Winter Break Safety Information

As Notre Dame students wrap up this semester, many students living off campus will be heading home for the long winter break.

As the semester comes to an end, you may be considering what to take with you over the extra long break — but don’t forget what you’re leaving behind. If you need to store a vehicle on campus during Winter Break, please park in the Fischer Faculty/Staff Lot. If that lot is full, you may park in the Lake Lot along the center or east side of the lake lot.

All University students, including off-campus and graduate students, may utilize these parking lots to store vehicles during Winter Break. Vehicles must have a 2020-2021 Notre Dame student permit properly displayed on the inside front windshield on the driver's side. We encourage you to follow vehicle manufacturer recommendations to prepare your vehicle and battery for long-term storage. We also recommend you leave no personal items inside your vehicle. Remember to lock your doors too! All student vehicles must be moved back to student lots by Wednesday, Feb. 10. Anyone with questions or concerns may contact Parking Services at (574) 631-5053 or parking@nd.edu.

Here are some additional safety tips to consider before leaving the area.

**Apartment or House.**

- Secure living areas before leaving campus for winter break.
- Unplug appliances and clean out refrigerators.
- Secure and hide, if possible, any valuables being left. Better yet, take them with you.
- Make sure all windows and doors to living areas are secure before leaving.
- For sliding glass doors, install a horizontal locking bar. A broom handle in the track at the bottom of the door can serve the same purpose.
Never attempt to hide your apartment key outside the apartment. Burglars know the hiding places.

Buy one or two inexpensive timers and program them to have lights in your apartment turn on and off during hours of darkness. It creates the appearance that your residence is occupied over break.

Consider getting your mail delivery stopped during the long break. Resume delivery when you return back to school.

**Traveling by Car**

- Check your vehicle’s fluid levels and make sure the tires, including the spare are in good condition and properly inflated.
- Have your route planned in advance.
- Carry emergency items in your car including a flashlight with fresh batteries, blankets, jumper cables and a flare or reflective triangle.
- If you become sleepy while driving, find a safe place to park for a short nap. Caffeine-containing beverages may improve alertness, but only for a short time.
- You should always allow yourself a quarter-tank of gas or more.
- When passing an exit, repeat the name of the exit showing on the sign. This will help you to remember the proximity of the nearest crossroad if you need to call for help. The easier you make it for the police or an emergency road service to find you the less time you leave yourself vulnerable.

**Traveling by Air**

- Make sure you have your photo id with you at all times.
- Reconfirm your flight directly with the airlines 24-48 hours prior to departure.
- Plan to arrive at least an hour and a half prior to departure for your flight.
- Use luggage tags to clearly identify your bags. Use only your last name, first initial and phone number.
• Don’t pack valuables in checked luggage. Always carry valuables along with some overnight necessities in a carry-on bag.
• Never leave your luggage unattended.
• Watch out for “staged” distractions at the airport, e.g., people arguing, people asking you questions, “bumping” into you. These distractions create opportunities for pickpockets.

Avoid Potential Fraud

Scammers know that students are leaving for break and often will try to take advantage of students. Some of the most recent types of scams involve a caller advising the victim of several scenarios, including: their name has come up in a drug investigation, their bank account was used to launder money, a warrant has been issued in their name or someone has stolen their identity. Please know that NDPD or any other police department does not make notifications in this manner and would never ask for a credit card, money transfers, gift cards, or other personal information over the phone or to meet in a remote location. In certain instances, the caller has also asked victims to send personal photographs. Never send photographs as scammers will use them to extort money.

Scammers often alter caller ID numbers to make it look like an actual agency is calling. The callers use titles and fake badge numbers to appear legitimate. They may use the victim’s name, address, and other personal information to make the call sound official. Sometimes merely calling the number listed may result in a charge to your phone service.

Scammers May:

Often pretend to be someone you trust, such as a government official, a family member, a charity, or a company you do business with. Don’t send money or give out personal information in response to an unexpected request — whether it comes as a text, a phone call, or an email.
Leave a voicemail message for you to call them.
Call to demand immediate payment without first mailing you a bill.
Demand that you pay without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal.
Require you to use a specific payment method, such as a prepaid debit card or gift cards.
Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
Threaten to bring in local police or other law enforcement agencies to have you arrested.

Preventative Measures:

Verify the claims by contacting a trusted source.
Before you give up your money or personal information, talk to someone you trust. Sometimes callers will want you to make decisions in a hurry. They might even threaten you. Slow down, check out the story, do an online search, consult an expert — or just tell a friend
Never give out any personal information and hang up immediately.
Scrutinize any solicitation before making payments.
If it is too good to be true then it is most likely a scam.
You will never be arrested or jailed for failure to pay money.
Call NDPD or your local police agency to verify any suspicious activity or fraud.
Don’t believe your caller ID. Technology makes it easy for scammers to alter caller ID information, so the name and number you see are not always real. If someone calls asking for money or personal information, hang up. If you think the caller might be telling the truth, call back to a number you know is genuine.

Following just a few of these safety tips will help you if you’re leaving for break and ensure a safe return back to campus.