

Coronavirus (COVID-19)
University System of Georgia
March 12, 2020

The University System of Georgia (USG) is consulting constantly with the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Governor's Coronavirus Task Force.

Georgia Governor Brian Kemp today announced state agencies, school systems and local communities have been given the flexibility to implement closures.

Effective Monday, March 16, 2020, all 26 USG institutions **will temporarily suspend instruction for two weeks** to allow time for USG institutions to test their business continuity plans and online instruction modules and for state officials to continue to assess the current situation regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) in Georgia.

Students who are currently on spring break are strongly encouraged not to return to campus. Students on campus are asked to depart campus by close of business Friday, March 13, 2020, and to remain away from campus until March 29, 2020. At this time, students are not being asked to move out of their dorms for the remainder of the semester. All institutions are being asked to work with students who are unable to leave campus.

We take very seriously the responsibility to make prudent and well-informed choices for the well-being of our campus communities and the public. We continue to prepare for all scenarios in this rapidly evolving situation. All USG institutions have plans to ensure academic continuity as operations are impacted.

The USG is providing regular updates to all institutions and the public at its website, <https://www.usg.edu/coronavirus>.

In the interim, all students, faculty and staff who may be traveling in any capacity (either domestically or internationally) are being encouraged to register their travel information so we may provide relevant updates at https://columbusstate.formstack.com/forms/travel_registry.

The CDC strongly advises against anyone traveling to a location subject to a Level 3 or higher Travel Health Notice, including most of Europe, South Korea, China and Iran. We also encourage community members to check with [the U.S. Department of State website](#), and talk with family and travel companions to make a wise decision about travel plans, particularly related to travel in Europe.

We urge all community members to practice good preventive measures and to visit the [USG resource guide](#) for the latest information concerning travel advisories and other guidance. You can also find additional information from the CDC [here](#).

Prevention of COVID-19 is paramount, and we urge everyone to take appropriate measures such as:

- Wash hands regularly.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Be responsible and courteous to others and stay home if you are sick or experiencing symptoms.
- Respect personal space when greeting others and during conversations.
- Be mindful of those in high risk populations such as those with underlying health conditions and the elderly.
- Follow CDC and DPH guidance on personal and business travel to avoid increasing your risk and that of others.

Guidance from DPH identifies those with [the highest risk to contract COVID-19](#) are travelers to countries with widespread outbreaks, as well as those travelers' close contacts. Additionally, those most likely to develop serious illness after contracting COVID-19 include persons who are older than 60, as well as persons with chronic health conditions.

Health officials advise that the incubation period of COVID-19 is 2-14 days, with an average period of 5 days. Symptoms include coughing, fever and shortness of breath. Most people experience mild to moderate symptoms. Those who experience flu-like symptoms are urged to contact the Department of Public Health at 1-866-PUB-HLTH.

The health of our students, faculty and staff is our highest priority. We will continue to work with USG leaders in collaboration with state officials and DPH to act on the most up-to-date guidance available.

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