

Subject: Health Update
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 4:56:08 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: Vice President for Student Affairs
Attachments: image001.png

Dear WCU Campus Community,

Please know that West Chester University does not have any reported or confirmed cases of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus at this time. Due to public health concerns, we caution the University community about sharing information that has not been confirmed or disseminated by the University's official communication channels.

The following information is provided to West Chester University based on current updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization, and guidance from the American College Health Association.

What is Student Health Services doing about 2019-nCoV?

Student Health Services providers are informed and prepared to test, report and respond as required based on established protocols by the CDC and World Health Organization. Any concerns will be reported to the Chester County Health Department for additional guidance on infection control.

What is novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?

2019-nCoV is a newly identified coronavirus that is causing an outbreak of pneumonia illness. It was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.

Since then, the virus has been identified in multiple other countries, including cases in the U.S.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [human coronaviruses](#) are common throughout the world and usually cause mild to moderate illness in people. This new virus is a public health concern because:

- It is newly identified and so much is still unknown about it.
- Two other human coronaviruses, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV, have caused severe illness.

What is the risk?

The CDC considers this new virus a public health concern based on current information. However, the immediate health risk to the general U.S. public is considered low at this time. The CDC and the World Health Organization are closely monitoring the situation and providing ongoing guidance.

Symptoms and transmission:

[Symptoms](#) may be flu-like, ranging from mild to serious, and include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

Person-to-person spread is occurring, although it is unclear exactly how it is transmitted and how easily the virus spreads between people.

If you travel to/through Wuhan or other parts of China:

The CDC recommends [avoiding non-essential travel to Wuhan, China](#). Chinese officials have closed transport within and out of Wuhan, including buses, subways, trains, and the airport. If you must travel:

- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Avoid animals (alive or dead), animal markets, and products that come from animals (such as uncooked meat).
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Older adults and travelers with underlying health issues may be at risk for more severe disease and should discuss travel to Wuhan with their health care provider.

As the health and safety of all WCU students is a critical priority, the University's College of Business and Public Management has cancelled its spring break travel to China as part of the MGT 387 course. No other student travel to China is planned at this time.

Treatment:

People infected with 2019-nCoV should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. Currently, there is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for 2019-nCoV infection. (source: [CDC](#))

Prevention:

There is no vaccine to prevent this virus, and the [CDC](#) advises that the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Currently, 2019-nCoV has not been found to be spreading in the U.S., so there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public to take.

Here are everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Follow with hand washing or sanitizing.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as cell phones, keyboard, and doorknobs.

Recommendations for people with respiratory symptoms:

If you have symptoms of fever, cough, and/or difficulty breathing and in the last 14 days you:

- Traveled to Wuhan, or
- Visited an affected region in China, or
- Had close contact with someone who had traveled to an affected region in China and had respiratory symptoms.

You should:

- Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Students experiencing respiratory symptoms may contact Student Health Services at 610-436-2509. Students will be routed by phone to a nurse as appropriate and provided instructions to access campus health services during clinic hours. After hours, students should contact their primary health care provider or call a local health care center.
- Employees experiencing respiratory symptoms should contact their doctor's office or nearest local health care center.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Avoid public transportation if ill with respiratory symptoms.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
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Sincerely,

Zebulun R. Davenport

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