



China 2016 Crime & Safety Report: Shenyang

Travel Health and Safety; Surveillance; Stolen items; Theft; Extortion; Counterfeiting; Assault; Fraud; Rape/Sexual Violence; Cyber; Religious Terrorism; Riots/Civil Unrest; Religious Violence; Earthquakes; Floods; Landslides and mudslides; Winter weather; Hurricanes; Employee Health Safety; Economic Espionage; Drug Trafficking; Financial Security

East Asia & Pacific > China; East Asia & Pacific > China > Shenyang

5/16/2016

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: Low

Crime Threats

The overall crime and safety situation in Shenyang and northeast China remains stable. Though crime in China, is on the rise, the rate at which it is increasing in the Shenyang Consular District remains low in comparison with other parts of the country. Shenyang and most of the northeast has a small but growing Western expatriate community. The most common crimes that affect Westerners are crimes of opportunity (purse snatchings, pickpocketing, taxi-fare extortion, counterfeit currency). Though not specifically targeted by criminal elements, Westerners sometimes fall prey to crimes of opportunity, especially around tourist centers (hotels, points of interest, shopping districts). 2015 yielded only a few reports of assaults on Westerners; these are infrequent and typically involve alcohol.

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Shenyang, as well as other parts of the northeast, has a large temporary worker population made up of migrant laborers from poorer parts of China. The size of this group increases dramatically during the warmer months when large construction projects are in full swing and will ebb during the colder months when construction slows. This transitory population often resides in large, temporary housing structures on-site that move with construction projects. The temporary worker population may bring with it some opportunistic crime (petty thefts, assaults), often fueled by poverty, substance abuse, and desperation.

Fraud and corruption occur frequently in northeast China, although in recent years the central government's sweeping anti-corruption campaign has seen a number of officials investigated and arrested.

Violent crime is less common but does occur. In 2015, a Consulate employee was physically assaulted in a public park in central Shenyang, and an American was sexually assaulted while visiting a massage parlor. Violent crime affecting the expatriate community most often occurs in bars and night clubs. While the legal age for consuming alcohol is 18, most establishments do not require identification. Some bars are overcrowded and safety standards are not routinely enforced. Prostitutes and drugs are known to be present in some clubs and karaoke bars.

The distribution of counterfeit Chinese currency continues to be an issue in Shenyang. Unsuspecting Americans are sometimes passed fraudulent notes when receiving change from restaurants, stores, and taxi cabs. Large numbers of 100 RMB and 50 RMB counterfeit notes continue to circulate, and even fake 20 RMB and 10 RMB denominations are encountered as well.

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Criminal organizations (Japanese, Russian, Chinese, and Korean crime syndicates) remain active and operate large fraud and counterfeiting rings throughout the northeast.

Cybersecurity Concerns

China is known for using sophisticated capabilities to target intellectual property, including that of Westerners. Methods include spear phishing, targeting of mobile devices, and social network manipulation.

Transportation-Safety Situation

Road Safety and Road Conditions

The physical road conditions in larger cities are generally good to excellent. Driving conditions in rural areas are usually poor. The roads in Shenyang are extremely crowded, and many drivers are new to operating a motor vehicle. They are often either overly cautious or overly aggressive, resulting in numerous accidents every day. Traffic laws are rarely adhered to, and policing is done remotely by video camera (mainly using speed traps). Signaling and yielding to oncoming traffic or pedestrians is virtually unheard of. Traffic signals are absent at key locations, stop signs are non-existent, and road closures are poorly/not marked. One must

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obtain a Chinese driver's license to drive.

Most accidents are minor and are resolved on the scene. Cars must remain at the site of the accident. In traffic accidents involving foreigners, the foreigner is often ruled at fault, regardless of the actual cause of the accident. The police should always be called, and persons involved in accidents should not try to make unofficial agreements or argue with the other party involved, regardless of who is responsible. If an accident involves a vehicle (or bicycle) and a pedestrian, the driver is assumed at fault. An ambulance responding to the scene will not take a pedestrian to the hospital unless the driver rides along to ensure payment for treatment.

Reports on the severity of transportation accidents are often conflicting. Drivers of commercial vehicles are often under-trained, and they drive as if they are operating much smaller vehicles. In addition, commercial vehicles are often overloaded, with the load poorly secured. This leads to many accidents and close calls on major highways. Except in the largest and most public incidents, the press is often censored and unable to report accurate details, making it difficult to estimate the true magnitude of the risks.

Public Transportation Conditions

Individuals often travel by public transportation (taxis, buses, subways). Taxis are plentiful throughout most of the day but can be hard to find during morning/evening rush hours. Seat belts are rarely used, and taxi drivers have been known to discourage passengers from wearing them. The average fare for a local ride in downtown Shenyang starts at 8 RMB and increases 1 RMB with every kilometer. Passengers should always insist that the cab driver use the meter. Passengers are cautioned to avoid traveling in "black taxis" that do not use

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meters or do not clearly display a taxi driver's license on the dashboard. Marked taxi cabs are generally safe. While taxi cabs come in a variety of colors, they are easily identifiable. In a limited number of cases, Americans have reported having their luggage stolen and some have reported being charged exorbitant fares. Luggage theft typically involves a taxi transporting individuals to/from the airport and the driver intentionally leaving the scene before bags have been unloaded.

Buses are frequent and convenient, with routes connecting many parts of the city. However, buses can be very crowded and become likely places for petty theft and pickpocketing. The use of public buses is strongly discouraged due to security issues presented by overcrowding.

Shenyang has two subway lines that run perpendicular, with Line 1 running east-west and Line 2 running north-south. Tickets for both the bus and subway cost about 2 RMB depending on the distance traveled. Google Maps has information for most of the bus and subway stops within the city.

The Dalian-Shenyang-Harbin high speed rail line (gao tie) opened in late 2012 and provides fast transportation to the southern port city of Dalian, Shenyang, and Changchun, as well as Harbin, the northern capital of Heilongjiang. Another high speed rail line linking Shenyang and Dandong opened in 2015. Additionally, fast trains (D trains) and hard-seat trains are available between these cities at a lower cost.

Terrorism Threat

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Post Terrorism Rating: Low

Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

China's domestic counterterrorism efforts remain primarily focused against the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM, the East Turkestan Islamic Party (ETIP)), a Pakistan-based terrorist group that seeks independence for the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) of northwest China. In public statements, government officials have singled out the "Three Evils" of extremism, separatism, and terrorism in Xinjiang as the main terrorist threat to the nation and characterized Uighur discontent as terrorist activity. Human rights organizations maintain that China uses counterterrorism as a pretext to suppress Uighurs, a predominantly Muslim ethnic group that comprises a large percentage of the population of the XUAR.

The threat from indigenous terrorist organizations is low for all of China. Indigenous terrorism is not a primary concern in northeast China, and there are no known terrorist organizations based or conducting operations in the region. However, in July 2015, a SWAT team component of the Shenyang Public Security Bureau reportedly killed three Uighur terrorism suspects from Xinjiang in a residential district of central Shenyang. The suspects had reportedly been under investigation in connection with potential ties to terrorist organizations.

Due to government control of media and information, threat information obtained from approved media sources is often limited. As a result, many look to questionable online media outlets, which often generate unverifiable threat reporting.

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Anti-American/Anti-Western Sentiment

Protests outside of official U.S. facilities occasionally occur, but gatherings are typically small (often consisting a single individual), relatively peaceful, and generally focused against the Chinese government. Political violence directed at Western organizations is uncommon.

Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

Post Political Violence Rating: Low

Civil Unrest

Geopolitical events often influence the occurrence of political demonstrations, but such demonstrations are rarely out of the control of Chinese security services. Police are generally quick to react to violent outbreaks using force to subdue any disturbances. Northeast China is characterized as more moderate in terms of political violence. Events that may spark political unrest in other parts of China do not necessarily resonate in the region.

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In September 2012, anti-Japanese sentiment peaked across China based on territorial disputes between the two governments. Anti-Japanese protests occurred in Shenyang and numbered close to 3,000 demonstrators. Chinese law enforcement authorities responded with slightly higher numbers, estimated at approximately 5,000 people. Although some local Japanese businesses and restaurants were targets of protests, the Japanese Consulate bore the brunt of the demonstrators' ire. Dozens of windows were damaged at the Consulate by demonstrators throwing paint, debris, and bottles over their perimeter wall, as Chinese People's Armed Police members took no action. There were no injuries reported.

Religious/Ethnic Violence

The government remains focused on maintaining social stability and preventing civil unrest over economic and social grievances. In recent years, the largest and most violent incidents have taken place in ethnic minority areas (Tibet, Xinjiang), where grievances over human rights abuses and discriminatory policies have resulted in spontaneous outbursts of violence targeted at government and Han Chinese interests. The frequency of large-scale violent incidents in Xinjiang has increased significantly in recent years.

Post-specific Concerns

Environmental Hazards

Earthquakes, floods, mudslides, and other natural disasters are common throughout China and can occur at any time with little/no warning. However, the largest environmental hazard to

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affect northeast China is the bitter cold, with temperatures often well below zero Fahrenheit for several months, and heavy snowstorms that may leave motorists stranded and bring cities to a standstill.

Other natural disasters include the threat of typhoons (hurricanes) and tsunamis along the coastal region. In August 2011, Typhoon Muifa brushed the coast near Dalian, threatening several chemical plants in the area. The typhoon resulted in mudslides near Dalian that cut power to the local area. Additionally, highways in the area were closed due to flooding, and trains were suspended for nearly two days. Likewise, tremors from the 2011 earthquake that devastated Japan were felt as far north as the Heilongjiang province.

Critical Infrastructure Concerns

Industrial accidents occur, but reports on severity are often conflicting. Despite this, there have been several high-profile reports of industrial accidents leading to contamination of drinking water or other issues in recent years.

Economic Espionage/Intellectual Property Thefts

Security personnel carefully watch foreign visitors and may place them under surveillance. Hotel rooms (including meeting rooms), offices, cars, taxis, telephones, Internet usage, and fax machines may be monitored onsite or remotely. Personal possessions in hotel rooms may be searched without consent/knowledge. Business travelers should be particularly mindful that trade secrets, negotiating positions, and other business sensitive information may be

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taken and shared with competitors, counterparts, and/or Chinese regulatory and legal entities.

U.S. Customs officials have the authority to seize suspect goods and impose fines on travelers caught attempting to enter the U.S. with counterfeit items.

Privacy Concerns

All visitors should be aware that they have no expectation of privacy in public/private locations. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates regularly receive reports of human/technical monitoring of U.S. private businessmen and visiting Americans. The areas around U.S. and other foreign diplomatic facilities and residences are under overt physical and video surveillance. Dozens of security personnel are posted outside of facilities and around residences, while video cameras are visible throughout diplomatic quarters (offices and residential neighborhoods). Overt microphones and video cameras are common in taxis.

All hotel rooms and offices are considered to be subject to on-site or remote technical monitoring. Hotel rooms, residences, and offices may be accessed without the occupants' consent/knowledge. Elevators and public areas of housing compounds are also under continuous surveillance.

Embassy employees are warned not to discuss sensitive information in their homes, vehicles, or offices. The Consulate strongly encourages members of the private sector to take similar

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precautions to safeguard sensitive, personal, and/or proprietary information.

All means of communication (telephones, mobile phones, faxes, e-mails, text messages) are likely monitored. The government has access to the infrastructure operated by the limited number of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and wireless providers in China. Wireless access to the Internet in major metropolitan areas is becoming more common. As such, the authorities can more easily access official and personal computers. The government has publicly declared that it regularly monitors private e-mail and Internet browsing through cooperation with local ISPs. Some bloggers are subject to particular scrutiny, as such activity is often carefully monitored and depending upon the subject matter, may be blocked. Common Western social media websites that are blocked in China include You Tube, Facebook, and Twitter.

Personnel-Background Concerns

The government may “detain” Chinese citizens who may have status in the U.S. or who are Chinese-American, particularly in cases where there are contractual or business disputes. This is more of a problem along the North Korean border where many U.S. non-governmental organizations operate, leading to the possibility of detention by the North Korean government if members are found on the wrong side of the border.

Drug-related Crimes

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Drug-related crimes have not been an issue. The government is concerned about domestic drug use, and enforcement efforts are widespread. The government has been active in conducting drug busts in 2015 and has seized an unprecedented amount of drugs. The government is also making examples of high-profile people ensnared in drug busts. Even so, drugs (marijuana, stimulants) are easily accessible to foreigners, especially around bars and night clubs frequented by expatriates. However, travelers are advised not to participate in the use of any illegal drugs.

Based on local reports, northeast China has experienced an increase in the drug trade. Local media has reported that criminal elements are transporting illegal substances (methamphetamine) from North Korea (DPRK) for distribution in China and other countries throughout the region. The focus of these reports has been on foreigners (South Korean nationals) involved in the illegal drug trade, but elements of the DPRK regime have also been credibly accused of involvement.

Police Response

Security forces are better trained and equipped in Beijing and other first-tier cities where authorities spend millions of dollars on security-related infrastructure. Local police are semi-effective at deterring crime; most responses to alarms/emergency calls are sufficiently prompt if the police are informed that the victim is a Westerner. In some cases, local police authorities will serve as a mediator between the victim and criminal to agree upon financial compensation (sometimes in lieu of jail time).

China gives the police the authority to detain and deport foreigners for a wide variety of

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reasons. Travelers who do not have their passport with them may be taken in for questioning.

How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment

If an American is arrested, the U.S.-China Consular Convention requires Chinese authorities to notify the U.S. Embassy or Consulate General of the arrest within four days. If a traveler holds the citizenship of another country and entered China using a passport of that country, authorities are not required to notify the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Typically, the police will not allow anyone other than a Consular Officer to visit the traveler during the initial detention period. Bail is rarely granted, and people can be subject to detention for many months before being granted a trial.

Crime Victim Assistance

Police response for foreign victims of crime depends upon the type of infraction, where it transpired, and the social status of the victim (private citizen, diplomat, VIP). If U.S. citizens become the victim of a crime, they should contact the police by dialing 110. The English-language capabilities of the emergency service personnel will vary significantly. They may also contact American Citizen Services (ACS) at the Embassy or Consulate for assistance. ACS officers can recommend appropriate medical facilities, provide contact information for local attorneys, notify family members, and explain how to transfer funds.

Medical Emergencies

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Medical care is improving in many urban areas, though it continues to lag in the northeast. Because Western medical centers are not available in the northeast, U.S. citizens are advised to seek out the VIP section ("gao gan bing fang") at large public hospitals where there are more likely to be Western-trained physicians and more modern medical equipment.

In rural areas, only rudimentary medical facilities are generally available. Medical personnel in rural areas are often poorly trained and may have little medical equipment or access to medications. Rural clinics are often reluctant to accept responsibility for treating foreigners, even in emergency situations.

Both municipal and private ambulance service remain substandard. Response time is typically very slow, and transport to the nearest hospital can take a considerable amount of time due to congested traffic conditions. There is no tradition of yielding to emergency vehicles. Therefore, injured or seriously ill Americans may be required to take taxis or other vehicles to the nearest major hospital rather than waiting for ambulances to arrive. Ambulances generally do not carry sophisticated medical equipment, and ambulance personnel may have little/no medical training.

Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

International SOS maintains a 24-hour alarm center for visitors. While SOS is not present in Shenyang, SOS representatives can advise on the availability of care in most urban areas.

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Collect calls are accepted. Contact information is as follows:

Beijing: (inside China): 400-818-0767; (outside China): 86-10-6462-9100

Hong Kong: 852-2528-9900

USA: 215-942-8226

Global Doctor is the primary emergency medical assistance firm in Shenyang. This facility has a 24-hour alarm center and has expertise in arranging for emergency medical assistance throughout China, with services including ambulances, hospitalization, and/or evacuation by commercial or charter aircraft. Assistance is provided on a pay per service basis. The clinic accepts credit cards and cash in Chinese currency.

Address: No. 54 Bangjiang Road, Dadong District, located in the Deji Hospital

Tel: 2433-0678; 2433-0678 (emergencies)

Medical Director: Peter Burgos, MD

ShenYang VITUP hospital is a branch of China VITUP Healthcare Holding Inc. registered in Nevada. This facility provides medical services, including Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) treatment, pediatric consultation, and chronic disease management. Advanced medical equipment, such as GE MRIs, Digital Radiography, and Color Ultrasound are also available. Advance appointments are preferable. The clinic accepts credit card and cash payments.

Address: No. 19, Wenyi Road, Shenhe District, Royal Plaza International Club

Tel: 024-8396-8850 ext. 6021

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Mobile Phone: 18609822595 (Ms. Vivian Zhang)

POC: Vivian Zhang

Shengjing Hospital of China Medical University is close to the Consulate District and is able to provide limited VIP care. The amount of paperwork is overwhelming and facilities may not meet Western expectations for cleanliness. Patients must pay cash prior to receiving care. Mr. Nao is the hospital's medical liaison and can help American citizens navigate the system. This is also the hospital designated for pediatric care.

Address: No. 36, Sanhao Street, Heping District, Shenyang, Liaoning

The hospital is located on Wenhua Lu and just west of Nan San Jing Jie (the street located east of the Consulate). The emergency room is in the building to the right as you face the main building and is clearly marked.

Telephone: 024-96615

POC: Dr. Wu

The First Hospital of China Medical University is across the street from the Zhongshan Crowne Plaza Hotel. The emergency entrance is on the north side near Mao circle.

Address: No. 155 North Nanjing Street, Heping District, Shenyang, Liaoning

Telephone: 024-961200

POC: Dr. Pan Bochen

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The People's Hospital of Liaoning Province is the hospital designated for cardiac emergencies.

Address: No. 33 Wenyi Road, Shenhe District, Shenyang, Liaoning

Telephone: 2401-6628

Deputy Medical Director: Dr. Christy Feng

Eye Doctor – The No. 4 People's Hospital of China Medical University

Dr. Li Hongyang was trained in the United States.

Address: No.11 Xinhua Road, Heping District, Shenyang

Telephone: 024-6203-7317

Recommended Air Ambulance Services

Air ambulance service varies by city. Medical evacuation by air is expensive, costing approximately US\$60,000-100,000 per flight depending upon the patient's condition and final medevac destination.

International SOS is the main Western air ambulance provider along China's east coast.

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MEDEX also provides regional air ambulance services; its representatives can be contacted at: <http://www.medexassist.com/>.

Recommended Insurance Posture

Visitors are strongly encouraged to purchase medical evacuation insurance prior to traveling. Payment of hospital and other expenses is the patient's responsibility. Before you go abroad, learn what medical services your health insurance will cover overseas. If your health insurance policy provides coverage outside the U.S., remember to carry both your insurance policy identity card as proof of such insurance and a claim form. Although many health insurance companies will pay "customary and reasonable" hospital costs abroad, very few will pay for your medical evacuation back to the U.S.

CDC Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

For additional information on vaccines and health guidance, please visit the CDC at: http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/china?s_cid=ncezid-dgmq-travel-double-001.

OSAC Country Council Information

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Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai all have active OSAC Country Councils. The initial point of contact for each Council is the Regional Security Officer. OSAC can provide an introduction for any organizations that are interested in attending future meetings. To reach OSAC's East Asia-Pacific team, please email OSACEAP@state.gov.

U.S. Consulate Location and Contact Information

Consulate Address and Hours of Operation

U.S. Consulate Shenyang

Address: #52, 14 Wei Road, Heping District, Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China 110003

Mon-Fri, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (closed on U.S. and Chinese holidays)

Consulate Contact Numbers

Consulate Operator: 86-24-2322-1198

Regional Security Officer, Dax Moss: 86-24-2322-2047

Medical Unit: 86-24-2322-1198 ext. 8155

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Consular Affairs: 86-24-2322-2748

After hours emergencies, please call 86-137-0988-9307

Marine Post One: 86-24-2322-1198 ext. 4444

Email: ShenyangACS@state.gov

Fax: 86-24-2322-2374

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

Nearby Posts

Embassy Beijing: <http://beijing.usembassy.gov/>

Consulate Chengdu: <http://chengdu.usconsulate.gov/>

Consulate Guangzhou: <http://guangzhou.usconsulate.gov/>

Consulate Wuhan: <http://wuhan.usconsulate.gov/>

Consulate Shanghai: <http://shanghai.usconsulate.gov/>

Consulate Guidance

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For the latest security and other information, Americans should regularly monitor the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs at: <http://travel.state.gov>, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings can be found, along with important information for Americans who face emergencies abroad. U.S. citizens are reminded to register with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate by entering their travel itinerary and contact information to: <https://step.state.gov/step/>. In case of difficulties registering online, please contact the closest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for assistance.

Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Scams

Crimes and scams in Shenyang involve street crime and counterfeit currency. Additionally, counterfeit products are readily available, but it is illegal to import them into the U.S.

Situational Awareness Best Practices

Travelers are strongly encouraged to be aware of their surroundings. Continued vigilance is necessary to reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime. As a general rule, lesser developed areas in major cities have a higher rate of crime. Statistically, more crimes of opportunity transpire during early morning hours; for example, individuals who frequent bars, nightclubs, and similar establishments are more likely to be involved in physical altercations after midnight.

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The Consulate recommends that visitors disperse money in more than one location on their person, taking care to separate small and large denominations. Men should place their wallets in front pockets, while women should drape the shoulder straps of purses across their body, keeping them in view and under positive control. Travelers with backpacks should maintain positive control and avoid placing expensive or hard to replace items inside.

Public payphones are becoming less common in urban areas. The Consulate recommends that long-term visitors purchase cellular telephones and that short-term travelers contact their cellular phone provider to determine if it provides coverage.

Travelers are encouraged to make copies of their passport photo page, visa, and credit card numbers (to include telephone contact information in the event the card is stolen); these copies should be stored in their hotel or residence in the event the actual items are stolen.

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