

## SPECIAL BULLETIN TO STUDENTS MARCH 6, 2020

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As a follow-up to the recent special bulletin you received this week on the coronavirus, the following are some important safety strategies to keep in mind when travelling off campus during spring break:

### **Stay up to date on travel restrictions**

- We encourage members of the Franciscan community to strongly consider deferring non-essential international travel during spring break and in the months ahead, keeping in mind the following:
- Many countries have only recently gained the capacity to reliably test for COVID-19, so the reported data underestimates the number of cases worldwide. Franciscan University continues to assess travel risks based upon the number of cases, degree of community spread, public health and medical infrastructure, and other factors. Please check for any new travel restriction updates before departing the United States.
- Please stay actively alert to changes and developments that may affect your plans travelling domestically or internationally.
  - Monitor travel advisories daily through the Center for Disease Control (CDC), including potential restrictions on border crossings.
  - Countries you visit may decide to implement travel restrictions with very little notice, impacting your ability to return to campus.
  - Airlines may cancel/limit flights in or out of a country or region.
  - Additional quarantine measures may be applied by the U.S. and other countries. Re-entry to the U.S. could be restricted.
- As a reminder, currently, the [CDC has travel alerts](#) in place for China, South Korea, Japan, Iran, Italy, and Hong Kong. The University is prohibiting official University travel to these highly impacted areas. Any student or employee who travels to any area where a travel alert is in place must self-identify by disclosing their travel plans to the University using the [University's Travel Registration Form](#) (*you must be logged into*

*MyFranciscan for the link to work*). Students and employees traveling to these areas may be required to be quarantined or self-isolate for the duration of a normal incubation period (generally two weeks) prior to returning to classes or work. All students and employees are advised to stay apprised of travel guidelines from the CDC.

- Amid this uncertainty, any travel, domestic or international, could heighten your risk of exposure. If conditions change in a location where you are visiting or traveling through, you may incur travel delays and mandatory quarantines. Also, please keep in mind that government-issued travel and screening mandates and airline operations could change while you are away, impacting your return plans. We cannot guarantee that impacted students or employees will be able to seamlessly return to school or work.

### **Reduce your risk of infection**

- Travelers should try to avoid contact with passengers who look or sound sick and should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds OR use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. The CDC warns that these solutions do not kill all germs.
- Remember that face masks are *not* necessary unless the person wearing them is sick and is preventing the spread of droplets from their own sneezing or coughing.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Get adequate sleep and eat well balanced meals.
- Practice good hygiene habits, i.e., cover your mouth with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing (if you do not have a tissue, you should cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not your hands)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands or after touching surfaces.
- Clean and disinfect “high touch” areas.

### **Help prevent “community spread”**

- Whether or not you are traveling far from home during spring break, this is a great time to talk more about preventing “community spread” of any kind

of virus. You should never share cups, bottles, bites of food, or any device that goes into someone's mouth, nose or eyes.

- If you are sick, you are strongly discouraged from attending events.
- Limit in-person contact when attending events.

### **Create a back-up plan**

- Make sure you have a solid back-up plan in case of any kind of disruption to your travel. Conditions can change rapidly at any time.
- Be sure to travel with extras of any medication you normally take, along with a cold and flu medication, and a fever-reducing medication like acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Hand wipes and/or sanitizers are always recommended, of course, along with wiping down commonly used surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, hair dryers, remote controls) in hotels and rental properties.

### **Ways to manage Fears and Anxieties**

- Get the facts. Stay informed with the latest health and campus information.
- Keep things in perspective. Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you spend watching or listening to upsetting media coverage. Although you'll want to keep informed — especially if you have loved ones in affected countries — remember to take a break from watching the news and focus on the things that are positive in your life and things you have control over.
- Be mindful of your assumptions about others. Also, someone who has a cough or a fever does not necessarily have coronavirus.
- Stay healthy by adopting proper hygienic habits. If you do not have a tissue, you should cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not your hands.
- Keep connected. Maintaining social networks can help maintain a sense of normalcy and provide valuable outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress.
- Seek additional help. Individuals who feel an overwhelming worry or anxiety can seek additional professional mental health support.