

In Words

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## Coronavirus Preparedness February 28, 2020

Office of Communications

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Dear Kenyon Families,

We continue to follow reports of the global spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and, while there remain no confirmed cases in Ohio, Kenyon is actively making preparations to support our community as circumstances evolve. President Decatur has appointed a task force with representatives from academic and student affairs, as well as facilities and admissions, to monitor the changing conditions and to develop both short- and long-term response plans. The task force will coordinate with Kenyon's emergency preparedness team (KEPT), local and global health authorities and our international program partners.

We shared the following summary of precautionary measures with the Kenyon community today, and I want to share it with you as well.

### **Useful Links**

For the most up to date information about coronavirus, please refer to the websites of the U.S. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [Ohio Department of Health](#) (ODH).

### **Staying Healthy**

The most important precaution each of us can take is to avoid being exposed to the virus. In addition, the CDC recommends the following practices to help prevent the spread of respiratory illness:

1. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
3. Stay home when you are sick.
4. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
5. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
6. Follow the [CDC's recommendations](#) for using a facemask.
7. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

If you are experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness — fever, cough, difficulty breathing — contact your primary care physician or, for students who are on campus, the Cox Health and Counseling Center at 740-427-5525.

### **Spring Break Travel**

Many of you will travel over spring break (student residences close at noon tomorrow, February 29, and re-open at 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 14), and we encourage you to remain vigilant about health protection as you enjoy time with family and friends. We urge you to consult [CDC travel warnings](#) and to exercise prudence regarding international travel, which could run the risk of quarantine in a foreign country if the virus advances. We advise you to keep records of where you travel, should there be a question of exposure upon your return.

### **After Spring Break**

As global transmission continues, the CDC expects more cases of coronavirus to be identified in the U.S. Our campus health professionals are closely following the CDC's guidance and working with the Knox County Health Department on screening and isolation protocols, should they be necessary. We will provide timely updates on any changes in local health conditions and to academic, residential or administrative operations.

### **Off Campus Study**

The Center for Global Engagement is in close contact with students studying off campus. No Kenyon students are on programs in China or South Korea, where the CDC has issued a [Level 3 warning](#) (avoid nonessential travel). Kenyon has four students on programs in Italy, two in Japan, and none in Iran, where the CDC has issued a [Level 2 alert](#) (practice enhanced travel precautions). As with the campus community, we urge students, faculty and staff who are abroad for any reason this semester to consult [CDC travel warnings](#) and to exercise caution when traveling.

**International Students**

There are students at Kenyon whose home countries have been hit hard by the coronavirus; they understandably may be feeling anxiety about their friends and families. Some students may not be able to return home in the summer, and we will work with them to understand and explore their options. We appreciate everyone in the Kenyon community extending their kindness and support to those who are affected.

We thank you for your continued partnership in promoting a healthy Kenyon community.

Sincerely,

Meredith Harper Bonham '92  
Vice President for Student Affairs

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