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TO: Chancellors and President's Staff, UA Community

FROM: Jim Johnsen, President 

RE: Coronavirus & Travel Restrictions - China

There is understandable concern about the novel coronavirus outbreak that originated in China. While there has been some spread to other countries, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to emphasize that the immediate health risk to the U.S. public remains low at this time. As of February 7, the CDC was reporting 12 confirmed cases in the U.S. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

In addition, a February 6 update by the Epidemiology Section of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services indicates that there were **no confirmed cases in Alaska**. See <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/Human-Coronavirus.aspx> for up to date information.

Here in Alaska

People who have returned from China in the past 14 days, or who have had direct exposure to someone with novel coronavirus, are those most at risk. The State of Alaska suggests if you are at risk and have a fever or respiratory symptoms, you call the DHSS Section of Epidemiology at (907) 269-8000 or after hours at (800) 478-0084 **before visiting a health care provider**. If you have any questions, please call (907) 269-8000 during business hours.

The CDC similarly recommends a number of steps that individuals in this elevated risk category who feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, should take, including avoiding contact with others and seeking medical advice, **calling the medical provider in advance to discuss recent travel and your symptoms**. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html>

Travel Restrictions

As you have no doubt heard, both the CDC and the State department have issued travel warnings for China, with the State Department issuing a Level 4

“Do Not Travel” warning. The State Department notes that most commercial carriers have reduced or suspended routes to and from China, and that “Travelers should be prepared for the possibility of travel restrictions with little or no advance notice.” Under these circumstances, the University must prohibit travel at UA expense to China. Chancellors may approve exceptions but only in emergency situations. Please take immediate steps to implement this change until further notice.

Already Traveling?

Our universities have employees and students located around the world. Each chancellor will continue to monitor the location and needs of UA-affiliated individuals and provide assistance as possible. If you need immediate health care assistance please see the guidance above, as well as information provided by local health officials. If you need additional assistance, please contact your UA home department. For information about countries with confirmed cases visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html>

Looking Forward

Since this is an evolving situation, additional travel restrictions and other steps may be required. Check UA Alert at <https://uaalert.alaska.edu/> for the latest information

For more information on CDC warning notices see

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

For more information on the U.S. Department of State warning notice see:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/china-travel-advisory.html>

cc: UA Board of Regents
UA General Counsel
UA Interim Chief Risk Officer