

Safety & Emergency Protocol: PWC Field Courses & Expeditions

This document serves as the official Safety & Emergency guide for all participants, staff, and researchers involved in the **Panama Wildlife Conservation (PWCC)** field courses and expeditions.

1. Quick Reference: Universal Emergency Numbers

- **General Emergency (Ambulance/Police/Fire):** 911
- **National Police (Direct):** 104
- **Fire Department (Bomberos):** 103
- **SINAPROC (Civil Protection):** *335 or 911
- **Red Cross (Cruz Roja):** *455

2. Institutional & Local Contacts (Veraguas Region)

Local Police (Policía Nacional - Zona Policial Veraguas)

For non-emergency reporting or direct coordination with local sub-stations:

- **Veraguas Provincial Headquarters (Santiago):** (+507) 998-2119 / 511-7000
- **Mariato Sub-station:** Reach via Veraguas HQ or 104 dispatch.
- **Santa Fe Sub-station:** Reach via Veraguas HQ or 104 dispatch.

MiAmbiente (Ministry of Environment)

Essential for coordination regarding park access, wildlife permits, and environmental emergencies:

- **MiAmbiente Veraguas Regional (Santiago):** (+507) 998-4387
- **MiAmbiente Santa Fe Office:** (+507) 998-4387 (Regional)
- **Cerro Hoya National Park Office:** Coordination is managed through the MiAmbiente Veraguas or Los Santos regional offices.
 - *Note: Access to Cerro Hoya is often coordinated via the Tonosí or Mariato entry points.*

SINAPROC (National Civil Protection Service)

For search and rescue, natural disasters, or severe weather alerts:

- **Veraguas Regional Base:** (+507) 520-4426 / 520-4429
- **Emergency WhatsApp:** (+507) 6998-4809 (24/7)

3. Medical Facilities

Primary Hospital (Santiago)

- **Hospital Luis "Chicho" Fábrega:** (+507) 958-2300
 - *Location: Pan-American Highway, Santiago. This is the main regional hospital with 24/7 Emergency/Urgencias.*

Local Health Centers (MINSA)

For minor injuries or non-life-threatening illnesses:

- **Centro de Salud de Santa Fe:** Located in the town center of Santa Fe.
- **Centro de Salud de Mariato:** Located in the town center of Mariato (Llano de Catival).

4. Field Safety Protocols

Wildlife & Environmental Risks

- **Venomous Animals:** Always wear snake gaiters or tall rubber boots in high-grass or dense forest areas (especially in Cerro Hoya and Santa Fe).
- **Dehydration:** Participants must carry at least 2-3 liters of water per day and use electrolyte replacements.
- **Terrain:** Santa Fe and Cerro Hoya feature steep, slippery terrain. Use trekking poles and maintain a "three points of contact" rule on slopes.

Communication in Remote Areas

Many areas in Cerro Hoya and the northern parts of Santa Fe have **zero cellular coverage**.

- **Satellite Devices:** Expeditions must carry a Starlink kit to communicate.
- **Check-in Policy:** Field teams must "check-in" with the base coordinator every 12 hours. If a check-in is missed by >4 hours, SINAPROC will be alerted.

5. Emergency Response Steps (In Case of Incident)

1. **Stabilize:** Administer immediate First Aid (CPR/Wound Care). Ensure the "First Aid Lead" is present.
2. **Communicate:** Use Satellite Kit to contact the PWC Emergency Coordinator.
 1. **Abel Rodríguez: +507 6803 5902**
 2. **Carlos Vigil: +507 6932 3326**
 3. **Miriam Flores: +507 6611 1965**
3. **Coordinate:** If extraction is needed, provide GPS coordinates to **SINAPROC (911)** and the **Veraguas Police (998-2119)**.
4. **Document:** Record time of incident, symptoms/injuries, and any treatment administered for hospital intake.