University of Alabama System
Interim Emergency Policy Statement Regarding the 2019 Coronavirus

Each University of Alabama System campus is a global institution with community members who are engaged in University-sponsored international work and travel. The personal health and safety of the faculty, staff and students at each campus is our highest priority. The University of Alabama System has developed this Interim Emergency Policy in response to the public health risks posed by the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This is designated as an interim policy due to the dynamic nature of available information on COVID-19. This policy may be revised on short notice as new information becomes available.

It is important to note that, at this time, there are no identified COVID-19 cases on the System campuses or in the State of Alabama.

To assess the impact of the virus on faculty, staff, and students, a dedicated team comprised of members from throughout the UA System, including our clinical and infection prevention experts, is monitoring the outbreak and utilizing guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization, and international governments and health agencies. The goal of this interim policy is to protect the health, safety and well-being of each university community, as well as surrounding communities. The System recognizes that this interim policy will create some challenges and further recognizes that it cannot eliminate every risk of potential exposure to this disease. We expect cooperation and compliance to maintain a safe and healthy environment for everyone. Faculty, staff, students, and visiting scholars who fail to comply with this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

COVID-19 Outbreak

COVID-19, also referred to as SARS-CoV2, 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, over 80,000 cases have been identified in multiple countries including the U.S. This new virus is a public health concern because of the rapid global spread and the fact that it can be transmitted from infected people who have no symptoms. Available data suggest that COVID-2 causes severe illness in about 15% of those infected, and is fatal in about 2%. There is currently no approved medication to treat or prevent the virus.
Travel Restrictions and Guidelines
We are taking all available precautions to protect and keep our community informed. While there are currently no identified COVID-19 cases on our campuses or in our state, based on the expanding global outbreak, the significant risk of exposure during international travel, and guidance from experts in public health and infectious disease, the University of Alabama System is implementing travel guidelines and restrictions. All University-sponsored international travel to CDC Level 2 and 3 destinations (COVID-19) is suspended effective immediately. This currently includes: China (including Hong Kong), South Korea, Japan, Iran and Italy. Faculty, staff and students MAY NOT TRAVEL to these countries for University business or academic purposes (“University-sponsored travel”), including but not limited to study abroad or other international academic work, research or grant activity, internships, conferences or presentations, teaching or training, performances, recruiting, or athletic competitions.

University-sponsored travel to other countries outside of North America (designated CDC Level 1 (COVID-19)) is strongly discouraged at this time. Individuals who choose to travel to a CDC Level 1 destination at this time should know that the global situation is rapidly evolving, and the risk of acquiring COVID-19 may change abruptly. Moreover, disruptions in return travel may occur and the possibility of quarantine upon return to the U.S. cannot be excluded. For this reason, faculty, staff, and students traveling on University-sponsored business or programs to Level 1 countries will have to sign a waiver acknowledging these risks. We expect such travelers to frequently check our policy on our website at http://uasystem.edu/ua-system-coronavirus-information-and-resources/. This policy will be updated urgently to reflect any changes in the course of the disease in these destinations as well. We highly recommend that you be mindful of potential associated risk of disruptions to your reentry to the United States and your ability to successfully return to work or class. We urge you to consult guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and U.S. Department of State prior to and during your trip and exercise caution when traveling to these countries.

While this policy does not inhibit or restrict the travel of individuals traveling on personal business or affiliate programs (i.e., travel that is not university sponsored but related to academic or business pursuits – e.g., travel through another institution or program), the UA System strongly encourages our faculty, staff, and students to consider this policy when making decisions to continue on or schedule travel to any of the affected countries.
A list of travel watch, alert and warning levels and affected countries are maintained on the CDC website. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html

All domestic and online classes and activities will continue as scheduled.

**Travel From Impacted Countries**

Any and all travelers returning to the U.S. or coming to the U.S. to participate in University-sponsored business or programs, must comply with all U.S. re-entry and quarantine requirements in place before returning to the university community.

For travelers returning to campus due to these travel restrictions, the following applies:

- **Employees** – Each campus Human Resources representatives will work with departments to support you and to ensure compliance with these applicable restrictions and quarantine requirements.

- **Faculty** – Each campus Human Resources representatives will work with departments to support you and to ensure compliance with these applicable restrictions and quarantine requirements.

- **Students** – Each campus Office for Student Affairs and International Study-Abroad office will work with the appropriate deans and academic offices to ensure students who must observe a quarantine period are not penalized academically and receive assistance, if necessary, with related matters.

- **Medical Residents and Fellows** – Residents and fellows returning from travel to or through an impacted country must call their program directors to determine how missed rotation times due to the self-isolation period will be managed. The Graduate Medical Education office will ask program directors to remind any residents and fellows who have returned from travel to or through an impacted country within the past 14 days to contact the Student/Employee Health service on their campus immediately.

- **Visitors** – Visitors (e.g., scholars, student interns, applicants, family, guests) who traveled from or through an impacted country may not come to campus (including off-campus U.S. sites) during a quarantine requirement. Visiting scholars and student interns traveling from or through an
impacted country who have not yet departed that country will have the start time for their visas deferred by two months (period to be reevaluated weekly).

**Personal Travel**

With respect to personal travel, we recognize that many members of our community may have international travel plans. This interim policy is not intended to impede travel related to family and other personal obligations. Travel of this nature, including travel as part of an affiliate program not sponsored by the University (i.e., travel that is not university sponsored but related to academic or business pursuits – e.g., travel through another institution or program), is considered (as in the past) to be personal travel. It will be subject to any regulations and advisories of the U.S. government and other relevant agencies. Personal travelers will be required to comply with all U.S. re-entry and quarantine requirements in place, and must verify to the University that they have done so prior to returning to the university community. Employees and students taking personal trips to an impacted country (including layovers through an impacted country) must be prepared to comply with self-isolation requirements upon their return.

**Resources and Updates**

We understand that many members of our community may have upcoming spring break travel, conferences or summer study abroad plans that this suspension may affect. We further understand that the longer the travel restrictions remain in place, more questions will arise related to future plans for international travel. Administrators at each campus are continuously evaluating and receiving advice on potential impacts and will provide future information and guidance. For up-to-date health and campus policy information concerning 2019 novel Coronavirus, please visit your campus resource page found here:

University of Alabama: [http://international.ua.edu/iss/](http://international.ua.edu/iss/)

University of Alabama at Birmingham: [https://www.uab.edu/news/coronavirus](https://www.uab.edu/news/coronavirus)

University of Alabama in Huntsville: [https://www.uah.edu/announcements/fac-staff/14622-coronavirus-precaution](https://www.uah.edu/announcements/fac-staff/14622-coronavirus-precaution)