

## **Faculty and Staff Update Regarding COVID-19 from Human Resources**

March 13, 2020

Dear Luther Faculty and Staff Members,

We would like to provide information regarding processes and procedures concerning COVID-19. We understand that the rapidly changing nature of this situation causes stress and anxiety. We hope to alleviate some of those concerns by addressing several of the most immediate and common concerns.

### **What to do if you are sick with flu-like symptoms:**

- Employees should stay home if they are sick.
- Anyone experiencing flu-like symptoms (especially fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) should consult with a family doctor, urgent care facility, or hospital about seeking care. Call ahead to your doctor's office or emergency room and advise them of your recent travel and symptoms.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath (similar to pneumonia).
- If you are ill or test positive for the coronavirus you need to self-isolate and stay home for the duration of the illness. There may be some circumstances that allow you to both self-isolate and work remotely, depending the situation and on your role at the college.
- If a student, faculty or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, we will share general information to the extent possible, but to maintain privacy, we will not disclose the health condition of any individual.
- Consider whether the Teladoc benefit offered through the College's health insurance provider is a suitable care option for your symptoms. This benefit gives you 24/7/365 access to U.S. board-certified doctors who can be used instead of visiting the emergency room. Download the app or visit the [Teladoc website](#) to create an account.

### **What to do if a family member is sick with flu-like symptoms:**

- Staff can use PTO to care for health needs of family members. PTO policy information is available [here](#).
- Faculty are not covered under the PTO policy but should use their best judgement about how to care for themselves and family members as they fulfill their teaching responsibilities.

### **What to do when absent from work due to illness:**

- Luther College provides PTO benefits to all regular full-time and eligible part-time staff for periods of temporary absence due to illnesses or injuries. Temporary staff are not eligible for PTO.

- Staff who are unable to report to work due to illness should notify their direct supervisor each day they are ill, before the scheduled start of their workday, if possible.
- Staff members who are concerned about potentially running out of PTO should consult with their supervisor. Staff supervisors can seek help from Human Resources about reasonable measures to accommodate sick employees and sick leave requests. Employees may be able to borrow against future PTO earnings as a temporary measure.
- The College is suspending the requirement for a doctor's note for flu-like absences until further notice. Typically, if an employee is absent for more than three consecutive days due to illness or injury, a statement must be provided by the employee's medical provider. Please notify HR upon your return. HR needs to determine your [FMLA](#) eligibility. The serious health condition of a covered employee or covered family member is a qualifying reason under the FMLA.

Luther College cares about the health and well-being of its employees and recognizes that a variety of life challenges can disrupt their personal and work lives. The College currently maintains an agreement with Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to provide professional assistance and advice to employees on issues that cause them concern, such as work stress, family and personal relationships, and emotional or mental health. Employee and Family Resources are available at no or reduced cost to employees. Employee Assistance Program services are strictly confidential and designed to safeguard your privacy and rights. You can contact EAP (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) at 800-327-4692 or visit the [EAP Website](#).

We know that this is a time of uncertainty and there will be many questions, some of which we cannot yet answer. As we move forward, staff should direct questions to their supervisors and faculty should direct questions to the Academic Dean's office.

Please check the [Luther College's coronavirus COVID-19 response website](#) for future updates and added information.

Thank you for all you do to support the College.

Eric Runestad, Vice President for Finance and Administration

Marsha Wenthold, Director of Human Resources