

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

To: All USM Presidents
From: Jay A. Perman, Chancellor
Re: Guidance on Telework, Study Abroad, and Large Gatherings
Date: March 12, 2020

As the state prepares for more COVID-19 cases, the University System of Maryland (USM) is closely following policy and practice changes at the state and national levels in response to the pandemic. I'm in regular contact with USM presidents, who are placing the health and safety of their students and employees at the center of their emergency planning.

TELEWORK

Consistent with the Governor's directive to state agencies, the University System should now move all USM employees to a telework environment, meaning that all non-essential employees approved for telework should begin preparations to work remotely, effective immediately. Consult with your supervisor for further instructions. I've shared with the USM presidents a [guidance document](#) that modifies our current telework policies during this period of COVID-19 threat.

STUDY ABROAD AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

In light of President Trump's new travel restrictions, I'm advising USM universities to recall *all* students studying abroad, including those not currently in Europe. I'm advising, as well, that universities discourage their international students from traveling to their home countries over spring break, given the significant possibility that return to the U.S. will be severely limited; this guidance, too, applies to students from European and non-European countries.

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

All out-of-state business travel for employees within the USM Office is prohibited, and I strongly advise all USM presidents to prohibit out-of-state, work-related travel for their own faculty and staff. The Governor has already banned such travel for state employees, and I'm extending this guidance to employees of the University System.

GATHERINGS

In accordance with the Governor's instructions, all large gatherings on USM campuses—gatherings expected to attract more than 250 people—must be canceled or postponed. Additionally, I strongly

discourage any small, on-campus gatherings where social distancing cannot be practiced. Again, the guidance on social distancing is that six feet should remain between each individual.

ATHLETIC EVENTS

On a phone call with System presidents, we agreed that each USM institution will handle athletic events on a case-by-case basis. The Governor has prohibited—at all Maryland venues—any athletic event attracting more than 250 spectators in close proximity.

For System universities, considerations vary greatly according to the sport in question (and whether social distancing among spectators can be implemented); the athletic conference; required travel; and other logistics. As you know, many athletic conferences have already canceled or adjusted their spring seasons for various sports, and are making arrangements for limited spectator access. The health and safety of the System's students and student-athletes will, of course, take precedence in each university's decision-making.