DEAR RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

As a member of our residential community, I know you may have concerns about the coronavirus known as COVID-19. Living in community means that you are often in closer contact than you would be otherwise. With this in mind, we want to provide you with hall-specific information.

WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS? WHAT IS COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can infect humans and/or animals and cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to pneumonia and bronchitis. The coronavirus causing the current outbreak is a new virus that was not previously identified.

The newly identified virus causes a disease called "coronavirus disease 2019" or "COVID-19."

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Symptoms range from mild to severe and appear within two to 14 days after infection by the virus.

The first presumptive case of COVID-19 was announced yesterday. Health officials continue to urge everyone to take steps to protect those who are at the highest risk of contracting coronavirus: older adults and anyone with a serious health condition or compromised immune system.

We are asking everyone in the campus community to take steps to protect themselves and others by washing hands often, safely covering coughs and sneezes, and staying in your room if you feel sick. Health officials recommend practicing social distancing whenever possible, which means keeping at least six feet between yourself and others in all public spaces, avoiding handshakes and hugging, and limiting in-person meeting whenever possible.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FEEL SYMPTOMS

COVID-19 is not the common cold. Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you are concerned that you have been exposed or are showing symptoms of coronavirus, call the SHAC Nurse Line with questions or concerns at 503-725-2515 or the 24/7 Nurse Advice Line after hours at 844-244-3145.

If you are tested and find that you have COVID-19, we urge you to try to go home and quarantine/isolate yourself there.

For residents who are absolutely unable to go home, we will move you to our quarantine/isolation location and you will remain in that room until your symptoms pass. You will not be able to leave your room and you cannot have visitors, except for anyone providing your care, food, or other supplies. SHAC will provide ongoing care and consultation to the quarantined or isolated student regarding the length of quarantine.

We will provide delivered food, linens, and trash service for those who need to be moved and quarantined/isolated.

Again, in most cases it would be more beneficial for a student to go home if this situation arises. But if you cannot, we are committed to taking care of you in the hall and protecting those around you.
WHAT IF MY ROOMMATE SEEMS TO HAVE SYMPTOMS?

If you are healthy but your roommate appears to be exhibiting symptoms, please also call the SHAC Nurse Line with coronavirus related questions or concerns at 503-725-2515 or the 24/7 Nurse Advice Line after hours at 844-224-3145. They will be able to advise you on what you can do to best protect yourself from any viruses. You can also connect with your in-hall staff.

If your roommate does have COVID-19, they will be moved to a room to be quarantined/isolated. You will either stay in your own room or be moved so you can quarantine yourself for a certain number of days to ensure you do not also exhibit symptoms. If necessary, you would receive the same kind of support that would allow you not to leave your room.

WHAT IF A RESIDENT ON MY FLOOR HAS COVID-19 AND IS QUARANTINED/ISOLATED?

The Oregon Health Authority advised us that there is no risk to individuals on the same floor as a quarantined/isolated person. The quarantined/isolated person is in a self-contained room with bathroom and kitchen and will not come out of the room until symptoms pass.

HALL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

In keeping with PSU’s guidance, and as a way to reduce the potential spread of coronavirus, we urge the campus community to keep in-person gatherings to a minimum whenever possible. We take this guidance seriously and have cancelled upcoming hall programs until the public health recommendations change.

DINING

Victor’s Dining Hall is open. PSU Eats has exceeded standard food hygiene rules and implemented additional precautions by changing our serving utensils on a more frequent basis. In addition, Victor’s Dining Hall will go to “full service” beginning on March 12. This means that all food you would normally serve yourself will be served to you by a PSU Eats employee. We still want you to know that the most important thing you can do is to practice good personal hygiene and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating.

BIAS RESPONSE

It is more important than ever that PSU come together as a united campus community and stand against discriminatory behavior. National origin has no bearing on how likely a person is to contract the coronavirus. If you witness or experience a bias incident or discrimination, please contact Global Diversity and Inclusion.

You can make a big impact in protecting yourself an others from spreading COVID-19 through personal actions such as hand washing, social distancing, staying in your room if you feel ill, and contacting the center for Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) if you feel symptoms.

If you have any questions or need any help, please connect with your hall staff member or visit PSU’s Coronavirus Response website for the latest updates. I would also encourage you to share this information with your family or persons who typically support you.

All my best,

Michael Walsh
Executive Director