

From: [Office of the Provost](#)
To: [KU Lawrence All Staff, Faculty and Affiliates; All KU Lawrence and Edwards Students](#)
Subject: Health Planning Updates - March 13, 2020
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Health Planning Updates – March 13, 2020

Students, staff and faculty –

The recent passing of an individual in Wyandotte County as a result of COVID-19 led Gov. Laura Kelly to declare a state of emergency in Kansas. My sympathies and prayers go to the individual and his family and friends in what must be an incredibly sorrowful time.

This loss of life stands as a sobering reminder that we have a responsibility to work judiciously and quickly to do what we can to protect our campus community as well as the health and wellbeing of the extended Jayhawk community. I believe these are extraordinary times that require our swift and decisive action. The nature and volume of messages my office has received suggest our community agrees.

Yesterday with Chancellor Girod and other members of the Public Health Planning Team, I had the opportunity to review our previously announced campus actions and discuss whether changes are appropriate.

Public health experts continue to stress the importance of social distancing and quarantine to contain spread of the virus. Effective immediately, all faculty, staff (including student employees) and prospective graduate student interviews will be conducted via Skype.

Some of KU's auxiliary units that are a major draw for the public have expressed concern over their place in preventing the spread of the virus. I am instructing leaders of these units, such as our museums, to craft proposals of their plans if they determine the correct course of action is to temporarily close. These decisions should be in line with our collective priorities. At this time, all other units, both mission-critical and nonmission-critical, should remain operational. It is important that we adjust as needed so we can continue to perform our work, serving students and other stakeholders and conducting our research.

As noted Wednesday evening, university sponsored events and activities are

limited to no more than 50 in-person participants until May 11 (60 days). Units will have autonomy and flexibility in determining the best course of action to deliver programming while also adhering to this limit. Some may determine they need to cancel or postpone their activities, while others may be able to develop online and interactive alternatives. The Office of Admissions, which provides mission-critical campus visits, will reconfigure prospective student visits for the foreseeable future to meet this 50-person limit. I greatly appreciate how our recruiters are responding to this challenge with courage and resourcefulness.

Per an advisory from the U.S. Department of State, KU is suspending all new J-1 visiting programs for the next 60 days and we will reevaluate on May 10. For questions please reach out to [KU International Support Services](#) for the Lawrence and Edwards campuses, or the [Office of International Programs](#) at the KU Medical Center. They can provide in-the-moment guidance.

Our Public Health Planning Team continues to work overtime to address many issues affecting our campus — such as academic, nonathletic student travel and inbound travel by domestic visiting scholars — and other questions some of you have posed.

Reminders and Clarifications

Faculty: I've received several questions from faculty who are already prepared to transition their in-person classes to online. Even though you may be ready, many of our students are not. Numerous students have told us they have limited access to Internet service or their laptop or computer is miles away at their Lawrence residence. They need time to adjust to this change. We will not cause additional disadvantage for our students. **Previously in-person classes and labs will resume no earlier than March 23.**

Moving Courses to Online: Additional KU Information Technology staff are available to help you adapt and transfer your course content online. Please contact KU IT Educational Technology Support, itedtech@ku.edu, 785-864-2600. The team will assess each faculty member's situation and either assist with Blackboard migration or refer instructors to more specialized consulting available through the Center for Online and Distance Learning.

Travelers: Individuals who traveled and spent time in California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon or Washington, during the past 14 days may be at increased risk of carrying the virus. Watkins Health Services strongly recommends self-monitoring for 14 days to determine any evidence of fever and/or respiratory illness. These travelers are not subject to mandatory isolation at this time, but should avoid crowds, and medically vulnerable people such as the elderly, pregnant women, and the chronically ill. International travelers may need to quarantine at home for 14 days, depending on their travel history. The CDC maintains a current [list of countries at high risk](#).

When you need to travel for personal reasons, please voluntarily report your travel plans in advance: [Lawrence and Edward Campus](#), or for [KU Medical](#)

[Center](#). CDC and the U.S. Department of State continue to update their travel warnings regularly.

Supervisors, Employees and Student Employees: Human Resource Management has [prepared guidance](#) on a variety of topics and KU Lawrence and Edwards Campus employee questions. During the response to COVID-19 we will continue to pay KU employees. We also have some clarity around personnel leave options. If you have payroll-related questions about your circumstances or the circumstances of one of your employees please contact HR at hrpay@ku.edu. Questions about compensation for sponsored-project funded employees can be directed to [Alicia Reed](#) in the Office of Research. In addition, the HR staff are available to address your more general work-related questions. They can be reached at hrdept@ku.edu, 785-864-4946.

All across campus, I see examples of people who are working through this challenge with creativity, compassion and urgency. Thank you all for all you are doing to support and care for our community and the university.

Respectfully,

Barbara

Barbara A. Bichelmeyer
Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor

