

COVID-19 March 10 YCCD Chancellor's Update

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To: All YCCD Employees <All-YCCD@yccd.edu>

Greetings YCCD Faculty, Staff and Students,

I am sending this with a specific subject of "Chancellor's Update" so that you can identify from other COVID-19 messages.

I am writing to apprise you of the planning progress in incorporating the California Department of Public Health's updated guidelines for colleges and universities that were released over the weekend. The health risk from COVID-19 to the general public **still remains low at this time**; however, this is a quickly evolving situation. Just as with other emergencies we've faced over the years, our communities and campuses are impacted differently so planning must intentionally address these regional differences. State and county public health officials are continuously assessing the situation; our Colleges and District Services are in regular contact with respective county Health Officers as so that we can make decisions based on the local community circumstances.

Later today or tomorrow you will receive a more detailed description of the plan as we continue to develop it but I wanted to give you this overview of the planning protocol – in accordance with the CDPH guidance, we are responding to the potential for an escalation of outbreak in a four-phase protocol.

- We are currently in "Phase I" where we are undertaking active infection control measures and planning in the event the infection does spread to our campuses; all faculty, staff and students are encouraged to practice healthy hygiene and to make individual decisions regarding work, class attendance and travel based on individual health circumstances. Certainly if you are ill, especially with flu-like symptoms, please "self-quarantine, see your health provider and notify your supervisors/professors.
- "Phase II" would be triggered at an individual college or campus (or District Offices) should two or more members of the local community be tested positive for COVID-19. This Phase entails certain restrictions including canceling non-essential travel, canceling large events, restricting public attendance at campus events and preparing to transition face-to-face instruction and services to distance education where appropriate.
- "Phase III" would be triggered if one or more students, faculty or staff at a campus (or District Offices) test positive for COVID-19 and have exposed others at the campus. In this case, in consultation with the respective County Health Office, the College President or Vice Chancellor Lolland would cancel community education classes, implement distance education solutions to continue instruction, direct essential personnel to work from home to maintain critical operations and possibly close the campus altogether depending on the local circumstances and counsel from that county's health officials.
- "Phase IV" would be triggered if multiple students, faculty or staff test positive at a particular District location and, again in consultation with the respective county health officials the decision would be made to close that site.
- In Phases III and IV we would also implement additional cleaning in accordance with CDC protocols; any decisions to move back to a "lower phase" or readiness (including reopening any closed sites) would be made in conjunction with the respective county health officials.

Our colleges have already started the process of requesting temporary blanket Distance Education Addenda from the State Chancellor's Office to satisfy Title 5 requirements. We have been assured by Chancellor Oakley that his team will expedite the review and approvals. Faculty and administrative leaders are considering carefully the implications of converting more broadly to on-line instruction, as many of our students and communities face broadband accessibility challenges. I truly appreciate this work and am proud of the diligence with which they have undertaken it.

Finally, many of our leaders, students faculty and staff have travel commitments especially to state-sanctioned events and professional development. The California Department of Public Health does not recommend cancelling public events unless certain conditions exist in a particular community (i.e. the conditions that would warrant "Phase II" described above). At this time, we have not been apprised of any cancellations that impact our District but we will certainly continue to monitor; until, and unless we move in to "Phase II," we will not be restricting any of that planned travel. That said, I do encourage all of us to make our individual decisions about travel based on our own circumstances and health.

The District and Colleges' Safety Committees are meeting to refine specific plans regarding the myriad of programs and services you provide to our students and communities and to anticipate the potential continued escalation of COVID-19 spread. You can expect to read more of their work in the coming days. Should you have any questions – I urge you to submit them on the link at the District's COVID-19 Information [website](#).

Thank you all,

Dr. Douglas B. Houston, Chancellor

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