
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR



May 7, 2020

Dear Washington University community,

As you likely are aware, St. Louis City and County are planning to modify their stay at home orders to allow some non-essential businesses to begin to reopen starting May 18. As you are also aware, we're hard at work on plans to implement a [phased return to normal operations](#) at Washington University. I'm writing today with an update on how these plans are coming together, and what you can expect in the weeks ahead.

Alternate operations to continue

Even as stay at home orders in our region are lifted or modified, we will remain on alternate operations for as long as it takes for us to develop and implement plans to return to normal operations safely, in accordance with guidance from our infectious disease experts and local public health departments. We will continue to closely monitor developments in our local jurisdictions, but will make decisions for the university independently, on our own timeline.

Phased return to work

We are working toward a phased approach to returning employees to campus. On the Danforth Campus, the first phase, which will likely begin around June 1, will bring back a very small number of faculty and staff. This primarily will include employees whose physical presence is necessary for managing essential laboratory research or remote teaching activities. During this first phase, departments and units will take significant steps to reduce the number of people in campus spaces to allow for social distancing, and to implement health and safety precautions, including requiring employees working on campus to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms. Department heads are currently being asked to complete and submit comprehensive

individual plans for a slow and deliberate return to normal operations in their respective areas, and we expect to communicate the specific details of these plans in the next couple weeks. We will make every effort to allow enough time in advance for employees to make arrangements for child care and any other individual needs before returning to work. The second phase of the return to campus will begin later this summer, and many employees will likely continue to work remotely for a period of time.

On the Medical Campus, a gradual return of clinical operations in the hospitals and clinics, and a corresponding return to work for some employees has already begun. Research and educational activities will be phased in over the next few weeks and months following the same principles outlined above, but respecting the unique academic calendars of the professional programs.

Fall semester

The Fall Contingency Planning Committee continues its work, and we anticipate being able to share information about the 2020-21 academic calendar sometime next week. We know for certain that **Washington University will have a fall semester**. We do not know yet exactly what that will look like, but the committee is working through numerous scenarios and we will share specific plans as soon as they are available.

I know it's incredibly challenging to deal with so many unknowns, and I'm grateful for your continued patience and resilience as we work to determine the steps we will take to safely return to normal operations in support of our mission to improve lives in service of the greater good. Please know that our core teams on the Danforth and Medical Campuses are working diligently to ensure that we are taking a smart and thoughtful approach, with the health and well-being of our community as our very highest priority.

You can expect to hear more soon. In the meantime, I wish you and your families all the best as we continue to do what is necessary in the weeks and months ahead. It's heartening to know that we're all in this together, and I remain grateful to you for your ongoing sacrifice and contributions.

Sincerely,

Andrew D. Martin
Chancellor

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CHANCELLOR

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