

## *Dear Parents/Guardians:*

Effective immediately, the National Job Corps Office has established a mandatory Spring Break from March 16 to April 14, 2020, which may be extended at the discretion of the National Office. Job Corps Centers will provide students transportation to their home of record or alternate destination and students will be given paid leave. Job Corps is being proactive with establishing this break. There are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 on any of our centers at this time and therefore, no evidence of substantial community spread of COVID -19 within the Job Corps community.

As you know, media coverage of the coronavirus is widespread, and both the global and national situations are rapidly evolving. The intent of this letter is to provide parents/guardians with general information about the coronavirus, and with some specific details about our ongoing, longstanding efforts in addressing the prevention and spread of viruses. Useful link: CDC ([www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html)).

### **Brief summary**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many different species of animals. The particular virus which is currently receiving media attention is a novel coronavirus known as COVID-19. This particular coronavirus can feature symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath. While the outbreak is believed to have an animal source, most cases are now likely to be spread from person to person by droplets, when coughing or sneezing. This is a new and evolving situation, and health authorities continue to carefully monitor how this virus spreads.

### **Prevention**

As with other respiratory viruses, there are simple steps which can help stop the spread of COVID-19:

- Frequent hand-washing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then discard it in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched objects/surfaces

### **Response**

Our center's maintenance staff are exceptional, and already utilize strong practices for preventing the spread of viruses. Strategies which have proven useful during past virus outbreaks (SARS, H1N1) remain in-place, and include the frequent disinfection of surfaces such as desktops, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, locker handles, faucet handles, etc... These practices have been successful in minimizing the spread of influenza and other viruses, and an aggressive approach to surface disinfection will continue.

Further, beyond the quality academic and career technical instruction which we provide, our staff also work with students on matters of personal and community hygiene. Students have been provided with frequent reminders about washing their hands and coughing/sneezing etiquette, etc.

Ultimately, nobody knows how extensive this outbreak will be, or if/how our region will be affected. In general, virus responses are directed by individual County Departments of Health, but we may also receive direction from the Job Corps National or Regional Offices, the CDC, the Governor, or other levels of higher office. We will continue to monitor this matter closely, and will react as appropriate. **Centers will be contacting students, prior to the end of Spring Break, to determine the health status of the student, their family and any close contacts. There will be a number of questions asked and every student will be triaged to maintain a healthy environment upon return.**

For now, our best advice is to practice responsible prevention to the spread of this virus, to keep students who are ill home from school, and to consult your primary medical caregiver if any of the symptoms associated with the COVID-19 virus present.

Together, we will successfully navigate this matter, as we have done with pandemics of years past. More information will be shared with parents as this situation evolves, and we look forward to your partnership as we all manage this fluid situation.