

**COVID-19 Response:**

Report to the Buffalo State College Senate  
from the Vice President for Finance and Management

April 10, 2020

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**EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING GROUP (ERPG)**

**Emergency Structure and Response**

1. Organizational Structure:

Developed [organizational structure](#) to respond to COVID-19 based on FEMA's National Incident Management System (NIMS). Structure includes the Emergency Response Planning Group (ERPG) and the COVID-19 Incident Management Team (IMT).

- VPFM Barnum is serving as Agency Executive for campus response: President's designee as chief administrator responding to COVID-19
- Chief Carey is serving as Incident Commander for campus response: Responsible for all aspects of response to COVID-19
- Fifteen (15) members of the Finance and Management team are serving as members of the campus Incident Management Team. Additionally, there are many employees across the division serving as essential-critical employees regularly reporting to campus. Many essential and non-essential employees are working remotely to ensure continuity of operations. Their leadership and the contributions they are all making to respond to COVID-19 is remarkable and greatly appreciated.

2. Response Teams:

Activated the college's ERPG on February 26, 2020, to accelerate campus preparations

- COVID-19 campus Incident Management and Communication teams meet regularly
- ERPG has met with several campus departments to discuss operational response plans in the event of positive tests for COVID-19

3. Notifications:

- Publicized requirements for, and provided guidance to, Buffalo State employees who may be exhibiting signs of COVID-19
- Shared communication from NYS Health Commissioner to State employees regarding safety protocols
- Coordinating employee relations updates and communications with unions regarding campus emergency response planning
- Coordinating the tracking of possible and confirmed COVID-19 cases and reporting them to SUNY

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4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Trained and fit tested more than 150 essential workers on N95 respirator use
- Gathered stock PPE from various campus departments and made a centralized storage location along with an active inventory. A portion of this stock has been used to support local health care providers, but the majority is being kept on active account to support Buffalo State operations. For donations, please contact [Jeffrey Hammer](#), Interim Director of Environmental Health and Safety.

5. Tracking Expenses for FEMA Reimbursement:

Faculty and staff members are asked to please work with their departments **to track any and all unusual expenses related to COVID-19** and the COVID-19 response. Kelly D'Aloisio, Director of Financial Management, is coordinating weekly submissions to SUNY.

6. Infectious Disease Plan and Documentation of Protocols:

The Incident Management Team is documenting various elements of the campus infectious disease plan and response for assessment and future use. Cheryl Byer, COVID-19 Planning Officer, is documenting and updating our campus infectious disease plan.

7. Timeline:

Partnering with Marketing and Communications to provide a [COVID-19 response timeline](#) as part of the Coronavirus Information website

## **BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

### **Temporary and Adjusted Procedures**

1. Administrative Services:

- Established and publicized temporary, remote business processes and procedures for:
  - [Copy Center](#)
  - [Mailroom and Central Receiving](#)
  - [Procurement Services](#)
- Contracts:  
Reviewing campus contracts that would be impacted by the interruption to business and negotiation ability

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- Events and Moving Operations:
    - Supporting the development of a commencement plan and recognition activities
    - Assisting with cancellation of campus events and planning for their replacement
    - Meeting emerging needs for moving operations
  
  - Human Resource Management:
    - Employee Relations:
      - Created an [electronic routing process](#) for the Current Employee Change Form and the Faculty and Professional Appointment Form
      - Designating and tracking essential employees (both essential-critical and essential-remote)
      - Alternate work arrangements:
        - ✓ Established a remote work process and authorization using the Alternate Work Location/Flexible Work Schedule Form
        - ✓ Sponsored Program Administration Office is working with Principal Investigators to ensure that employees are continuing to work on grant objectives and remain on the Research Foundation payroll
    - Payroll:
      - Provided guidance from the Governor's Office on Employee Relations to hourly employees for the continued processing of time records and payments, and for compliance with Governor's directive
      - Office of State Comptroller is mailing paychecks directly to employees not enrolled in the direct deposit program
  
  - Loan of College Property:
    - Managing [loan of college property](#) requests and questions
    - Reinforced the need to continue property control protocols during this time of remote work
2. Travel
- Issued guidance to campus supervisors regarding employee travel to affected countries
  - Advised campus community that travel to COVID-19 affected countries (China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, Japan) is prohibited.
  - Advised campus community that college-funded travel is prohibited
  - Assisting with the cancellation of travel that is now prohibited

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**Financial Management and Student Accounts**

1. Collecting and providing data on financial expenditures related to COVID-19
2. Created a collections work team that includes all areas collecting fees, fines, charges, to ensure continuity, consistency of message. This group is developing a recovery plan for post emergency response.
3. With Student Affairs, advised students and families regarding [upcoming pro-rated financial adjustments](#) for fees, room, board
4. Coordinating the development of an execution strategy -- with the offices of Student Accounts, Financial Aid, Information Technology, Financial Operations and Financial Management -- for student account spring 2020 adjustments for room, board and fees

**Communication**

Partnering with Marketing and Communications to provide business continuity updates on the [Faculty and Staff FAQ](#) page of the Coronavirus Information website.

**CAMPUS OPERATIONS**

**Construction**

The college is developing a plan to address Governor's [halting of non-essential construction](#) in New York State. We are coordinating with the State University Construction Fund, the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York and SUNY to evaluate campus construction projects for feasibility to safely resume activities. Design work is continuing remotely, and we are working to obtain approval to continue funded construction projects in a safe manner. We do expect delays to almost all projects. The current status is:

***Projects Active as of April 10***

Construction Phase (Critical)

- Clinton Center: Elevator repair work is underway and is expected to be completed this month
- South Wing: Elevator repair work is underway and is expected to be completed this month

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Preparing for Bid

- Salt Storage Building (new prefab structure to store road salt in environmentally safe manner)
- Replacement of emergency generator at Butler Library
- Replacement of electrical switchgear and panels at Bulger, Campbell and Upton
- Removal of underground fuel tanks and boiler at Power Plant
- Replacement of water heaters at Campbell, Cassety and Chase

Design Phase

- Classroom Building
- Butler Library window replacements
- University Police and Campus Operations Center (Building 50)

***Projects Inactive as of April 10***

- Buckham Hall and Cleveland Hall roof replacements
- Butler Library
- Central Heating Plant
- Coyer Field track replacement
- Iroquois Drive refurbishment
- Porter Hall asbestos abatement
- Science and Mathematics Complex

**Custodial Services**

1. Revised cleaning and sanitation protocols, including a heightened focus on disinfecting high-touch surfaces and high-volume areas
2. Developed a [custodial services FAQ](#) for the campus Coronavirus Update website to inform campus community about new cleaning protocols
3. Instituted alternate day schedules for on-site maintenance and custodial work to reduce potential exposure among most front-line workers
4. Developed and publicized a new safety measure – placing tape on doorknobs of workspaces -- to differentiate between offices that do and do not need to be cleaned.

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**Grounds Care: Temporary Plan**

Staffing changes are in place to reduce the possibility of COVID-19 exposure for grounds employees. Current staffing levels are not adequate to fully maintain and improve the campus grounds. A temporary grounds plan, in place through April 30, addresses grass cutting, plant bed maintenance and trash removal. This temporary plan prioritizes grass cutting in areas that are most prominently in public view, areas near residence halls where students remain, and the softball field. A recovery plan is being developed that will quickly address the grounds conditions once we can return to normal operations and staffing levels.

**Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)**

Adjusted HVAC settings to nighttime modes for workspaces not in use. This is a cost and energy saving adjustment.

**Precautionary Quarantine (March 7, 2020)**

The residential planning office partnered with other college offices to prepare Tower 2 for possible precautionary quarantine of Study Abroad students.

**Security**

1. University Police Officers:
  - Conduct foot patrols and virtual patrol using the campus camera system
  - Follow social distancing guidelines during community policing
  - Respond to first aid calls using PPE
  
2. Building Security:
  - Administrative and academic buildings are now locked. This measure maintains the safety of employees who need to report to campus and the security of campus assets; keeps unused working and teaching spaces sanitized; and helps our cleaning staff to focus their attention where it is most needed. Essential staff members are being granted building access by their supervisors and with President's Cabinet level final approval.
  
  - Residence halls remain locked as well; access is provided only as necessary to students and staff.