



Lorna Candler
Director

Novel Coronavirus - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Planning for Institutions of Higher Education Regulated by the Division of Private Occupational Schools

- I. **UPDATED DPOS GUIDANCE AS OF 3/19/2020 - Further guidance will be issued:**
 - **Prepare**
 - **Stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation.** Know where to turn for reliable, up-to-date information in your local community. Monitor the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment website](#), the [CDC COVID-19 website](#) and your local health agency websites for the latest information. The Colorado Department of Higher Education has created a [webpage](#) with these and other resources.
 - **Develop, or review, your campus' emergency operations plan.** Ensure your institution has a plan that includes strategies to reduce the spread of disease and establishes mechanisms for ongoing communication with staff, students, volunteers, and the community. This should be done in collaboration with local public health agencies and other relevant partners.
 - **Establish relationships with your local [public health agency](#).** Make sure you know about healthcare and public health emergency planning and response activities in your community and establish open lines of communication.
 - **We Strongly Suggest that you Consider Online Instruction and Be Prepared for a Partial or Full Campus Closure**
 - **In accordance with CDC guidelines, the Colorado Department of Public Health also issued a public health order prohibiting gatherings of 10 or more people.** Gatherings include community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based events, sporting events with spectators, concerts, conventions, fundraisers, parades, fairs, festivals or any similar event that brings 10 or more people together. Click [here](#) to read.

- The Private Occupational Schools Act requires that schools are “maintained and operated in compliance with all pertinent ordinances and laws, including rules adopted pursuant thereto, relative to the health and safety of all persons upon the premises.” Colo.Rev.Stat. § 23-64-112(1)(j). Therefore, convenings of 10 or more should cease immediately.
 - Consider how to accommodate classroom activities that typically include laboratories or other in-person interactions.
 - Ensure that students have access to technology required for distance learning.
- While our immediate and urgent guidance is to move to online delivery as stated above, our secondary message is to seek approvals for new delivery as soon as possible or within 10 days. Reach out to your DPOS Program Specialist to obtain the required approvals for ceasing operation or changing your method of delivery from classroom to on-line.

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If you do not know who your Program Specialist is, please direct the information to all Program Specialists **and** Amy Knoblauch at Amy.Knoblauch@dhe.state.co.us.

- This process has been simplified for the COVID-19 situation only and does not require a fee. **DPOS RECOMMENDS YOU MAKE ALL CHANGES OR ADJUSTMENTS TO DELIVERY FIRST BUT SUBMITTING THE TEMPORARY DISTANCE EDUCATION FORM IS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO BE COMPLIANT WITH STATE STATUTE AND RULES. AGAIN, PLEASE TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO ACCOMMODATE INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED ABOVE AND THEN NOTIFY THE DIVISION OF CHANGES OR ADJUSTMENTS.**

- **Travel Policies**

- Continue to monitor the [CDC’s Travel Health Notices](#) and create a plan for supporting students and staff in affected areas.
- **Provide recommendations and up-to-date information for students who may consider traveling during school breaks.**
 - Consider requiring students and staff/faculty to self-quarantine or self-isolate if they travel abroad or to a region of concern in the United States during spring break.
- **Consider restricting faculty and staff travel.**
 - No travel should be allowed to countries with widespread community transmission and there are restrictions on entry to the United States for citizens of several countries.

- Consider restricting all travel abroad to essential travel only requiring an extra level of approval.
- Consider restricting domestic travel to essential travel only requiring an extra level of approval.
- Discourage personal international travel.

- **Events**

- **Restrict any large events.** No new non-essential large events should be scheduled through the current term. For events already scheduled, encourage organizers to consider postponing or canceling.

- **Other Steps to Take Immediately**

- **Build relationships with key community organizations and partners who may be impacted by your campus' closure.**
- **Create an emergency contact list for key partners, including state agencies and your local public health agency.**
- **Develop a communications plan** that outlines how you plan to reach different audiences including ensuring all communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate as well as accessible for individuals with disabilities.
- **Discourage visitors** to your campus.
- **Assess possible impacts to other services and on campus,** or on customers, clients, patients, or utilizers of your services.
- **Consider High Risk Individuals on your Campus** Inform employees that some people may be at higher risk for severe illness, such as those over 60, immune-compromised or those with chronic medical conditions. Identify these individuals and plan to accommodate their work.

- **Communicate**

- **Communicate about COVID-19 with your staff.** Share information about what is currently known about COVID-19 and your facility's preparedness plans. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has updated messaging.
- **Communicate about COVID-19 with students.** Provide updates about changes to your policies or operations; please provide all student notifications to the Division as instructed in our previous notice. Use all communication channels that you have available including your email, website, letters, and social media to share updates. Make sure to plan ahead for linguistic needs of the student population.
Communication with the larger community and other impacted individuals. Once you have assessed the impacts to other services within your institution, make sure you develop a specific communication outreach plan to ensure the individuals most impacted by your decision or closure receive the information they need. Proactively identify and meet any needs for language assistance through the translation of

materials or interpretation services.

- **Maintain up to date information on your institution's website regarding procedures for access health facilities on campus.**
- **Intentionally and persistently combat stigma.** Misinformation about coronavirus and COVID-19 can create fear and hostility that hurts people and makes it harder to keep everyone healthy.

- **Testing for COVID-19**

If a faculty, staff member or student believes they should be evaluated for COVID-19:

- If individuals have fever, cough or shortness of breath and have not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID19, they should stay home away from others until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (without use of fever-reducing medicine), runny nose or productive cough and other symptoms are improving.
- If an individual believes they have had close contact to someone with COVID-19 but are not currently sick, they should monitor their health for fever, cough, and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day they were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19. They should not go to work or school, and should avoid public places for 14 days. If the individual develops symptoms, they should **call** the school clinic or a local health provider. If your campus clinic sees a student who they believe might have COVID-19, the clinic should immediately notify your local public health agency. **Your local public health agency will provide you with guidance.**

- **If you Have a Confirmed Case**

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the community or at your campus:

- **Work in close collaboration and coordination with local and state health officials and other health care and public health partners in your community to make decisions regarding measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.**
- **Implement social distancing measures.** If there are cases of COVID-19 in the community, consider using social distancing rather than closing facilities until there is evidence that a case is associated with your institution in some way. Examples of social distancing include staggering class times or canceling large conferences and sporting events.
- **Communicate about potential exposure to COVID-19.** It is critical to maintain confidentiality of the individual while working to address potential fear and anxiety of students and staff.
- **Determine if, when, and for how long it may be appropriate to dismiss classes or close.** In consultation with your local public health agency, determine the extent of the risk and appropriate responses.
 - If there is a confirmed infection in a staff or student, and that individual was at school or school facility while symptomatic, then the IHE should close to allow time for cleaning of the facility and contact investigation by

local public health.

- Seek guidance from local health officials about the need to lengthen facility closures or resuming normal operations.