



AMERICAN
COLLEGE
HEALTH
ASSOCIATION

ACHA COVID-19 Update: March 5, 2020

These updates have been provided by ACHA's COVID-19 Task Force. Please forward this message to others on campus who may benefit. Non-members can subscribe to receive these and other messages [here](#). We will continue to update the [COVID-19 webpage](#) with important alerts and resources.

ACHA Guidelines Available

The guidelines, Preparing for COVID-19, (dated March 3, 2020), were developed by the ACHA COVID-19 Task Force with support from the American College Health Foundation, and aid college health staff and campus administrators in preparing for COVID-19 and related issues on their campuses. [View the guidelines here](#).

CDC Guidance on Student Foreign Travel

On March 1, CDC provided guidance to institutes of higher education (IHEs) for [student foreign travel](#) with the primary recommendation to “**consider postponing or canceling student foreign exchange programs.**”

CDC’s wording of “consider” postponing or cancelling programs is in line with typical medical guidelines and recommendations which leave room for clinical judgement and the many shades of grey associated with individual cases. However, IHE’s risk management and legal counsels prefer clear, unambiguous language and recommendations.

Additionally, CDC’s statement that the “IHE should **consider** asking current program participants to return to their home country” was similarly ambiguous. Some IHEs are interpreting this wording as a recommendation to send international students studying in the U.S. back to their home country, raising additional questions.

As IHEs consider and evaluate their international academic programs:

- Monitor CDC travel advisories and review the CDC’s Geographic Risk Assessment for COVID-19 Transmission. Avoid sending students to any country with a level 2 or level 3 travel health notice.
- Consider the academic value of the experience if cultural sites are closed, social gatherings are cancelled, and opportunities to interact with the local population are curtailed.
- Discuss with risk management or legal counsel.

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- Ensure policies and procedures outlining emergency response plans, contact information, and support services for the participants are in place and have been meticulously reviewed.
- Evaluate the feasibility of distance learning to replace in-class lectures.
- Encourage students with spring or summer academic-related international travel plans to proactively communicate goals and contingency plans with the sponsoring departments or faculty.
- Advise students with underlying health conditions that may place them at higher risk for COVID-19 morbidity or mortality to discuss their travel plans with their health care provider.

CDC Guidance for Returning Travelers

CDC has released [new guidance advising travelers returning](#) from international locations with widespread or ongoing community spread (Level 3 Travel Health Notice) practice social distancing for 14 days. Campuses should be prepared to support students during this period academically and personally. They should also communicate this recommendation to their community and arriving visitors.

Domestic Travel

As more communities in the United States experience community transmission, institutions of higher education will also have to consider concerns about domestic travel, such as:

- adopting flexible refund policies for visitors arriving for an event
- developing contingency plans for event and travel cancellations
- supporting alternative arrangements for individuals who may be concerned about travel due to underlying health conditions, and
- advising travelers to use discretion and monitor local conditions closely before travel.

New CDC Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education

CDC has released new comprehensive [guidance for universities](#) both prior to a case in the community and in the event of a case. Campus health leaders should review this guidance closely and work with campus response teams to incorporate these items into planning.

See all updates here: https://www.acha.org/ACHA/Resources/Topics/COVID-19_Update.aspx

ACHA COVID-19 Page: <https://www.acha.org/COVID-19>