

What do I need to know?

- The novel coronavirus is a newly identified strain of a known virus family called coronaviruses. The common cold is an example of another strain of a coronavirus. The novel coronavirus strain in this outbreak causes a disease called COVID-19.
- As of March 7th 2020, there are **NO confirmed cases** of COVID-19 in Western Massachusetts.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), your **risk of infection is low**, unless you have recently traveled to affected areas or have been in close contact with an individual with COVID-19.
- If you do experience symptoms, contact Student Health Services at 413-748-3175 BEFORE going to work, attending class, or other group gatherings.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19, and how can I stay safe?

- Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath and may appear 2-14 days after exposure.
- There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19.
- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure and to follow everyday preventative actions to reduce the spread of respiratory diseases, including:
 - Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
 - Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Regular cleaning and disinfection of household surfaces, including your cell phone and computer.
- The CDC does not recommend the use of facemasks to protect healthy individuals.
- You can help protect others by staying home when you are sick, and coughing or sneezing into a tissue (rather than your hand or elbow) and throwing the tissue away. If you don't have a tissue handy, cough or sneeze into your elbow. Avoid coughing or sneezing near other people.

Is it safe to travel?

- The CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to China, Iran, South Korea, Italy, Japan, and Hong Kong.
- As of March 7th, there are no domestic travel warnings for US residents.
- The most up-to-date travel information from the CDC can be found at [CDC Travel - FAQ and Answers](#) and [CDC COVID-19 Information for Travel](#).

Are study abroad programs and international travel affected?

- Springfield College is carefully monitoring all international locations where members of the campus community are studying and traveling this semester.
- As of February 28th, all students studying abroad in Italy have been withdrawn. Students returning from affected regions should self-monitor for symptoms and not visit campus for a period of 14 days. No other students studying abroad have been withdrawn.
- As of March 3rd, all upcoming college sponsored international travel is suspended.
- As of March 3rd, Springfield College advises all students currently studying abroad to cancel unnecessary travel outside of their host community.

How is Springfield College responding and preparing?

- Springfield College is following guidance from the CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO), and is working closely with state and local public health authorities to develop protocols and to reduce the possibility of exposure to COVID-19, including recommending a 14-day self-quarantine for any person deemed at risk of exposure.
- Springfield College has a plan to care for members of the campus community who need to observe the 14-day self-quarantine period, including a care plan for the affected persons, a prepared location removed from other community members for affected persons who cannot return home, and a communication plan to get information to those affected.

- The most up-to-date information from Springfield College can be found at <http://springfield.edu/coronavirus>.
- Springfield College's Health Center staff are available to answer additional questions.

What do quarantine and isolation mean?

- Self-quarantine is **voluntary**, and means that healthy people who suspect potential exposure **do not go to work, school, or public areas**, and avoid other members of their household, including using a separate bedroom and bathroom if possible.
- Mandatory quarantine could be enforced and involves the same instructions to affected persons.
- Isolation occurs when confirmed cases of COVID-19 are separated from others for the duration of their illness (until they test negative for the virus twice 24-hours apart).
- The CDC recommends anyone with potential exposure (including returning home from an affected area) self-quarantine for 14 days.

Where can I learn more about COVID-19?

- The [CDC](#) and the [WHO](#) are both excellent resources for comprehensive and up-to-the-minute information.
- If needed, updates specific to Springfield and Massachusetts will be posted on the following websites:
 - [Springfield Department of Health and Human Services](#)
 - [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#)
- Johns Hopkins University is maintaining a [live map](#) of the COVID-19 outbreak, including global distribution of cases and information on the outcome of confirmed cases.