



NEW MEXICO MILITARY INSTITUTE

Office of the President / Superintendent

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TO: Staff, Faculty, Corps of Cadets

FROM: MG Jerry Grizzle

RE: COVID-19

DATE: March 11, 2020

Considering the inevitable spread of the COVID-19 (coronavirus), I wanted to provide you with the latest updates as to how we at NMMI are preparing for its potential impact to our NMMI community and also provide you with some information as it relates to travel over the Spring Break. The majority of the information that I share comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which has a dedicated website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> the website provides valuable information.

First, I want to acknowledge that each of us worry in terms of how we interpret the risk of and from the virus. Some of us recognize viruses such as COVID-19 as an inevitable part of humanity and if we get sick, then given our various age and health condition, we know that we will most likely survive its exposure. Others are impacted with tremendous anxiety about how it may impact our lives. According to the CDC, the risk at present is low; however, it is expected that more cases will be reported in the coming days. According to the CDC, the greatest risk group is the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions which have otherwise compromised immune systems. Scientists believe the incubation period is five days, but are still recommending a 14 day quarantine for persons who may have come in contact with the virus. At present there are now three reported cases in New Mexico. You can view the NM Governor's press conference, held today, here; <https://www.facebook.com/GovMLG/>

If you are traveling over Spring Break, other states have seen cases with a few states having a significant number of confirmed cases. For more information here is a link of those states that have reported cases

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html#reporting-cases>).

If you are traveling internationally, the CDC has provided advisories regarding the hardest-hit countries and every country in the European Union has reported at least one case.

From a higher education perspective, several universities have temporarily closed or have shifted their courses to all online. These universities are primarily in areas that have incidents of the virus. I have mixed reservations about this strategy, because it is not as simple as closing a university or moving classes to online. We have other factors to consider such as our on-campus student housing populations or our student athletes. Further, at some point we lose the forest for the trees in what it means to at NMMI. But still we must take prudent measures and be prepared.



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- I, along with Dean Murray, have requested a determination as to how the academic departments would offer online courses for all of their subject matters. The plan is to identify any impact that we might have and understand the ramifications before we ever launch a complete online strategy for all courses. The good news is that most courses already have a Canvas shell; however, typically there is much training and support that needs to accompany the courses that are moved online. I am looking for Dean Murray and the Academic staff to create and provide resources and support to adapt courses for distance delivery should decisions be made to go fully online.

- We have also reached out to our NMMI medical staff and the New Mexico Department of Health centers regarding protocol and process to aid any students, staff or faculty with diagnosis and support upon their return from Spring Break and feel they may have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus.

- If you see a student, staff or faculty member experiencing anxiety because of the coronavirus, or for any other reason, please remind them of the counseling services available to them through our Cadet Counseling Center.

- If a student reports they are sick, allow them to stay away from the classroom and make up work study hours or class assignments at a later time. Do not require a doctor's excuse to return to the workplace or the classroom.

- Events/performances will continue as scheduled at this time.

- NMMI-related travel to high risk areas is up to the individual.

- Arrangements are underway to accommodate basic operations in the unlikely event employees may need to work from home. Details will be provided when solidified.

- Custodians are wearing gloves and cleaning door knobs, railings and high traffic areas to help sanitize the Post and reduce any potential spread. We appreciate their hard work and contribution in helping to keep us all safe.

- Hand sanitizing dispensers will remain filled on campus for your use. A limited number of personal hand sanitizers have been ordered and are available upon request.

- Remember your role in this to reduce the risk to campus and loved ones: wash your hands frequently, keep your hands from your face, cover your cough, don't shake hands and stay home if you are not feeling well.

Given the dynamics of our institute and its complexities, one size does not fit all. I count on our leadership to make good judgments and offer understanding. As the COVID-19 progresses around the country and has greater impact to our institution, we will provide updated information.

Have a safe and enjoyable Spring Break.