



Community College

**DARE TO DO MORE**

Office of the President

PHONE: 718-482-5050

FAX: 718-609-2009

Dear Colleagues:

As we all monitor developments related to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), I want you to know that your health and safety, and that of all in our community, is LaGuardia's top priority.

Although cases of coronavirus in the New York City area have been confirmed, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that the risk to New Yorkers remains low.

### **Status Update**

At this time, there are no coronavirus cases involving anyone in the LaGuardia community.

There are several individuals who are voluntarily engaging in home self-monitoring for 14 days. It is important to note: they are **not** positive for the virus and have exhibited no symptoms. This is a precautionary step that has been recommended they take because of previous travel.

The information they have provided is self-disclosed – we have no way of knowing who traveled, where they traveled, or if they have been asked to home self-monitor. Those who have completed their 14 day home-monitor period are free to return to class and do not have to present a doctor's note.

The virus has been confirmed in more than 80 countries at this point, and is local as well, so travel is also no longer the sole indicator. We do want anyone in our community to self-disclose, however, so it is critical that we react guided by science and medicine and without any bias.

A student or employee who self-discloses possible exposure and the need to stay home (as recommended by public health officials) can and should do so, and we can and should do everything we can to accommodate their continued learning or work remotely during that time. If a student self-discloses, please immediately contact Interim VP Bart Grachan. Staff or faculty should contact Director of Human Resources Oswald Fraser.

All medical information, regarding any student, faculty or staff, is confidential. Why they were out of class (or missing work) may not be discussed with classmates and colleagues, and they may not be publicly questioned about their absence.

ADDRESS: 31-10 Thomson Avenue  
Long Island City, NY 11101

PHONE: 718-482-7200  
WEB: [www.laguardia.edu](http://www.laguardia.edu)





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Given recent developments, and based on guidance from CUNY and public health officials, we are taking many preparations for prevention and for the possibility of our campus and community being impacted.

I would encourage faculty to ensure they can readily communicate with their students using online tools. We will be offering, in the coming weeks, a series of training workshops on utilizing Blackboard to communicate with your students.

### **College-Wide Task Force**

The rapidly evolving nature of this public health situation has prompted us to assign a College-Wide Task Force consisting of individuals representing critical programs from all divisions to assess, evaluate and modify our policies and plans as needed. In our approach, we are following the guidance of CUNY, the NYC Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

I have asked Interim VP for Student Affairs, Bart Grachan, and VP for Administration and Finance, Shahir Erfan, to co-chair the Task Force. This task force will meet as regularly as needed to identify and address situations, issues, and questions that may arise regarding the coronavirus and its impact on our College community. A major focus will be identify and implement community education and to enhance prevention measures.

### **Preventive Measures**

Everyone can do their part to help minimize the potential impact of the coronavirus outbreak. We strongly suggest you follow these basic steps. We encourage faculty and staff to encourage students to do the same.

- Wash your hands regularly or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to help stop the spread of germs and protect yourself against other infections. Air dryers are safe to use.
- Avoid contact with sick individuals.
- Self-monitor any flu-like symptoms and immediately contact your primary care physician.
- If you, or any students or colleagues show flu-like symptoms call the LaGuardia Health Services Center at 718-482-5280 rather than go in person, and follow their directions.
- Faculty and staff are discouraged from bringing in their own spray type sanitizers to minimize accidental exposure and related health concerns, but wipes are allowed.
- Remember to get the flu vaccine; it will not protect you from coronavirus but will help protect you against the flu.

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- Wearing a face mask is not considered necessary if you are not sick. According to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC DOH), face masks are only recommended if directed by a health care provider.

Our Facilities Staff has implemented an aggressive, multiple step sanitation/disinfection action plan to reduce the likelihood of transmission that includes:

- Trained personnel conducting increased cleaning using safe and effective, products.
- Hand sanitizer stations installed in and/or near labs, the gym and cafeterias. We are scheduled to receive an additional shipment of hand sanitizer shortly and additional dispensers are being deployed in public areas.
- Wiping down entrance handles, elevator buttons, bathroom doors, stairwell handrails, and water fountains with disinfectants three times daily.
- Door handles, all public computers and public phones will be wiped at least once per day with disinfectant solution.
- Large format signs/posters will be posted at entrances and other prominent areas highlighting useful preventative measures.
- Cafeteria and Bookstore managers have already put in place procedures for their staff to wipe surfaces in accordance with Department of Health guidelines.
- You may see our Facilities Staff in training sessions cleaning in “Hazmat” suits. These are trainings to prepare in case a thorough cleaning of an area is needed. Please do not be alarmed.
- Please contact extension 5550 if you see any facility-related issues that need attention.

### **Who to Contact If You Have Any Concerns or Questions**

You might encounter situations related to the coronavirus that can range from a simple question to a delicate scenario involving students or colleagues. Please follow these guidelines should you want to contact anyone on campus about concerns or questions you have related to:

- **Students**

Dr. Bartholomew (Bart) Grachan  
Interim Vice President, Student Affairs  
Email: [bgrachan@lagcc.cuny.edu](mailto:bgrachan@lagcc.cuny.edu)  
Phone: (718) 482-5180  
Administrative Support: Shameeza Singh

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- **Faculty & Staff**

Oswald E. Fraser  
Executive Director of Human Resources  
Email: [ofraser@lagcc.cuny.edu](mailto:ofraser@lagcc.cuny.edu)  
Phone: (718) 482-5080  
Administrative Support: Robin Espinoza

- **Flu-like Symptoms or Health-related Issues**

Health Services Center  
Phone: 718-482-5280

- **Coronavirus Updates and Links to Resources**

LaGuardia Website Section: <https://www.laguardia.edu/healthservices/#coronavirus>  
CUNY Coronavirus Updates: <https://www.cuny.edu/coronavirus/>

- **Free, Confidential Access to Professional Counselors**

We understand that you may be experiencing heightened levels of anxiety during this time. Therefore, we want to remind you that CUNY's Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) is available to work with you and your household members toward addressing this. CUNY's EAP may be reached at 1-888-993-7650 or [www.deeroaks.com](http://www.deeroaks.com).

### **Preventing Bias and Discrimination**

There have been news reports regarding stereotyping, harassment, and bullying directed at persons wrongly perceived to be at risk of contracting or transmitting the virus. Ethnic harassment or bullying is not tolerated on our campus. In the near future, we will be holding forums to ensure our community has medically accurate information and how we can prevent misinformation from fueling bias and discrimination.

To ensure that you have the most up-to-date guidance, directives and resources, please check your email and our [coronavirus website section](#) frequently.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Arcario  
Interim President

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