

Sweden Gothia Trip 2024 FAQ

Who is the main contact for Sweden Questions?

- Viktor Adamcsek - Viktor@blackhawksoccer.org
- Jamie Hagg - James.Hagg@spps.org - will be on-site during the trip, will be coaching Boys Black team
- Danah Ditzig - DanahJDitzig@gmail.com - will be on-site during the trip, primary family liaison

Who are the Sweden Planning Committee Volunteers

- Lisa Gruszka - juhli001@umn.edu
- Julia Rogers - julia.anne.irish@gmail.com
- Rose Jagin - rosejagim@gmail.com
- Max Brummel - brummelmax@gmail.com

Who is responsible for our players while Traveling?

- While traveling, the Coach of each team will be responsible for their respective team's players.
- Chaperones will support coaches but have more of a camp counselor role where they are responsible for helping execute the coaches itinerary and club rules but ultimately are not responsible for consequences. Consequences will generally be handled through the team's coach in accordance with club policy..
- If issues arise with the coaches, Viktor will be available for issues, concerns as well.
- The process for addressing additional issues/concerns can be found in the Blackhawks [Code of Conduct](#) as well as the [US Soccer SafeSport Handbook](#)

What is the chain of command for the trip? (How to report an incident w/ Blackhawks)

- If there is a need to report any incident of any kind during the trip, it should be brought to the attention of one of the club leaders participating on the trip, Jamie or Danah. They will liaise directly with Viktor.
- Player or Team concerns should be directed to the trip coach
- Issues are also documented via [Incident Reporting Process](#)

If we are arranging all flights on our own (not traveling with the rest of the teams) how and where do we need to meet in Copenhagen to ensure our son/daughter is on the same bus to Horsens?

There is a bus area (pick up) right outside of baggage claim and the buses will be marked (sign in the front window) "Blackhawks". We'll ensure everyone is reminded of the flight numbers so they can check the arrivals information and rendezvous accordingly. We will take roll-calls before departing the airport. Those traveling "ground only" must arrive before the group or contact trip leaders ASAP once you know your flight is being delayed.

How many teams are going to Sweden?

- The number of teams differ each year. All players in the U15 age groups are eligible to sign up and go to Sweden. Teams are determined based on who signs up. Teams may sign up as a team and stay together as a team throughout the trip. Teams may be combined as well to ensure all who register get to play on a team.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the Coaches?

- View the [Coaches Roles & Responsibilities](#)

Who pays for the coaches trip?

- For every 15 paid travelers, Blackhawks has 1 free trip to cover coaches and chaperones. If we do not have enough funds to cover all coaches and chaperones, coaches will be prioritized and any excess will be distributed equally to cover chaperones. We may choose to raise funds to cover the difference, if needed, for the volunteer chaperones.

Who are the chaperones and what are the responsibilities?

- Chaperones are volunteers. The positions are first staffed by coaches within the club or their regular season team manager. If unavailable to travel with the team, the trip leadership will then solicit volunteers from other club staff or family members of players.
- There will be 1 chaperone per team.
- View the [Chaperone Roles & Responsibilities](#)

What will the lodging accommodations be like?

- [Lodging accommodations information](#)
- Hotels for traveling families
 - Horsens: Scandic Opus
 - Gothia: Elite Park Hotel
 - Copenhagen: Imperial Hotel

Where to find out more details about the Gothia Cup?

- Visit [Gothia Cup's website](#) for all information specific to the Gothia Cup tournament
- View their [page about security](#)
- There is a mobile (Android & iOS) app. [Find more information here](#)

How will travelers pay for things?

- Credit cards are supported generally everywhere. ATMs are widely available to withdraw cash from your card, if needed.
- Check with your financial institution in advance of travel.
- In some instances, travelers using prepaid cards (such as “refillable” Visa gift cards) have had issues with them not being accepted or functioning in places.

How much money should kids bring?

- We recommend \$300-500 per person on incidentals and snacks (coffee/smoothies, ice cream, pizzas) and buying a Gothia Cup hoodie, etc. While 3-square meals are provided daily, the kids often want to supplement.
 - Sweden and Denmark and Iceland all have their own currency. They are not using Euros. So, the kids may also want to familiarize themselves with exchange rates. Using credit cards will offer the best transaction rates EXCEPT check w/your banker to see if they charge foreign transaction rates.
 - These countries are NOT cheap to travel in. Things are generally more expensive there. So for those shoppers in the mix, keep in mind, if you could buy it in the USA, don't buy it on the trip as a souvenir.
- There will be times when they are not provided food (IcelandAir doesn't feed you for free - so they may buy airport food or in flight food). When we land in Denmark, we'll stop (probably at the one and only McDonald's - think oasis style gas and food stop) and then when we ferry from Denmark to Sweden. Finally, the days in Copenhagen (where it will be more expensive), they'll need to anticipate buying meals for themselves. It's an exercise in budgeting, too. Life skills.

Will there be cell phone access to the members on the trip?

- On phones, it's everyone's responsibility to investigate if you want your own mobile plan to have an international option. Do this in advance b/c inevitably, someone does not and they are greeted a month later with a \$500 mobile bill if they haven't verified what they have. NOTE - Nearly everywhere has WiFi. So, the other option is to forgo cellular altogether. Turn your cellular data off the minute you board the flight and leave it off. Use WiFi on your mobile for apps and calls.
- During the trip, mobile technology may be used for communication (Whole Group & Individual Team Chats - Chats created by Coach and/or Chaperone). **WhatsApp** will be used for whole group, parent, team, and team leader chats.
- If there is a traveler who does not have a mobile device. There are alternatives to leverage, but they are the responsibility of the traveler to secure. If travelers do not have a mobile device, it is recommended to always be in a group with others where at least 1 member of the group has a mobile device.

What documentation is needed for the trip?

- All travelers must have a valid passport to travel. It is required that all passports have an **expiration date that expires 6 months or more after the expected date of return.**

- Visas are not required for US Citizens. If you are not a US Citizen and plan on traveling, please confirm with the appropriate countries.
- Is it suggested that each traveler have a picture of their passport (page with picture and information) that can be shared with trip leaders and saved in a way that can be referenced in the unfortunate event that a passport is lost.
- More information can be found at the [US Department of State website](#)

What are the packaging guidelines for players?

- View the [player packing list guideline](#) for examples of what a player may want to pack.
- Bring items you can layer, wear multiple times, or hand launder & quick air dry (such as dri-fit shirts).
- Backups of certain items (socks, underwear, sanitary products) are also recommended
 - 1 carry-on and this should be your soccer bag with all uniform components and cleats, etc. Place cleats inside a plastic bag (which you should have in there anyway in the event of rain during the trip to keep your bag dry on the sidelines. I recommend a few dryer sheets in there, too and to wash your bag in advance of travel so the plane doesn't stink. (That's a real thing w/so many of them, especially.)
 - You will be allowed one checked bag and the airlines will have the size/weight limit. Ensure you have a name tag on it. Every traveler will be responsible for their own belongings (carrying, lugging, securing) so keep that in mind when you pack. Again, I'll drop in a recommended list with generalities and reminders for meds, hygiene products, and things NOT to bring like laptops and devices that are big, expensive, that you'd be dismayed if you lost, broke, etc. hair dryers (you'll need to get on w/o them).
 - Absolutely bring your mobile. And you'll need a Euro plug / adapter for your phone charger. Get the simple/cheap ones w/just two prongs (no need for the elaborate ones)

Medical Care

- In the event that a player needs medical care while traveling, we will ensure to contact the player's guardians while also seeing they get the care they need. The costs for care there are very low (one example provided by Barry was a player sprained their ankle and needed surgery to get a pin put in – the total hospital cost was ~\$500).
- The tournament has first aid and a triage area for minor injuries
- One of the best children's hospitals is located right in Gothenburg as well
- **IMPORTANT:** Kids should have a picture of their medical insurance card on their phone – just in case. If you prefer a copy of the insurance card with the club, email the trip leader or the player's coach/chaperone the picture.
- You could also consider buying travel medical insurance, however, per Barry this is less necessary than travel insurance.

How are medications handled?

- **Only Medications that are legal in the destination countries are allowed.** If you are unsure, please check the laws for all countries that will be traveled through to ensure your medications are legal. The Blackhawks, nor our partner Travel & Play, are not responsible for the legality of anybody's medications but may be available to try and assist with identifying additional contacts to explore this question on your own.
- Travelers are responsible for their own medications and for the use of those medications. The Blackhawks, and our partner Travel & Play, will not be responsible for storing, securing and/or distributing medications beyond the steps identified for securing all belongings of players throughout the trip.
- It is recommended that, if your player can bring a backup/extra set of their medications (e.g. extra inhaler, seizure pills, etc...) that they bring them and store the extra medications in a separate location in the unfortunate event the player loses their main bad.
- If there are specific needs and/or exceptions, families/players can reach out to the trip leader to discuss and possibly collaborate on a plan for those specific exceptions

What is the Behavior/Code of Conduct Policies?

- All members of the trip will adhere to the Club's [Code of Conduct](#) policy
- All players, coaches, chaperones, and other trip leaders and representatives of the club adhere to the policies as outlined in the [US Soccer Safe Sport Handbook](#)
- Reporting of infractions are required by all members traveling as outlined by policies in the Club's Code of Conduct as well as the US Soccer SafeSport Handbook Liability

Who is responsible for the travel arrangements?

- Blackhawks travel agency partner is [Travel & Play](#). They organize and manage all the travel arrangements. You can find FAQs and the Terms and Conditions of Travel & Play for the trip on their website. Travel & Play is not responsible for our players behavior and safety beyond the specifics outlined in their Terms & Conditions.
- Questions specific to travel arrangements can be made directly to Travel & Play.
- Blackhawks, nor Travel & Play, take responsibility for any travel, lodging or other arrangements related to the details travelers have arranged on their own, outside of the packages provided by Travel & Play in partnership with the Blackhawks.
- In the event of a player violating the Travel & Play's terms and conditions, Blackhawks club, coaches and/or chaperones will assist the player in remedying the situation including helping to secure safe travel back home at the player's expense if the violation requires termination of the player's trip.
- Family members (non-players) traveling who violate Travel & Play's terms and conditions will be required to resolve and remedy the issue in accordance with Travel & Play's policies and procedures on their own.

Are families able to stay in the same or near-by rooms?

- Families stay separately from the players. Players are in the schools and families will not be staying in the schools.
- For security reasons, only players, coaches, and chaperones are permitted in the schools. This is controlled by passport verification at check-in and unique identifiers during the Gothia Cup stay (such as a wristband). This provides access to the school and meals.

How will information be shared about the trip?

- A month or two before registration opens, Blackhawks will hold a meeting open to the club to introduce the members to the trip, introduce our Travel & Play coordinator and provide a presentation about the next upcoming trip.
- There will be opportunities for questions related to travel, the tournament, policies, procedures, logistics and anything else the attendants would like to discuss related to the trip.
- Blackhawks will post all documents on the [Sweden Page](#) of our website relevant to the trip.
- PlayMetrics will be used to communicate via email and direct message to travelers before and after the trip. Members will be added to the TeamSnap group once they are registered and confirmed for the trip.
- Blackhawks will do their best to ensure Guardians of players receive all communications that are sent out via email, however this is a shared responsibility of the club and families as the Club will only receive the emails used when the players are registered. If you are a guardian of a player and are not, or don't think you are, receiving all the communications, please reach out to the Sweden Planning Committee with your player's name and the email you would prefer to use and the club will ensure you are added to all future communications
- There may be other periodic large group meetings that are scheduled to help communicate additional or changing information, fundraising opportunities or any other reason the club and/or planning committee deem necessary to share information with all travelers.
- There will be individual team meetings, once coaches are selected, registration is complete and the players have been organized into their respective teams. These meetings will be organized by the Coach of each team and the intent of these meetings will be to ensure each player, their families (traveling with or not) and the coach/chaperones are all on the same page and clear expectations are set. There may be multiple team meetings but there will only be 1 required team meeting. The required team meeting will happen approximately 1 or 2 months before the trip departure date.

Are there additional policies and procedures for non-player travelers of the trip?

- The club is primarily concerned with the players on the trip and the majority of policies and procedures are dedicated to our players. Travelers who are not players will still be held to the standards of the Club's [Code of Conduct](#) and [Travel & Play's Terms and Conditions](#)
- There will be opportunities for these travelers to participate in events that our players are also participating in. Interactions between these travelers and our players will be limited though based on the event.
- There may be opportunities for these travelers to share sight-seeing experiences, social dinners and other events with the players but it is not guaranteed and will be dictated by the number of people traveling and the specific logistics of the trip which may vary from year to year.

Other facilities available to travelers (e.g. Laundry, Cafeteria/Food)?

Laundry

- Families staying in Hotels may have services/facilities available for Laundry, food and other amenities but are not guaranteed. Details will be made available once the various details are coordinated after the registration has closed and the hotel reservations have been completed.

- Players should pack to assume they will not have access to laundry facilities throughout the trip.
- Recommendations from previous years is for players to shower with their kits as needed to help with the stink and sweat.
- Recommendations to pack sneaker balls and other deodorizers/air-fresheners to help with the inevitable smell of the rooms.

Cafeterias will be available at the schools. 3 meals are provided every day with healthy options. There's always fresh fruit, salad, and main course items with milk and water.

- Players will be staying in areas where they will have access to purchase food from restaurants and other establishments in the cities where we stay. Though that is NOT necessary. And, grocery stores, convenient stores and fast food are available.
- The only meals players need to purchase are on travel days (airports, flights, ferry) and while in Copenhagen.

What can I do if I have a question that is not addressed in any policies, procedures, FAQs or any other information provided by the club via trip communication or available on the website?

- Contact the trip leader and/or the Sweden Planning Committee with your specific questions

What flights are the kids on?

- For 2024, all girls and boys who are one-way travelers are on the same flight, IcelandAir. All other travelers will fly Air Canada.