. For more information, please refer to OSAC's Report, "Traveling with Medications."

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747). For additional information on vaccines and health guidance, please visit the CDC at: [http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/ecuador?s\\_cid=ncezid-dgmg-travel-double-001](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/ecuador?s_cid=ncezid-dgmg-travel-double-001).

## OSAC Country Council Information

OSAC re-established a Guayaquil Country Council in early 2015. All U.S. private sector organizations and affiliates operating in the area are encouraged to participate. Parties interested in joining the Country Council should contact RSO Robert Gousie at +593-99-428207 or Carlos O. Guerra, Coordinador de OSAC Guayaquil Ecuador, Cellular:

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



+593-4-371-7155. To reach OSAC's Western Hemisphere team, please email [OSACWHA@state.gov](mailto:OSACWHA@state.gov).

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

### Consulate Contact Numbers

Switchboard: +593-4-371-7000

After-Hours: +593-4-371-7000

Regional Security Officer: +593-4-371-7034

Consular Affairs and American Citizens Services: +593-4-371-7000

Website: <http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov/>

### Nearby Posts

U.S. Embassy Quito:<http://ecuador.usembassy.gov>

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



## Consulate Guidance

For the latest security and threat information, U.S. citizens traveling or living abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State's travel website (<http://travel.state.gov>) and U.S. Consulate General's website (<http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov/>). These sites contain country-specific consular information, current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Worldwide Cautions.

## Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

### Scams

Thieves often distract the victim, sometimes by purposefully spilling liquid on the victim and pretending to help hi/.her clean it up (condiment scam), while accomplices snatch the victim's bag or pick the victim's pocket.

### Situational Awareness Best Practices

To lower one's risk of non-violent crimes, travelers should leave valuables in a safe place or not travel with them. Make use of hotel safes when available, avoid wearing obviously expensive jewelry or designer clothing, and carry only the necessary cash or credit cards on each outing. Travelers should avoid withdrawing large amounts of cash at one time from

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



banks and ATMs and should use ATMs in protected indoor areas (well-guarded shopping malls). Never carry more than you are willing to lose and never carry anything you consider priceless or irreplaceable. Pay in cash whenever possible and use credit cards at larger establishments (hotels). To avoid skimming, visitors should take the credit/debit card to the register him/herself and never let the card out of his/her sight. Also, be sure to monitor bank accounts and credit card statements frequently. Take only the money you need with you and do not keep it all in one pocket.

Stay alert to pickpockets when in crowds and when taking public transportation, and be conscious of distractions created to target tourists. Be unpredictable in your movements so that you will not be an easy target. Increase your awareness of your belongings when in congested areas (airports, bus stations). Teams of criminals frequent these areas; one will attempt to distract a victim while an accomplice commits a theft.

To lower risk of falling victim to sexual assault, travel in groups, do not leave food or drinks unattended in public places, and never accept a drink from a stranger.

Maintain a low profile and do not advertise that you are American. Dress casually, keep valuables out of sight, and do not draw attention to yourself. The Consulate recommends traveling in groups at all times. Maintain a copy of passport and credit card information and the telephone numbers to report a lost or stolen card. In the event of a robbery, the Embassy/Consulate urge all travelers to comply with the demands of the aggressors while attempting to observe identifying characteristics of the perpetrators. No item is worth risking serious injury or death.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*



If one falls victim of express kidnapping/obbery, cooperation with the assailant usually results in the best outcome, as nothing material is as valuable as one's life. Following a criminal incident, U.S. citizens are encouraged to immediately file a police report with the local authorities and to inform the American Citizens Services Unit at the U.S. Embassy in Quito or the U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil.

---

*The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.*