



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **LACCD CHANCELLOR RODRIGUEZ ISSUES STATEMENT REGARDING DISTRICT PREPAREDNESS FOR CORONAVIRUS AND COVID-19**

LOS ANGELES—Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D., today issued the following statement regarding the District's preparedness and response for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus and the COVID-19 respiratory illness:

*"Our shared concerns about the local, and worldwide, spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus and the COVID-19 respiratory illness are real and understandable. I ask that we all work together in a calm and deliberate manner to protect and inform ourselves and our students. The health and safety of our students, staff and faculty remain a top priority for me, the Board of Trustees, our College Presidents and District Executive Staff.*

*Effective immediately, I have asked Interim Deputy Chancellor Dr. Melinda Nish to lead a COVID-19 Response Team with representatives from the District and our Colleges to help ensure we are proactively engaged at all levels of our organization for any significant impacts in the workplace and in our classrooms; to protect the health and safety of all who study and work at LACCD and to sustain a continuity of operations. Expect regular communications to the LACCD community about our efforts.*

*As already publicly announced by the White House, our Governor and many health officials, we can expect the number of COVID-19 cases to rise in California and other parts the U.S. For the past month, key personnel from the Los Angeles Community College District have been maintaining close, regular contact with state and Los Angeles County public health officials to stay informed of any directives from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, the California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control. We will remain vigilant and continue those efforts.*

*As of March 1, 2020, there are **no** school closures ordered in California; **no official** health orders to cancel public events in the U.S.; and **no** widespread quarantines. We can expect a continual assessment of these situations as conditions unfold. Meanwhile, we will stay alert and prepare to respond as needed.*

*Currently, the best advice and precautions from our public health and medical experts to prevent the spread of any virus includes:*

- *Frequent, thorough hand-washing with soap and water for 20 to 30 seconds, especially after touching commonly used surfaces; or, use hand sanitizer with at least a 60-percent alcohol solution if soap and water not available*
- *Cover all of your coughs and sneezes with a tissue that you properly dispose of; or cough/sneeze into your bent elbow; then wash hands*
- *Stay home if you are sick; stay away from people who are sick*
- *Stop touching your eyes, nose and mouth; if you need to touch them, wash your hands before and after*
- *Make sure you are prepared for this or any other emergency with adequate supplies at home*
- *Remember to get a flu shot; while it won't protect against COVID-19, it can protect you from regular, seasonal flu*

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There continues to be **no** formal recommendation for healthy people to wear masks in public settings; the use of masks is a personal choice and generally reserved for people who are sick and for healthcare workers treating the ill. Preparing on a personal level at home is similar to preparing for any emergency. Make sure you have enough extra food, water, medicines and other emergency supplies for everyone in your household, including pets. Health officials advise that home quarantines can last up to two weeks.

It is important for everyone to stay informed with official information and not to overreact. Stigmatizing or blaming anyone, or any race, because of this situation is disrespectful and simply untrue, and will not be tolerated.

We ask that everyone remain flexible as the situation is dynamic and rapidly changing. All LACCD personnel are asked to direct any questions or concerns to Mr. William Ramirez, LACCD Safety and Emergency Services Manager, (213) 891-2071, [RAMIREW@laccd.edu](mailto:RAMIREW@laccd.edu).

Thank you for your attention and help on this important health and safety matter.”

--Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D.

#### Here are useful links to help stay informed:

L.A. County Department of Public Health

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/>

L.A. County Department of Public Health Guidance for Schools

<http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/GuidanceForSchools.pdf>

Multi language outreach for schools

<http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/SchoolToolkit.pdf>

California Department of Public Health

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>

California Department of Public Health Guidance for Schools and School District

<http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/StateGuidanceForSchools.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

CDC Guidance for Schools

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-for-schools.html>

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#### **About the Los Angeles Community College District**

We are the Colleges of Los Angeles! LACCD ([www.laccd.edu](http://www.laccd.edu)) is the nation's largest community college district, educating about 250,000 students annually at its nine colleges that serve the residents of more than 36 cities and communities from 900 square miles of Los Angeles County. Since 1969, the District has been providing an important learning pathway for students seeking transfer to four-year colleges or universities while also offering two-year degrees and certificated training programs to Southern California's diverse workforce in many specialized trades and professions. Follow us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/LACCD>, @LACCD, and on Twitter, <https://twitter.com/laccd> @laccd and Instagram, [https://www.instagram.com/laccd\\_edu/](https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu/) @laccd\_edu.

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