



Western Nebraska Community College

WNCC Faculty, Staff, and Students,

WNCC would like to share some important information with each of you regarding the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak to ensure you have accurate information as we head into spring break week.

The current outbreak of COVID-19 is spreading quickly worldwide. This new virus causes mild to moderate respiratory illness (fever, cough, and shortness of breath) and, in some cases, serious medical complications. While the vast majority of cases of Novel Coronavirus have occurred in mainland China, other countries like **Iran, Italy, Japan and South Korea** are emerging hot spots. As the virus continues to spread, other countries may see a surge in the number of cases. For more information on COVID-19, please see the [COVID-19 Factsheet](#).

Before traveling for spring break, it is recommended that each of you do the following:

- Check the CDC Travel Advisories [webpage](#) regularly for updates prior to traveling.
- Check the State Department Travel Alerts [webpage](#) regularly for updates prior to traveling.

Do not travel if you or others with you are sick. If you are sick or believe you may be sick with COVID-19, please follow the recommendations listed in the [Sick with COVID-19](#) factsheet attached to this email.

After returning from travel, you should monitor yourself for any symptoms related to COVID-19.

As the Environmental Health & Safety Coordinator, I'm monitoring the current situation for updates, and critical trends. WNCC will work closely with public school systems, emergency managers, and public health officials for each campus to share information and ensure proper response to any suspected cases.

Additionally, WNCC is currently reviewing and evaluating existing epidemic plans and procedures, and has begun to implement recommended mitigation procedures for each campus to include:

- Continued communication to the campus community regarding response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Enhancing infection control / cleaning practices at each campus.
- Ensuring effective cleaning materials and hand hygiene products are readily available to each department and classroom for use by staff, students, and faculty to assist in infection prevention.

Please use these materials as necessary to clean work spaces, desks, tables, or any other "highly touched surfaces."

Please remember the following infection control practices when traveling or within the college campus:

- **Most importantly, wash your hands frequently with soap and water for more than 20 seconds**, especially after using the restroom, touching public items, coughing, sneezing, and before touching your face and eating.
- **If soap and water are not available**, use alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizer) that is 60% alcohol or greater.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.**
- **Cover your mouth and nose** with your elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. If using a tissue, immediately throw the tissue away; do not store them in your pocket, then wash your hands.
- **Avoid public transport as much as possible.** Confined spaces such as buses, trains, subways, and airplanes may put you at a higher risk of infection.
- **Maintain situational awareness when in public spaces** - i.e. be aware of your surroundings (including people who are sick) and try to distance yourself as appropriate.
- **Be aware that you may be quarantined upon entry/departure if traveling outside the United States.**
- **Practice social distancing:** stay at least two meters (six feet) away from you and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. You can inhale droplets that contain the virus if you are close to someone who is coughing or sneezing.
- **Avoid large public gatherings if possible.**
- **Avoid spitting in public.**
- **Avoid unnecessary contact with people and highly touched surfaces** (i.e. shaking hands, doorknobs, others' phones, public computers) as the droplets from those who may be sick can live on surfaces for long periods of time.

WNCC has made available Phone Soap machines across all three campuses for which staff students and faculty can sanitize their smartphones to help prevent the spread of illness.

The locations are as follows:

Scottsbluff Campus

- Human Resources
- John N. Harms Center
- Learning Commons
- Administrative Offices
- Room G260 - Main Building
- Room D8 - Main Building

Alliance Campus

- Main Office

Sidney Campus

- Library

WNCC will keep all staff, students, and faculty updated with information regarding any new critical information regarding COVID-19, new mitigation efforts, or changes to plans and procedures for local epidemics.

Please also understand that at this point, our state and community is virtually unaffected by this situation. However, it is in the best interest of WNCC that we begin to address these issues with planning and mitigate any potential transmission of COVID-19 to our campuses. The intention of this communication is not to induce fear amongst the community, but simply to inform with accurate information and ensure that each of you understands your role in the protection of our campus community.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time. Stay safe and wash your hands!

Respectfully,

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