



FLIGHT

PASSPORT

VISA

INFORMATION

Panama: Marine Ecology and Blue Carbon Conservation  
in the Pacific & Caribbean

Summer 2024

## GENERAL FLIGHT INFORMATION

This document is designed to assist you in making your travel arrangements. An essential part of your preparation for studying abroad includes obtaining the proper travel documentation for your international stay. Please read this document carefully to determine if you need to take action *immediately* in preparation for travel.

You are responsible for booking your own travel to and from Panama City, Panama (PTY). In addition, it is your responsibility to read and understand the terms and conditions for your airline ticket(s), to reconfirm your flight reservations in advance of the day of travel, and to be aware of airline and TSA regulations for baggage size and contents. SIT is not responsible for additional charges you may incur as a result of airline schedule changes or other travel-related reasons.

As you book your flights, we encourage you to purchase tickets on airlines with flexible cancellation and postponement policies.

Individual countries may have specific entry requirements related to COVID-19 (e.g., providing proof of vaccine, providing a negative COVID-19 test prior to travel or testing and/or quarantining upon arrival, etc.). Please stay up to date on airline and country specific regulations and refer to CDC guidelines related to preventing the contraction and spread of COVID-19. **Once you have finalized your travel arrangements, please log into your application portal and enter your itinerary information and any notes about your arrival in the *Travel Information* section of your application.** This will ensure that SIT staff knows when to expect you. Please submit your travel itinerary no later than 30 days prior to your program's start date.

## AIRLINE INFORMATION

We have been advised that the following airlines usually provide service to the meeting location for this program: United, Copa, Delta, American, Iberia, Avianca, and KLM.

You can, of course, travel on any airline of your choice; however, please note that regardless of your transportation carrier, you are expected to be at your meeting location at the required time.

When you first arrive and pass through customs and immigration, officials will request that you show proof that you have confirmed plans to depart their country at a designated time in the future; therefore, you must purchase a round-trip itinerary into and out of Panama. Booking a round-trip ticket will likely be more affordable than purchasing two separate one-way itineraries. Even if you later decide to change your return flight, the fees for making that change will oftentimes still amount to less than the overall price of two separate tickets. If you believe that you will want to travel independently after your SIT Study Abroad program has concluded, we recommend that you estimate the approximate amount of extra time you will need and then book your flights accordingly.



## ARRIVAL INFORMATION

You are expected to meet your group at the following date, time, and location:

**Program Arrival Date:** Sunday, June 2, 2024

**Arrival Airport:** Tocumen International Airport-Panama City (PTY)

**Group Meeting Time:** 3:00 PM

**Group Meeting Location:** Outside of baggage claim on the north side of the airport.

**Group Will Be Met By:** SIT Program Staff

**Notes:** SIT Program staff need travel itinerary information 30 days prior to the program start date in order to reserve transportation and make appropriate arrangements to meet students at the airport. Students who do not submit their travel itineraries 30 days prior to the program start will be provided with taxi service information to meet program staff at the program site instead of the airport.

**NOTE: If you are unable to find suitable travel arrangements which will allow you to arrive at the specified date and time, please contact your admissions counselor as soon as possible—BEFORE you make any reservations.**

Arrival prior to the start of the program is strongly discouraged. No SIT Study Abroad staff will be able to assist you with any matter should you arrive before the program's commencement due to personal travel or for any other reason. Please note that medical insurance, provided to you through SIT Study Abroad for the duration of your program, is not in effect either before the program start date or after the program end date.

## DEPARTURE INFORMATION

You are expected to plan your departure for the following date, time, and location:

**Program Departure Date:** Sunday, July 14, 2024

**Departure Airport:** Tocumen International Airport-Panama City (PTY)

**Earliest Departure Time:** Anytime

It is possible to remain in-country after the program ends. Please note that the program is no longer responsible for you after the end of the scheduled program.

## PASSPORT INFORMATION

To participate in this program, you will need a signed **passport that is valid for at least six months after the end of the program**.

- If necessary, apply for a new passport or renewal immediately.
- **US Citizens:** consult US State Department information at [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html) for passport processing times and application procedures.
- **Non-US Citizens:** contact your embassy or consulate.

You may need to expedite your passport application in order to meet visa application deadlines. Please check with your admissions counselor at [studyabroad@sit.edu](mailto:studyabroad@sit.edu) or (888) 272-7881 to discuss whether you should expedite your application.

## VISA INFORMATION

A visa is an official endorsement from a foreign government permitting entry into and travel within a particular country or region for a specified period of time. A visa may be glued or stamped directly into an applicant's passport or be on a separate paper or insert.

### Students with US passports:

For this program, students with US passports will enter the country with a tourist status. Upon arrival in Panama, you will be issued a 180-day tourist visa. When passing through Panamanian immigration, you will be asked to provide an in-country mailing address. Please use the mailing address listed in your "Academic Director Letter" document.

SIT students will not be required to obtain a "student visa" for Panama because you will not be directly enrolled in a Panamanian university. Instead, your time in the country is legally considered to be an "educational excursion" ("excursión educativa"), permissible under a tourist status.

### Students with non-US passports:

Students without a US passport may be subject to additional or different requirements for obtaining a visa or meeting other conditions of entry into the country or countries listed above. Many countries require individuals to apply for visas in person at the relevant embassy or consulate located in their country of citizenship. We strongly recommend that you contact the embassy of each country the program will be traveling to very early in the process to confirm visa and/or entry requirements applicable to your country of citizenship and determine next steps while allowing plenty of time to apply. If the foreign consulate permits non-US passport holders to apply for the required visa from within the United States, applicants are encouraged to contact Travia Visa Services. As an experienced visa agent working closely with a number of SIT programs, Travia may be able to assist you in your visa application process. A service discount is available by entering "SIT" as the corporate code in your Travia online application. It is your responsibility to confirm and complete the visa application process particular to your situation, and to keep your admissions counselor informed.



## GENERAL VISA AND PASSPORT NOTES FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

- You are responsible for complying with all visa procedures and deadlines.
- Keep in mind that procedures and fees are subject to change at the discretion of the embassy or consulate with jurisdiction over your application. Students should double-check visa procedures prior to sending materials to ensure accuracy.
- Issuance of visas is at the sole discretion of the applicable consulate or embassy; SIT assumes no responsibility for the issuance or denial of any visa.
- Please make a copy of the first two pages of your passport (one of which has your photo) and give these photocopies to your academic director once you arrive.
- Students are responsible for their own passports. The program may hold passports for students when at the program site and when on excursion. Students should have passports on their person during their field project. Throughout the term, students should keep a copy of their passport and visa on their person at all times.
- If you are planning to travel to other countries before or after the program or your transit route involves connections in other countries, check with the embassies of those countries before you leave the US regarding visas, documents, and/or immunizations required. Please contact your admissions counselor as soon as possible to discuss the feasibility of your plans.



## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the US office of SIT Study Abroad at 802-258-3212 or toll-free in the US at 888-272-7881 and ask to speak to your admissions counselor, who is available Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM–5:00 PM (US East Coast time) to assist you.