

Crime Prevention News

March 2020



Spring Break Have Fun & Be Safe

Traveling internationally- At this time the University has restricted all Columbia related international travel. Mindful both of the University's service mission and of its need to safeguard against the COVID-19 threat, the University has determined to suspend all student related [Columbia Travel](#) abroad until further notice. Additionally, all Columbia affiliates are strongly urged to postpone any non-essential international travel at present. Please visit [Columbia Preparedness](#) for additional information.

Staying Stateside or Local:

Before leaving • Secure your dorm room or apartment. • Unplug all appliances. • Make sure all windows are closed and locked. • Leave a copy of your travel itinerary with someone back home.

Use the buddy system- There is safety in numbers and it is best to do things as a group. Try to have at least three members of your group with you at all times when leaving your hotel. Don't leave a friend behind. If you go out together, come home together!

Drinking- If you are of legal drinking age and you do decide to drink, do so responsibly. Reports indicate that 98% of spring breakers who suffered injuries were intoxicated at the time. Note also that drinking to intoxication leaves a person more susceptible to becoming the victim of a sexual assault or other serious crime. Keep your drink in sight at all times. If you must leave an unfinished drink to go to the bathroom or dance floor, discard it and purchase a new one when you return. Leaving a drink unattended gives anyone (including bar personnel) the opportunity to tamper with it.

DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE- Use a designated driver or choose public transportation. The most important spring break safety tip we can give you is to ask you to use common sense. Trust your instincts! If someone, or someplace, doesn't feel right to you, chances are it isn't. With these safety tips in mind, stay safe, and enjoy your sun-filled spring break! Please watch this short video of a special report from CNN on Spring Break- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UhzYX9ubZQ>



Fake Job Check Scams on the Rise

Scammers know that finding a job can be tough. To trick people looking for honest work, scammers advertise where real employers and job placement firms do. They also make upbeat promises about your chances of employment, and virtually all of them ask you to pay them for their services before you get a job. But the promise of a job isn't the same thing as a job. If you have to pay for the promise, it's likely a scam. In some of the reported incidents, they send you a check (fraudulent) via priority mail or even email you a check, the check is for more than what you agreed to, then they ask you to deposit it and send them back the difference. You deposit the check, send them the difference and now you get a notice from your bank that the check you deposited was fraudulent and now you're out of the money you sent them for the difference. This does not include a bank fee for the fraudulent check you deposited, which can also affect your credit report. If you've been targeted by a job scam, [file a complaint with the FTC](#). (Federal Trade Commission) For problems with an employment-service firm, contact the appropriate state licensing board (if these firms must be licensed in your state), [your state Attorney General](#), and [your local consumer protection agency](#).