A GUIDE FOR LGBTR TRAVELERS IN ASIA/PACIFIC

The travel security risks for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) travelers in the Asia Pacific vary by location.

It is crucial to understand the laws and social attitudes towards the LGBT community in different destinations to mitigate the risks associated with being an LGBT traveler.

Homosexuality is illegal in 18 countries in the Asia Pacific, as well as in the provinces of Sumatra and Aceh in Indonesia, due to predominance of Sharia (Islamic law). It also carries the death penalty in Pakistan. Homosexuality is either decriminalized or legal in 26 countries, 11 of which have discrimination protection laws; two of these countries have same-sex relationship recognition laws.

DID YOU KNOW?

Malaysia
Illegal and not accepted

Singapore
Illegal but accepted

New Zealand & Australia
Legal and accepted

Indonesia
Legal but not accepted

BE AWARE

• Be prepared
• Keep a low profile
• Remain vigilant

Risks to travelers may include assault, detention, expulsion or imprisonment.

FEMALE TRAVELERS

Of the 18 countries where homosexuality is illegal, only three countries and the provinces of South Sumatra and Aceh in Indonesia, explicitly criminalize homosexual acts between females in their penal codes.

Expressing sexual orientation and gender identity in public exposes women to the risk of hate crimes by men, such as ‘corrective rape’.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Avoiding public expressions of sexual orientation and gender identity is vital to a LGBT traveler’s safety in the Asia Pacific, irrespective of the legality of homosexuality and social attitudes and norms.

While most Asia Pacific countries criminalize same-sex sexual acts, it is highly improbable that an LGBT traveler would be prosecuted or face hostility as long as he or she does not commit such acts in public.