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DATE: February 21 2020
TO: Chancellors and President's Staff, UA Community
FROM: Jim Johnsen, President 
RE: 2nd Update - Coronavirus (COVID-19)– Student and Employee Resources

I am hopeful that our communities will remain largely unaffected by COVID-19. That said, Universities have students and employees who travel around the world, and as noted in the *Facts and Resources* section below, COVID-19 continues to spread, though so far, not to Alaska.

Flexibility for Students and Employees at High Risk

There are a few resources we can offer now to encourage self-care and prevention, particularly among high risk groups. Based on CDC guidance, the high risk group includes people who have traveled in China, or been exposed to someone sick with COVID-19, in the last 14 days.

High Risk and Ill – such individuals should remain out of the classroom and workplace and follow CDC guidance (see attachment).

Students - I'm asking the chancellors to ensure that students who are at increased risk are able to remain out of the classroom during the incubation period through assurance of academic flexibility and student support services.

Employees - I've also asked Human Resources across the UA system to be prepared to offer telework or paid leave during the incubation period to employees at increased risk to allow and encourage them to remain out of the workplace.

Remote Sites – if a person at high risk for COVID-19 is still in the incubation period, they should inform appropriate administrators before deploying to remote stations/close quarters such as research vessels or field camps.

Looking Forward

Since this is an emerging situation, additional travel restrictions and other steps may be required. Check UA Alert at <https://sites.google.com/alaska.edu/coronavirus/> and your campus websites for the latest information.

Attachment (Facts & Resources)

JRJ

Facts and Resources:

If a High Risk Person is Ill

The CDC recommends that people in the high risk group who feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, take the following steps:

- **Seek medical advice – But call ahead** before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room. Tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Do not travel while sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands with soap and water immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- The State of Alaska suggests people in Alaska 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.

As of February 19, the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports 15 confirmed COVID-19 cases in the US, and 42 US States and territories with "persons under investigation."

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

The CDC has also issued a **Level 1 Watch for Japan and Hong Kong**, recommending that "*travelers practice usual precautions.*"

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

As of February 20, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) website reports there have been no confirmed cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) infection in Alaska.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/Human-Coronavirus.aspx>