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## Guidance for Employees Regarding COVID-19, March 16, 2020

University of Northern Iowa

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# University of Northern Iowa

## Guidance for Employees Regarding COVID-19

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Campus Community,

During this time of time of uncertainty regarding the current pandemic, we'd like to thank you for your flexibility and understanding as we work to develop solutions to keep the semester on track for our students, faculty and staff. It is a time in which guidance and directives change rapidly, and your patience is appreciated as we navigate this situation together.

Last night, state officials announced that there has been a community spread of COVID-19 in Iowa. We'd like to provide additional recommendations and support to employees who are reporting to work on campus during this time.

As you likely know, the practice of "social distancing" - or maintaining a safe distance from others (defined by the CDC as a distance of about six feet) in order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases - is an effective way to protect everyone. At UNI, we already practice social distancing for many by having offices and workstations that are six feet apart or more. We are also encouraging additional social distancing for faculty, staff and students in the weeks ahead.

UNI has already implemented many social-distancing measures by moving all coursework online through at least April 3, temporarily discouraging all meetings and gatherings of 10 or more people, and closing communal buildings like Maucker Student Union, the Wellness/Recreation Center and Rod Library to everyone except building employees.

We strongly encourage employees to move face-to-face meetings online, and to seek larger spaces (the group size should be no larger than  $\frac{1}{3}$  the size of the space) if face-to-face meetings are unavoidable.

We are also communicating with students in the residence halls about observing social distancing, and adding signage to areas across campus that welcome visitors, such as Admissions.

Acting on the guidance of the CDC and Iowa Department of Public Health, we ask that you carefully consider how to implement social-distancing techniques in your workspaces across campus.

These can include:

- Increasing physical space between workers at the worksite

- Staggering work schedules
- Decreasing social contacts in the workplace, such as in-person meetings and group lunches
- Considering alternate team approaches for work schedules
- Limiting large work-related gatherings, such as staff meetings, training sessions and after-work functions
- Considering telework arrangements to help minimize operational disruption

FAQs related to telework are located at [prepare.uni.edu/facultystaff-faq](https://prepare.uni.edu/facultystaff-faq). Additional questions, as well as telework requests, should be directed to your supervisor. Supervisors will be receiving additional guidance from HRS later today.

**As always, we strongly encourage you to stay home if you have a fever or are feeling ill.** In addition, the university [employee assistance program](#) provides resources and support for managing increased feelings of anxiety and stress related to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic via phone, chat or email.

We will continue to provide the campus with additional information regarding COVID-19 and its impact on operations as the situation unfolds. Visit [prepare.uni.edu](https://prepare.uni.edu) regularly for updates.

Thank you for your efforts to keep our campus community safe, and for your dedication to our students.