



COVID-19 NEWS

CURRENT STATUS

The health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff is the top priority of District administrators and the Board of Trustees. As mentioned in my last communication, we are working on a strategy that is specific to COVID-19, which will be incorporated into our District Emergency Preparedness Plan. Once complete, we will provide you with these details and request your input and suggestions. I can assure you, we are preparing at the same level of vigilance we have shown during other public health risks we have experienced in the past.

On Monday March 2, the Executive Cabinet received a very informative report on COVID-19 from Dr. Patrick Savaiano, Family Nurse Practitioner Sarah Adams, and Nurse Hope Mondala Rull. Included in their report were a number of recommendations for us to consider in regards to COVID-19 and our level of preparedness as a District. These are being evaluated by our Emergency Response Team. While the level of threat to our campus community remains extremely low, our health services team has established COVID-19 specific protocols. To date, there are no identifiable risks on our campus. They are monitoring the Patients Under Investigation (PUI) information as posted by San Diego County Health and Human Services Department. To date, there are no confirmed cases in San Diego County. PUI information is available on the County's [website](#) and is updated each day at 4:00 p.m.

There are many important considerations that contribute to the health and safety of our campus community. Below you will find just a few that we should all keep top of mind.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL HYGIENE

The spread of this virus, like many others, is **best prevented** by following good personal hygiene practices. These include

- avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- avoiding the need to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth
- cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces
- staying home when you are sick, except to get medical care
- washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (*hint: it takes about 20 seconds to sing the "happy birthday" song*)

To avoid spreading germs or coming into contact with others suffering from a contagious illness, some health providers are asking patients to call and discuss their symptoms instead of coming into a clinic or medical office.

TRAVEL WARNINGS

The District has not issued an official travel warning. However, if you are considering personal international travel, consult the [Centers for Disease Control Traveler's Health Site](#). It is important to understand if your desired destination is identified as: Watch Level 1, Alert Level 2, or Warning Level 3 for safety of travel. It is also important to note whether or not your travel itineraries take you through airports in one of the countries listed, as you may be putting your health at risk. Other colleges are recommending to their students, staff and faculty, preparing to travel to any of the listed areas, to consider a 14-day self-quarantine away from campus

upon their return. Taking this action provides a certainty to the individual that they have had no exposure to the virus.

We are aware that our international students may have some questions that are specific to their travel plans. Please advise students to review the [Centers for Disease Control Traveler's Health Site](#) and to consult with our Coordinator of International Education, Yasue Oneill, at extension 7525.

LARGE GATHERINGS/EVENTS

The District will not cancel large gatherings or events unless it is evident that there is a specific health risk due to a change in the status of the virus in San Diego County.

Lastly, as stated in previous communication, it is important not to incite panic or stress among colleagues and students at this time. Rest assured, as a College, we have the experts on-hand and we will share more information as it is available.

If you have specific questions, please send them to Dr. Savaiano at ext. 2642 or psavaiano@palomar.edu. And, of course you know where to reach me as well jkahn1@palomar.edu.