

Mississippi Public University System Guidance for University COVID-19 Action Plans

March 2020

In addition to following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html> and the Mississippi Department of Health (MDH) guidelines https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,0,420.html, individual universities should follow, but expand upon, the guidelines below.

Travel

- Cancel all scheduled out-of-state and international travel until further notice.
- Employees and students should avoid scheduling any new non-essential out-of-state and international travel.
- Avoid large meetings or conferences and any place that has declared a state of emergency due to the virus.
- Develop protocols for employees and students who recently traveled to out-of-state and internationally or who have been in contact with individuals who traveled to COVID-19 high risk areas.

Public Health Actions

- Postpone or cancel any events or gatherings that include fifty people or more
- Initiate/continue informing the campus community on how to reduce risk of infection, with emphasis on social distancing.
- Install hand sanitizing stations around high-touch areas on campus.
- Implement protocols to include the use of disposable wares, reduction of self-service options, and increase high-touch area cleaning in dining facilities.
- Provide take-out/boxed meals when possible to help avoid dining in large groups.
- Conduct campus-wide training of custodial staff members to address COVID-19 specific standards and product training.
- Launch websites to provide information to the public about COVID-19.

Actions Planned

- Suspend all university-sponsored events and gatherings, including events sponsored by any registered student organization.
- Impose additional restrictions on visitors (including non-essential vendors), limit access to campus facilities, increase cleaning and sanitation in common areas, and other best practices to reduce the spread of the virus.
- Impose mandatory sanitation and social distancing training for employees and students that are on campus.
- Refer to national and conference websites for the latest news on athletic contests:
 - National Collegiate Athletic Association: <http://www.ncaa.org/>
 - Southeastern Conference: <https://www.secsports.com/>
 - Conference USA: <https://conferenceusa.com/>
 - Southwestern Athletic Conference: www.swac.org/
 - Gulf South Conference: <https://gscsports.org/>

Faculty Preparation

For online and alternate delivery of instruction

- Provide online and other remote instructional technology training to faculty.
- Develop university websites to include a checklist, faculty resources, and instructions on the various content delivery technologies available.
- Review student teaching and clinical requirements and follow all applicable federal and state guidance.

COVID-19 on Campus

In case of identified (or suspected) case of COVID-19 in the campus community:

- Isolate the student, faculty or staff and immediately.
- Contact the Mississippi Department of Health immediately.
- Maintain confidentiality of suspected and confirmed individuals.
- If the person who is infected (or suspected to be) is a student: Students who live on campus, to include fraternity & sorority houses, will be immediately checked into alternative, isolated housing.
- If the person who is infected (or suspected to be) is a faculty/staff member: Faculty & staff will be directed to self-isolate at home with instructions as to appropriate precautions.
- Develop a plan for continuity of education, medical and social services, and meal programs and establish alternate mechanisms for these to continue.
- Direct students who are well and can remain home or return home to do so.
- Implement housing and residence life protocols for students who will remain in campus housing to include instructions on how to remain healthy and what to do if they begin to experience symptoms of the virus.
- Offer counseling and other support services remotely.

Communications

- Develop microsites to keep faculty, staff, students and their parents informed with the latest developments.
- Encourage faculty, staff, and students to monitor microsites and websites daily for the latest developments.
- Utilize social media platforms to communicate information to university constituencies

CDC and MDH COVID-19 guidelines may be adjusted. Our universities are directed to adjust their action plans to align with the most recent CDC and MDH guidance.