

**HUMAN RESOURCES MEMORANDUM
FACULTY AND STAFF COMMUNICATION
EMPLOYMENT ISSUES RELATED TO COVID-19
March 19, 2020**

Dear Faculty and Staff,

As we continue to navigate through these unprecedented circumstances, I wanted to touch base on a few items.

Monitoring Temperatures

Yesterday, Governor DeWine asked that all employers take increased measures in protecting the health of employees and mitigating the spread of COVID-19. In responding to the governor's request, the University is implementing a requirement that all employees check their temperature daily before they report to work on campus. Now, naturally this raises some issues because some individuals may regularly run a bit higher temperature than others. In speaking with the county health director, he indicated that a temperature above 100.4° is of particular concern as it relates to the symptoms of COVID-19. That said, we should all also be aware that a fever could be indicative of other communicable diseases that we do not want to spread amongst our community. Therefore, no employee may report to work with a fever above 100.4°, nor should employees report to work with a fever unless their normal temperature is regularly above 98.6° or there is another non-disease related explanation.

While I imagine most of us have the capability to monitor our temperature at home, I recognize that some of us may not have had the opportunity to buy a thermometer before the stores sold out. Starting tomorrow (Friday, March 20), Wellness Center nurse(s) will be available in Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Room 109 (first floor, first door on the right), to take temperatures of staff and faculty who would like assistance. The nurse(s) will be available from 8:15 am – 10:00 am on weekdays until further notice. If you arrive at this screening and there is a line in the lobby, please observe the recommended six feet of social distancing.

Changes to Campus Operations

In light of these increased measures, the trajectory of current governmental guidance, and continued concerns voiced by employees, the University is requiring that, as of March 23, all employees work remotely—except those who must report in person to carry out key necessary functions. The latter includes, but is not limited to, faculty who need to come to their classrooms or offices to teach online, online learning support

personnel, residence life staff who work directly with remaining resident students, Wellness Center staff, identified Physical Plant staff necessary for the continued operations of campus, etc. This is not an all-encompassing list and certain positions within every area of the operations of the University will likely be designated as necessary. The decision on each position will be made in consultation with each employee and his or her supervisor with final approval by the relevant divisional administrator (Note: This means the VPAA for Faculty and Academic Affairs staff).

While I know the circumstances in which we find ourselves cause great concern for all of us, the University remains open and essential operations must continue. We still have thousands of students relying on us to finish out this semester!

We are determined to ensure that the modifications to our operations caused by the coronavirus will not impact our existing commitments to compensate and continue existing benefits for Franciscan University employees, whether part time or full time. We will, therefore, honor all existing commitments through at least Friday, April 3, 2020. The length of this crisis is difficult to predict at this point, as are the economic ramifications. Prior to April 3, 2020, we will reassess this matter considering the length of time of the crisis or significant changes in circumstances, but our hope and plan is to weather this crisis together.

Our prior communication indicated that employees would be required to use accrued sick and vacation time to cover work absences related to COVID-19, prior to the University sick donation bank kicking in. That is no longer the case. We are making the commitment to providing wage and benefit continuation through at least April 3, 2020, retroactively to the date of our prior announcement (March 13, 2020). More information will be shared regarding specific interim timekeeping procedures as we approach the payroll deadline for hourly staff.

To be clear, those who must report for work will have to do so. Those who can work remotely will have to do so. Those who fall into neither category may be asked to perform other functions for their units or schools or to take on tasks elsewhere at the University. Whether or not these employees are able to be re-deployed, we will honor existing compensation and benefit commitments through at least April 3, 2020.

We need to be as flexible as possible as we navigate our way through these challenges. It is important to understand that these various work statuses (reporting to work, working from home, or temporary paid furlough) are not mutually exclusive. For example, it may be necessary for someone to report to work one day, work remotely 14 hours during the week, and not work the remainder of their normally scheduled hours

for the week. Again, the details of the arrangement should be worked out between employees and supervisors with approval from the division administrator. Once more, regardless of the circumstances, or actual hours worked, we will honor existing compensation and benefit commitments through at least April 3, 2020.

Salt and Light

I know that I speak for the entire leadership team when I tell you that I have been truly inspired by the level of dedication, collaboration, and concern that I have witnessed over the last several weeks. What we are accomplishing here in the face of extreme, ever-changing challenges is nothing short of a miracle.

As we prepare for many of us to move our work off campus and disperse, I want to offer some ideas of how we can help to recreate this miracle in our communities. Our University has been and continues to be a beacon of light and hope to the Church and our world. Each one of us shares in this call—not only by what we do when we are here but what we do in our homes and in the broader community.

I'd encourage all of us to consider how we can let the light of Christ shine through us in these difficult times—that our light might shine before others, so they may witness our good deeds and give glory to God. Consider how you can provide care and support to the most vulnerable among us—particularly the elderly and homebound, check up on them, offer to go shopping for them, or deliver meals to them. Donate blood. Donate food or your time to a shelter or foodbank. I spoke to the Rev. Ashley Steele today who expressed a great need for both. If you are willing or able to help the Urban Mission in any way call 740.282.8010.

Questions?

I know that we are all operating with a great deal of uneasiness and uncertainty about our future. There is a lot that changes every day—and sometimes hour by hour. We are continuing to monitor these circumstances and to communicate as promptly and transparently as possible. If you have any concerns or questions, do not hesitate to let me know (office: 740-283-6445, cell: 740-317-9964, email: bpergi@franciscan.edu).

Peace and blessings,
Brenan Pergi
Vice President of Human Resources
Franciscan University of Steubenville