

# Statement from USM Student Health Services on Coronavirus (COVID-19)

March 2, 2020

University of Southern Mississippi Student Health Services are joining health officials worldwide in closely monitoring the outbreak of illness caused by the newly identified coronavirus (COVID-19). The epicenter of this outbreak is Wuhan, China, but additional cases have been identified in a growing number of other international locations, including the United States. To date, there have been no cases of COVID-19 reported at USM or in Mississippi. However, health officials worldwide recognize that this is a rapidly evolving situation and that recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. State Department, and the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) are being updated frequently as needed.

The USM Moffitt Health Center is strategically monitoring the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as the Mississippi State Department of Health and is working closely with campus partners to prepare for the possibility of COVID-19 at the University. While the risk of COVID-19 to the American public remains low currently, the situation is rapidly evolving and it is important to remain vigilant and cautious. University officials have an Infectious Disease Emergency Response Plan in place that will be activated should the need arise.

Prevention is a key strategy with any infectious illness. We encourage the USM community to continue practicing preventative measures such as hand washing, covering your cough, self-isolation when ill, and disinfecting surfaces regularly.

## **Travel to Areas with Documented Cases**

Students and employees who have traveled from impacted areas in the past 14 days and who have a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing should contact Moffitt Health Center or seek appropriate care immediately. Moffitt Health Center direct line is 601-266-5390.

At present, USM is not approving travel for any faculty, staff or students to countries that have been issued Level 3 status by the CDC. USM is also discouraging travel to any countries with a Level 2 status.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

## **Additional Resources**

The University of Southern Mississippi is offering these resources to those seeking information on the coronavirus (COVID-19).

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- [https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/\\_static/14,0,420.html](https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,0,420.html)
- [https://www.usm.edu/student-health-services/monitoring\\_coronavirus.php](https://www.usm.edu/student-health-services/monitoring_coronavirus.php)

The University will circulate timely notices regarding any changes in the University's strategies to responsibly prevent and monitor these public health concerns.

Sincerely,

Melissa B. Roberts, M.D.  
Executive Director  
Student Health Services at Moffitt Health Center

