

Information and Guidelines: 2019 Novel Coronavirus

Dear Fairfield University and Prep Communities –

We are sharing the following information and guidelines from the American College Health Association as they relate to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus. Fairfield University and Prep have no confirmed cases of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus at this time and have no patients under investigation.

Information About 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) for the Campus Community

What is novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?

2019-nCoV is a newly identified coronavirus that is causing an outbreak of pneumonia illness. It was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Since then, the virus has been identified in multiple other countries, including cases in the U.S.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [human coronaviruses](#) are common throughout the world and usually cause mild to moderate illness in people. This new virus is a public health concern because:

- It is newly identified, so much is still unknown about it.
- Two other human coronaviruses, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV, have caused severe illness.

What is the risk?

The CDC considers this new virus a public health concern based on current information. However, the immediate health risk to the general US public is considered low at this time. The CDC and the World Health Organization are closely monitoring the situation and providing ongoing guidance.

Symptoms and transmission:

[Symptoms](#) may be flu-like, ranging from mild to serious, and include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing.

Person-to-person spread is occurring, although it's unclear exactly how it is transmitted and how easily the virus spreads between people.

If you travel to/through Wuhan or other parts of China:

(Fairfield Prep note: No Fairfield Prep students or faculty have traveled or have plans to travel to China.)

The CDC recommends [avoiding non-essential travel to Wuhan, China](#). Chinese officials have closed transport within and out of Wuhan, including buses, subways, trains, and the airport. If you must travel:

- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Avoid animals (alive or dead), animal markets, and products that come from animals (such as uncooked meat).
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Older adults and travelers with underlying health issues may be at risk for more severe disease and should discuss travel to Wuhan with their health care provider.

Students who plan to study or travel abroad with university-sponsored programs should contact their program coordinator for updates and guidance.

Treatment:

People infected with 2019-nCoV should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. Currently, there is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for 2019-nCoV infection. (source: [CDC](#))

Prevention:

There is no vaccine to prevent this virus, and the [CDC](#) advises that the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Currently, 2019-nCoV has not been found to be spreading in the U.S., so there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public to take.

Here are everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Recommendations for people with respiratory symptoms:

If you have symptoms of fever, cough, and/or difficulty breathing and in the last 14 days you:

- Traveled to Wuhan, or
- Visited an affected region in China, or
- Had close contact with someone who had traveled to an affected region in China and had respiratory symptoms.

You should:

- Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Do not travel while sick. Please do not get on public transportation.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available

What is the campus health service doing about 2019-nCoV?

The Fairfield University Student Health Center has developed and implemented clinical 2019-nCoV protocols based on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance. The Student Health Center is in ongoing communication with the Connecticut Department of Public Health and following all response recommendations. The Student Health Center will continue to coordinate 2019-nCoV response efforts with University administration and stakeholders.

Please Note: The Student Health Center continues to recommend the annual seasonal influenza vaccine. As stated above, there is no available vaccine against the 2019-nCoV, but influenza ("flu") activity remains widespread in Connecticut.

Employees presenting with flu-like symptoms should consult with their healthcare provider before returning to work.