

Message from President Neeli Bendapudi  
March 14, 2020

Dear Cardinal Family,

It is in times of challenge that having a community to rely on is most important. In our Cardinal community of care, we cherish, support and are there for one another. Just as our campus community serves as a primary home for so many of our students, it also is an important source of income and the foundation of the livelihoods for so many of our staff and faculty. I take that reality and responsibility seriously. To that end, I want to share two additional actions we will take to prioritize our community's health and wellness.

Experts tell us the best way to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 is to maintain social distance. This involves minimizing the number of people in a given space and increasing the physical distance between any two individuals. **Effective immediately, all events hosted by the University of Louisville or at a University of Louisville facility will be postponed or cancelled through April 5th.** Academic and administrative units may continue to hold meetings as the university remains open and operational. However, we recommend that these meetings be conducted virtually

We have been working diligently over the past several days on our next step: to minimize faculty and staff presence on campus, while making sure there is no interruption to the operations of our university. My leadership team and I have developed an emergency temporary telecommuting policy so as many of our staff and faculty as possible can work remotely.

**No later than Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup>, you will hear from your Dean, Vice President, Vice Provost or their designee, about your eligibility to work from home, effective date to do so and general work assignments.** This decision will depend on whether your work can be accomplished remotely, and whether you have the equipment to do so. (For example, if you access highly sensitive UofL information, and you do not have a university laptop or a secure computer at home, your supervisor will make every effort to assist you in obtaining the equipment as soon as possible.) Remote work may begin as soon as you have authorization from the VP, dean, vice provost (or designee).

If you receive authorization to work remotely, you **should work from home** within the following parameters.

- Remain available and on call during your office's normally scheduled hours.
- Continue to document the time you work remotely the same as you would on campus. (non-exempt staff).
- Post contact information on your office door as well as your voicemail and email.
- Review and comply with the attached "Temporary Telecommuting Guidelines for Employees."

The reality is that not all of our employees will be able to work remotely. In order to remain open and continue to serve our student population, we will still need staff to be physically present in the workplace (e.g. custodial, housing, public safety, security, mail processing, libraries, student recreation center, etc.). Also, our Health Sciences Center schools (medicine, dentistry, nursing and public health) will be making determinations based on patient care. In all these instances, your deans, vice presidents, and vice provosts are fully committed to creating staggered work schedules, whenever possible, so we can maximize social distance.

The first step we took to protect our faculty and staff who are more vulnerable to COVID-19 and/or have caregiving responsibilities for those who are, was to reduce the number of students on campus. While younger people seem to be less at risk, we were concerned about the risk they may pose to our faculty and staff. Given the uncertainty of where students may have traveled over Spring break, and the certainty that classrooms are confined spaces, we prioritized moving our classes to online and remote instruction. To our faculty who have had to adapt to remote instruction, and to the staff who are assisting in this change, a big Thank You. This change will ensure our students are able to continue their studies, and progress and graduate. We also encouraged all students who can stay away from campus to do so.

Additionally, we also recommended students who are able to do so to please stay away from campus and return home. Again, for many of our students, we are their home, and options to leave campus are not viable. We are committed to providing all the services and support these students will need.

Check on your colleagues and neighbors. Be considerate when setting up schedules. Continue to follow [social distancing and preventative hygiene practices](#). Continue to review the information on the [UofL COVID-19 page](#) for the latest information. We need to be physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually resilient. We can only do that as One Cardinal Family.

Neeli

[Emergency Temporary Telecommuting Guidelines for Employees \(PDF\)](#)