
From the Chancellor: New county public health order begins at 4 p.m. today

1 message

CU Boulder Chancellor Philip P. DiStefano <chancellor@colorado.edu>

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From the Chancellor

Sept. 24, 2020

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Dear Students, Faculty and Staff,

Thank you for your patience and resilience as we navigate the challenges of the fall semester in a pandemic. As a campus, we are committed to the health and safety of our surrounding community, and we continue to partner with local and state officials to make decisions to help protect public health.

I know the number of recent health and safety announcements may be taking a toll on you all, and I want you to know [we are here to support you](#).

There are three important public health updates I want to share with you:

- Boulder County Public Health enacted a [new public health order](#) **requiring all local city of Boulder residents between the ages of 18 and 22 to avoid gatherings of any size**, building upon the specific public health protocols included in the voluntary self-quarantine we announced last week. There are exceptions for certain class and work requirements. The county will reassess in two weeks, looking at whether there is success in reversing the curve of infection.
- As a further step to contain the outbreak and bend the curve among our undergraduate students, [the same Boulder County Public Health order](#) requires CU students at 36 specific off-campus properties that have been identified as either outbreak sites or posing an increased risk to the community, most being fraternities and sororities, to stay at home to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Affected residents: please read the guidelines thoroughly and **make sure you understand the specific requirements of this order**.
- Our campus was **listed this week in the state of Colorado's COVID-19 outbreak database because of the rate of infection and number of cases among our undergraduate student body**. This action was taken largely to allow public health authorities to consolidate and track COVID-19 cases in our community. Our recent actions—voluntary self-quarantine and a temporary shift to remote instruction—and the county's new order are both designed to help contain this outbreak.

For those in our community who have been infected with COVID-19, you are in my thoughts and I wish you a safe, full and speedy recovery.

While our campus supports the county's public health order, we are also concerned about the impacts it will have on our students. To support all of our students during this time, we will be providing additional care, flexibility and resources for your emotional, physical and academic needs.

- We are enhancing **access to campus health and wellness services** and ensuring students continue to have access to medical care, food and exercise.
- We are working to amplify **our lineup of remote events and programming** that provide social activities and virtual ways to engage for all students.
- We are also **offering flexibility, support and options for students who are struggling to succeed this semester** and would like to consider alternatives for how best to safely complete the fall term.

Ultimately, the choices before each of our students are clear:

1. You can stay in the Boulder area and continue to follow public health guidelines to protect our broader community, and we will support you in every way we can. This is the only way it will be possible to resume in-person instruction in as early as two weeks (though you may choose to continue remote learning at that time). Practicing physical distancing, wearing face coverings and avoiding gatherings are the main ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We strongly encourage students to stay in Boulder and to help reverse the spread by following the county order.
2. You can choose to return to your permanent residence and transition to **fully remote learning** for the remainder of the semester, and we will help you make this change so you may continue your education from wherever you live. Traveling home is not our preference and public health agencies have advised against it. Any students who are isolated or quarantined because they have been diagnosed or exposed to COVID-19 may not be able to travel. If, however, you are permitted to travel and this is your preference, **there are steps you need to take**.
3. You can choose to not follow the rules that protect our community from COVID-19 spread and run the risk of serious health consequences to yourself and others. There may be criminal penalties under the county public health order and/or suspension from the university via our student conduct code and health and safety policy. **Please do not choose this option.**

More guidance on the specific support services and options available for our students during this time is available through our **campus COVID-19 resources webpage**.

Like many of our peer universities across the country, we continue to face new challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some have enacted similar approaches to ours and are successfully reducing their positive cases. I believe we can as well, but only if we work together and make sacrifices for each other.

Please take care of yourselves, each other and our community.

Sincerely,

Phil DiStefano
Chancellor

Office of the Chancellor

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