

March 6, 2020

Students:

As you may be aware, the first case of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been detected in Tennessee. Over the last few weeks you have likely heard much conversation about this virus and the impact that it has had around the world and how we have adjusted a number of our international programs and plans to ensure the safety of our students who are involved in them.

**I want to assure you that the Lipscomb community is prepared to respond to developments related to COVID-19.** Preparedness, education and prevention are critical. Please know that the health and safety of all Lipscomb community members remains the top priority of the university during this challenging time.

Initially, while very concerning in its continuing appearance around the world and now in Middle Tennessee, the virus is still very limited in its occurrence. **While no cases related to COVID-19 have been reported on campus nor have significant risks been identified**, we wanted to share information with you that may be helpful during this time.

### **Preventing Illness**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, the CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- 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.

These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses.

### **Travel Guidelines and Recommendations**

On campus, we are working on a continuous basis to proactively anticipate whatever might develop and be particularly focused on protecting members of the Lipscomb community and continuing the education of our students. In terms of school-sponsored travel, such is fully restricted until further notice to any country or area that meets **any** of the following criteria:

1. Has a rating by the CDC at a Level 2 or higher, or
2. Has a rating by the U.S. Department of State at a Level 3 or higher, or
3. Is restricting or banning travel.

Any student who independently visits a location that meets any of these criteria is restricted from campus for a 14-day isolation period. If this situation applies to you, students should inform Dr. **Randy Bouldin**, vice provost for academics. For additional information on how to gauge your risk of COVID-19 infection, see the CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html>. The university will work with students to minimize disruptions to their academic progress during the isolation period.

When traveling within the United States, general precautions should be taken and we encourage all travelers to be cognizant of less-controlled health environments such as that of airplane travel, large public events and public transportation. Those who plan on personal Spring Break travel should thoroughly research their destinations and continue to stay tuned to the [State Department](#), [CDC](#) and [World Health Organization](#) travel advisories for the most up-to-date information and follow all guidance from these organizations regarding self-quarantine policies based on travel locations visited.

### **What To Do if You Are Sick**

Those who believe they may have been exposed to or infected with the novel coronavirus should seek medical care right away. **Before you go to a clinic, doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead** and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms. Students should contact the [University Health Center](#).

Along with following the CDC recommended guidelines for hygiene and health, we expect students who may have a fever or otherwise exhibit signs of illness to isolate themselves from others in the Lipscomb community, seek assistance from the University Health Center or their health care providers and stay home until symptoms have subsided and they are fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication. A temperature is considered a fever in an adult at 100.4 degrees. Standard practice is to treat the symptoms which are very similar to the cold and flu viruses. This is especially critical for those in high-risk categories due to age or pre-existing health conditions.

The situation is rapidly evolving and recommendations from the CDC and the U.S. Department of State change daily. Members of the Lipscomb community are encouraged to monitor the [CDC](#) and [U.S. Department of State](#) websites.

## Information Resources

Based upon what we know about the COVID-19 virus, it is transmitted both from person-to-person and from infected surfaces. [Here's a link](#) to a video produced by the College of Pharmacy that provides helpful information about the virus. The CDC has provided additional guidance that may be helpful to understand more about the COVID-19 virus and practices in your daily health hygiene that should become practices for all of us:

- [What you need to know about COVID-19](#)
- [Stop the spread of germs](#)

In addition, the Tennessee Department of Health has in depth resources available about the impacts in the state as well as other helpful information that is updated frequently. Visit the site [here](#). You may find additional information about COVID-19 on the [Lipscomb website](#).

For questions about travel and other related information, contact **Kathy Hargis**, associate vice president for risk management, at [kathy.hargis@lipscomb.edu](mailto:kathy.hargis@lipscomb.edu) or 615.966.5661. For health-related questions, please contact the University Health Center at 615.966.6304; 800.333.4358 ext. 6304 or [healthservices@lipscomb.edu](mailto:healthservices@lipscomb.edu).

Please join me in praying for members of our community impacted by the recent severe weather and those students and faculty in study abroad programs during this time.

Blessings,  
Randy Lowry  
President