

SPECIAL BULLETIN TO CAMPUS COMMUNITY

MARCH 4, 2020

Important Coronavirus Information and Recommendations

The health and safety of the Franciscan University community is of the highest priority so the University is actively monitoring the recent outbreak of COVID-19. COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus. COVID-19 symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Currently, there are no cases of COVID-19 on our Gaming, Austria, or Steubenville, Ohio, campuses.

University Planning

The University's Wellness Center is in regular communication with Health Department officials and other health care professionals. In addition, the University has established a multidisciplinary team from across the institution to identify and plan for a range of scenarios. They are actively coordinating campus resources, responses, and communications.

University Classes and Activities

Currently, the University is operating on our standard schedule. Please note that classes and activities could be modified based upon a change in circumstances as it relates to the spread of COVID-19. If so, you will be notified immediately.

Personal Preparedness

The University cares about the well-being of every person in our community. Accordingly, the University strongly encourages everyone on campus to follow standard Center for Disease Control (CDC) preventive guidelines:

- Practice good hygiene. [Wash your hands often with soap and water](#) for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing, sneezing, or shaking hands with people. If soap and water are not available, the CDC recommends using a hand sanitizer made with at least 60 percent alcohol but warns that these solutions do not kill all germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- If you are experiencing fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath, visit the University's Wellness Center or your health care provider immediately.

- Minimize physical contact with casual acquaintances by substituting a polite nod or other gesture instead of handshakes.
- Practice respiratory etiquette. The main way the virus spreads from person to person is in the droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. Therefore, it is important to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you do not have a tissue, you should cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not your hands.
- Disinfect surfaces that may have been contaminated.
- Avoid close contact with those who are ill or think they may be ill.
- Stay home if you feel ill or have any signs of respiratory illness.
- Get a flu vaccine as recommended by the CDC during the flu season. If you have been prescribed flu antiviral medication, please make sure to take it.
- Please follow the advice of your health care provider.

Also, the University encourages everyone to stay current with the information available on the CDC's website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>).

Travel

Currently, the [CDC has travel alerts](#) in place for China, South Korea, Japan, Iran, Italy, and Hong Kong. The University is prohibiting official University travel to these highly impacted areas. Any student or employee who travels to any area where a travel alert is in place must self-identify by disclosing their travel plans to the University using the [University's Travel Registration Form](#) (*you must be logged into MyFranciscan for the link to work*). Students and employees traveling to these areas may be required to be quarantined or self-isolate for the duration of a normal incubation period (generally two weeks) prior to returning to classes or work. All students and employees are advised to stay apprised of travel guidelines from the CDC.

Amid this uncertainty, any travel, domestic or international, could heighten your risk of exposure. If conditions change in a location where you are visiting or traveling through, you may incur travel delays and mandatory quarantines. Also, please keep in mind that government-issued travel and screening mandates and airline operations could change while you are away, impacting your return plans. We cannot guarantee that impacted students or employees will be able to seamlessly return to school or work.

Regarding upcoming University-sponsored spring break trips, the University is monitoring the situation on a daily basis, is in communication with local health officials and experts, and will implement any changes, precautions, or cancellations that might be appropriate.

In light of the fact that conditions are continually changing, all students and employees who travel over spring break, domestic or international, are being asked to [disclose their travel](#) to the University (*you must be logged into MyFranciscan for the link to work*).

Use of Masks

The University adheres to the CDC guidelines for the use of masks:

- CDC does not recommend people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
- Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for [health workers](#) and [people who are taking care of someone in close settings](#) (at home or in a health care facility).
- Students, staff, and faculty may wear surgical masks if they choose to do so.

Updates

The University will share additional information as it becomes available. Updates will be provided through the University's website, University bulletins, and/or University email.