Lower Columbia College Campus Community--

As you probably know, a new respiratory illness called "COVID-19” has reached the United States with many confirmed cases in Washington state. As a member of our campus community, you likely have questions around our college’s preparedness and response.

There are no confirmed cases in our local community at this time. The Cowlitz County Department of Health and Human Services is not recommending closing educational facilities at this point.

Please be assured that LCC is monitoring the situation closely, and a campus closure could occur in the future if necessary to protect the health and safety of our students and employees.

As of this writing, we don’t know when or if the virus will spread to our community, or if we will have any related closures or event cancelations. We are making preparations so we will be ready to respond quickly should an outbreak occur, according to our established Emergency Operations Procedures.

Our custodial team will be increasing the frequency and intensity of cleaning all common and instructional areas effective immediately.

We will be carefully evaluating each community event hosted on campus for potential risks, with cancelations possible at any time.

Regular updates will be provided to the campus community as new information becomes available.

**Our healthcare partners are recommending that students, staff and volunteers should seek medical evaluation for COVID-19 if they are:**

1. Ill with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing AND have traveled from China in the last 14 days.
2. Ill with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing AND have been identified by public health officials as a recent close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case or had recent close contact with someone who is being evaluated for COVID-19 infection.

**What you can do to prevent infection:**

* Stay home when you are sick.
* Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the restroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose.
* Help young children do the same. If hands are visibly dirty, use soap and water to clean them.
* If soap and water are not readily available, using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
* Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
* Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer (if soap and water are not readily available).
* Take care of your immune system. Get plenty of rest and fluids, eat fruits and vegetables, do not smoke, take steps to reduce stress, and exercise regularly.

Additional Resources:

[Centers for Disease Control](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html)

[World Health Organization](https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus)

[Classroom Cleaning: Tips for Teachers](https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/EnvironmentalHealth/ClassroomCleaning)

[Hand Washing to Prevent Illness at School](https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/EnvironmentalHealth/handwashing)

[Infectious Disease Control Guide for School Staff](https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/healthservices/pubdocs/infectiousdiseasecontrolguide.pdf)

Sincerely,

Christopher C. Bailey, J.D., President
Janel Skreen, Director of Environmental Health and Safety