



2024 TRAVEL TIPS & IMPORTANT TRAVEL INFORMATION

Please, Read the Following & View Your Provided Itinerary for Bus Times & Roommates' Names

ALL TRAVELERS:

- ✓ No later than **3-Days PRIOR** to your arrival at the hotel, each traveler (bus travelers or hotel only) will be required to **submit their completed and SIGNED Hotel Credit Card Authorization Form online via the link >> <https://form.jotform.com/241026755491154>**. This form is **required** by the hotel in case of any hotel/room damage fees. *This form must be completed by the cardholder.*
 - Each traveler must pre-authorize a minimum of \$50.00 and **if there are no damages or extra cleaning fees reported** by the hotel for your room, then the pre-authorized amount will be released after check-out.
 - *Any traveler that arrives without their completed/signed credit card authorization form for the hotel security deposit will be DENIED hotel check-in and will not receive their room key.* *If you misplace your hotel credit card authorization form (included in your EMAILED Departure Packet), you may download a copy from your online account at GradWeek.com, under the "Travel Documents" section.

BUS TRAVELERS SPECIFIC INFORMATION:

- ✓ **You must arrive at your designated pickup location** listed on your itinerary and check-in a minimum of **30-MINUTES BEFORE** the designated **departure time** on your itinerary.
- ✓ You **must** have a **valid Photo ID**, to check-in with GradWeek Staff, and board the **bus number listed on your itinerary**. **If you still have a balance due on your account, you will be DENIED boarding and hotel check-in.*
 - **Bus Baggage Allowance:** 1 suitcase to check-in and 1 very small carry-on, per traveler.

HOTEL-ONLY TRAVELERS (NO BUS) SPECIFIC INFORMATION:

- ✓ **Mandatory Student Driver Waiver** – Make sure that you have **submitted your signed copy of this form** (previously emailed to you and can be accessed online by clicking here >> <https://form.jotform.com/240747631841155>), **BEFORE** your departure date or you will be denied check-in.
- ✓ **DO NOT go to the hotel first! Check-in starts no sooner than 4pm and no later than 6pm.** All travelers must go to the **SpringHill Suites Hotel (12513 Front Beach Rd, Panama City Beach, FL 32407)** for hotel check-in with GradWeek Staff to go through your mandatory Welcome Orientation and receive your room key.
- ✓ All travelers arriving by car **cannot** follow any of the buses to the destination and **will be required to check in with GradWeek Staff once they arrive to the hotel.**
 - If you miss the check-in timeframe, you **MUST** call or text **on-site** GradWeek Staff at (225) 505-1214 to make special arrangements. If you try to bypass the check-in and Welcome Orientation procedure, your parents will be notified and will be responsible for your return home.
 - The hotel will only provide one parking pass, per car/per room.

Bus Company's - Restrictions & Expectations – Everyone is on the GradWeek trip to have a great time, but please be respectful of those around you. Especially the people of the city that you are visiting and the resort/hotel that you are staying at. Every year several travelers never make it to their destination or leave early due to their behavior prior to or during their trip. **Misbehaving at the bus pick-up location could lead to being denied boarding.** Rude or poor behavior during the bus trip will also not be tolerated and may necessitate removal from the program, your parents being notified, and being responsible for your return home. **No eating sunflower seeds, gummy snacks, or gum chewing is allowed on the bus. No smoking of any kind including but not limited to vapes, e-cigarettes, etc. In addition, no coolers/ice chests are permitted on the bus. ONLY resealable twist-top drinks are allowed.** Travelers must stay seated unless moving to/from the bathroom. **Violating any of the bus rules will result in termination of the bus portion of your trip and it will be the travelers' responsibility to find their own transportation.**

Getting Ready! – To help you decide what essentials to pack, check [Panama City Beach, Florida's](#) weather forecast online a few days before your trip. The dress themes for this year's Panama City Beach events are – Barbie and Ken (dress in pink), Stoplight Party (dress in green for single, yellow for undecided, or red for taken), Neon Night (dress in neon colors), and Mardi Gras (dress in purple, green or gold). All event themes are optional and subject to change.

Spending Money – We recommend using a debit or credit card and **taking a small amount of cash**. It is always advisable to let your bank know where you will be traveling before your departure. **You can walk to many locations** but if you want, you can take Uber, Lyft, or a Taxi (so plan to have cash on hand for Taxis). **Traveling in groups is the safest and most economical way to go.** The amount of money that you take for your trip is up to you; but \$350 to \$500 is recommended for souvenirs, Action Pac events, transportation, and meals.

Day of Departure – **Do not be late! You are 100% responsible for your own transportation to your bus pick-up location (listed on your trip itinerary) and must arrive no less than a minimum of 30-minutes prior to your scheduled departure time to check-in with GradWeek Staff.** We recommend looking up directions to your bus pick-up location in advance before your trip to ensure you know where to go and arrive in plenty of time for bus check-in.

Hotel Only Package Travelers – Your trip package DOES NOT include bus transportation. So, **if you purchased a HOTEL ONLY PACKAGE** then you are responsible for arranging your own rides/transportation to and from your hotel in Panama City Beach.

At Your Hotel – Once you arrive at your hotel, make sure to retrieve any of your luggage from the bus (unless you are a Hotel Only traveler) and look for a GradWeek Staff member wearing a GradWeek shirt & ID Badge, and they will direct you where to go next. You will be given a full **Welcome Orientation by a GradWeek Staff member.** They will check you in, explain any events or activities that may be held during your stay, and

go over some basic guidelines and rules to make sure your trip is great and worry-free. Enclosed in your Departure Packet you will find an Action Pac flyer that lists the various activities and price options as well as the application form (which is required to be filled out by the traveler to purchase). **Action Pacs are available for on-site purchase only at the GradWeek Welcome Orientation by CASH ONLY.**

GradWeek Staff – While our staff is available at your destination 24/7, the Hotel Staff can help you with daily requests, such as more towels, more pillows, and any questions about the hotel, rooming, nearby shopping, restaurants, etc. **GradWeek Staff are NOT chaperones!** The GradWeek Staff are at the student hotel and available to travelers on-site 24/7 to ensure the program is running smoothly, which includes, coordinating any GW events, Welcome Orientation, going over rules, providing a Destination Guide with an area map, **and most importantly, will assist with any serious emergencies or roommate/hotel situations on-site.** If a traveler needs assistance while on the hotel property, please reach out to on-site Staff, and be patient with both GradWeek and Hotel Staff, as rude behavior will not be tolerated.

Calling Home – Parents want to know you have arrived safely. So, we encourage you to please make either a quick call, send a text, email, etc. home to say you have arrived and to provide them with your room number is **highly recommended.** It is very expensive to make calls from your hotel room and is not recommended.

In-room Security Box and Room Inspection – Once you check-in to your room, we strongly recommend that you **use your in-room safety deposit box** (1 per room) to store all your valuables, such as your travel documents, cash, cell phone, tablet, etc. This will ensure that the items are securely locked away when not in use. Take a few minutes to check that everything in your room is in good shape and working order. Please **contact the GradWeek Staff or the Hotel's Front Desk personnel IMMEDIATELY IF you see anything broken, damaged, or not working properly,** to ensure you will not be held responsible for preexisting damages. If the hotel reports any room or property damage from your room, ALL travelers in the room will be held responsible for paying for those damages regardless of who in the room was at fault. Room doors should NOT be left open and unsecure. Please be aware that the included travel insurance **DOES NOT** cover you for loss of personal items such as cell phones, tablets, etc. If **ANY** incidences of theft occur on-site, it MUST be reported to the **hotel first, and prior to departure home!** While GradWeek will help assist any local authorities if theft or loss occurs, we are not responsible for the cost of any cell phone replacements or other personal items.

Ahhh...Paradise! – This is your time to relax and have a fun time. **This does not mean you can do anything you want!** All local laws are strictly enforced in and outside of the hotel, and they **will not tolerate illegal activity, disorderly conduct** (including underage drinking), or property damage. Travelers caught doing any of the above will be required to pay for any incurred damages and risk being evicted from their hotel at their own expense, with no exceptions! GradWeek is not responsible for travelers that lose all or a portion of their vacation due to their behavior issues, violations, illegal actions, or damages and will not be entitled to a refund. Be smart, behave appropriately, be respectful to the locals and other guests, and stay safe by traveling in a group whenever leaving your hotel. **We highly recommend using the buddy system!** Please go out in groups, especially when going back to your hotel at night. Always remember that there is safety in numbers, and it is best to always tell a friend if you are leaving the hotel and/or an activity before everyone else. **No traveler can leave the trip early without checking out with one of the on-site GradWeek Staff Members.*

Policy on Alcohol Consumption – The legal drinking age in Florida is 21! GradWeek does not promote or condone the use of alcohol by its travelers! Students caught drinking on the hotel premises will be evicted by the hotel immediately with **no refund**, and your parents will be notified, and you will be responsible for making new hotel accommodations and arranging your own transportation home! Each participant chooses whether to follow the rules. All local and federal laws are strictly enforced, and you will be held responsible if caught violating those laws.

Returning Home – GradWeek Staff will post the time you need to be ready to board the buses (or leave the property for Hotel Only travelers) for your return home in the lobby of the hotel the night before departure. However, before leaving the hotel, your room must be picked up and cleared of all trash. All registered guests in that room must wait until GradWeek Staff or Hotel Staff have inspected the room for any damage. Should there be any hotel/room damage, you and your roommates will need to proceed to the hotel front desk immediately to take care of the damage costs and pay for any other incidental charges not included in your package price. Before checking out of your room, take a quick look around to make sure you have all your belongings. Once this is done, you will be given the “Ok” to board the bus for home. Make sure your luggage gets loaded on your bus and always keep your valuables with you. **GradWeek is not responsible for any items left behind.** Double-check that you have all your belongings before deboarding the bus once you arrive at your drop-off location.

How to use the Emergency Medical Coverage – Even though over 95% of our travelers do not encounter any sickness or injury, it still may occur. If sickness or injury occurs that requires medical attention, GradWeek or Hotel Staff can direct you to the medical facility at your destination. The travel insurance plan through Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) does assist U.S. destination (domestic) travelers with trip interruption, however, it does not provide coverage for medical sickness, security evacuation, or personal property/financial instrument. **For policy questions or to receive assistance while traveling, you must call (800) 303-8120, or email claimhelp@mycisi.com and provide policy # GLM-N-18660234-DT.** The insurance agent will guide you through the policy, and if needed, help you file a claim for reimbursement for your approved medical costs up to the limits of the plan.

Money Wire Transfers – Should you run out of money at your destination, GradWeek provides a money wire transfer service for those students who may need additional funds on-site. This service is only available Monday through Friday from 8:30 am-3:00 pm (PST), and the required form can be accessed from our website at www.gradweek.com. The Wire Transfer Authorization form is located under the **ABOUT US** section, then click on **RESOURCES**. Please print and fill out the form completely and **EMAIL** it to info@istours.com **prior to 3:00 pm** Pacific Standard Time (PST), Monday through Friday. The traveler receiving the money on-site can pick up their cash with their photo ID from our 24-hour GradWeek Staff **after 7:00 pm (Florida local time).** The wire limit is \$300.00 and there is a \$25.00 service charge per wire transfer.

Parents Wishing to Contact Their Son/Daughter – **PLEASE READ THE “HIGH IMPORTANCE” INSERT INCLUDED IN YOUR DEPARTURE PACKET!** 

Informational Documents – Please visit our website at www.gradweek.com under the **ABOUT US** section, then click on **RESOURCES** to view all of our valuable travel information and forms we provide including Preparing for Travel Letter, Travel Tips, Destination Guide, Action Pac, and Travel Protection Insurance. ***REMEMBER** – If you misplace your itinerary, you can always reprint a copy of your Trip Itinerary by logging in to your online account at www.gradweek.com and clicking on TRIPS >> [TRIP ITINERARY](#).

HOTEL CONTACT INFORMATION

SpringHill Suites Panama City Beach Resort
12513 Front Beach Road / Panama City Beach, FL 32407

Phone: (850) 230-6004
Website: www.springhillsuites.com