

Dear Colleagues:

Let me express my gratitude for your patience as we share information about the COVID-19 virus and our actions at the College to enhance the health of our community. In an effort to keep you updated with the emerging information about the COVID-19 strain of the Coronavirus, I am providing the following information.

In this message you will find information about:

- Spring Break travel guidelines
- What to do if you become ill
- Information about COVID-19 infection and prevention

You may already be aware that the situation around COVID-19 is changing daily, with news reports of increased cases globally. It's important to note that for the general public, as of today, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low. However, the situation is evolving rapidly. MCLA will continue to monitor alerts and adjust plans as needed to keep our community healthy and safe. You can also read a helpful [Fact Sheet](#) on the Coronavirus from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

With spring break approaching, we wish to share travel recommendations with you to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### **Spring Semester Travel Guidelines**

As our campus community prepares for spring break, inevitably, many of our community members will have plans for personal travel. We strongly encourage those members of the MCLA community planning international and domestic travel to practice safe hygiene and health recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization. You can find links to those recommendations on [MCLA's COVID-19 landing page](#).

We also ask that you make us aware by notifying Human Resources if you are traveling internationally during the Spring semester, especially to one of the countries from a region considered by the CDC to be a Level 3 high risk alert for "widespread sustained transmission" (China, Iran, Italy, South Korea) or CDC Level 2 alert for "sustained community transmission" (Japan), so that we can be in the best position to keep you informed and offer any assistance that may be helpful.

Should you decide to travel internationally, please also register your travel with the U.S. State Department's [Smart Travel Enrollment Program](#) (STEP) which provides access to alerts from the local embassies and Consulates. In accordance with CDC guidelines, travelers to regions with confirmed COVID-19 cases who feel sick with fever, cough, or are having difficulty breathing are advised to stay home, avoid contact with others, and immediately seek medical attention.

### **What To Do if You Become Ill**

If you are feeling ill and think you might have contracted the Coronavirus, please stay home so that you recuperate and do not make anyone else ill, contact your primary care physician or local hospital emergency room for further instructions and inform Human Resources so that we can offer support, advice, and work accommodations, should any be necessary. While we are focused on avoiding the

presence of the virus on campus, we are most focused on the health of all of our colleagues. It is possible, that despite our collective efforts to stay healthy, MCLA could encounter someone who has the virus. If you have been exposed to someone with the virus, please let Human Resources know so that we can work to prevent the spread of the virus on campus.

It is important that you call ahead before going to any medical facility if you may have been exposed to the virus or if you have any of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- If you have had confirmed contact with any COVID-19 patient
- And/or traveled from mainland China or any other country with a travel advisory within 14 days of the onset of illness.

Please keep in mind that we are in the midst of cold and flu season. Flu-like symptoms do not automatically indicate that you have COVID-19. Only a test will do that.

#### **Information about COVID-19 infection and prevention**

Helpful Links

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

[www.berkshirehealthsystems.org/coronavirus](http://www.berkshirehealthsystems.org/coronavirus)

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/information-on-the-outbreak-of-2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

We will continue to track alerts around COVID-19 and will share news and information with you as needed, while keeping in close communication with the members of our community currently studying abroad. The best way to remain informed and healthy is to follow the CDC and WHO recommendations.

We also urge everyone to follow some simple but effective illness prevention measures:

- It is not too late to get a seasonal flu vaccine. (Call your primary care provider or stop by any pharmacy as many now offer flu shots.)
- Cover coughs and sneezes in your elbow or sleeve.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If you feel unwell, stay at home in order to protect yourself and other people.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds to avoid spreading any virus to others, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Disinfecting commonly touched surfaces is suggested. Additionally MCLA Facilities staff have increased sanitation maintenance around campus.

Our own personal attention to these simple steps can limit the spread of the virus and contribute to the collective health of the MCLA community.

We continue to track alerts around COVID-19 and will share news and information as needed.

Thank you,  
Barb

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**National Top Ten  
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