Information on Spring Break and the Coronavirus for North Park University Travelers and Guests

March 2, 2020

Dear North Park Students, Faculty, and Staff,

The wellbeing of all members of the North Park community is our highest priority. To that end, for the past several weeks, University officials have been closely monitoring the global threat posed by the new coronavirus (COVID-19). Now, with North Park’s spring break approaching and the virus spreading beyond China, we are writing to provide new information and updates.

China and South Korea travel advisory

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Level 3 travel advisory for China and South Korea due to the spread of COVID-19 in these countries. This currently does not include Hong Kong, Macau or the island of Taiwan. North Park is suspending until further notice all University sponsored travel to China and South Korea and strongly advises against personal travel there.

Italy

Due to the increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in Italy, the University has cancelled a University sponsored spring break academic trip. North Park is suspending until further notice all University sponsored travel to Italy and strongly advises against personal travel there.

Spring break travel advice

Based upon guidance from the CDC and State Department, the University strongly recommends against personal travel to China, South Korea, Italy, Iran and Japan during spring break (March 7 to 15) or anytime in the foreseeable future. This situation remains very fluid and other countries could be added to these advisories in coming days and weeks.

If you do choose to travel internationally, please keep the following in mind:

- Understand and routinely check any travel and border restrictions in transit, at your proposed destination, and upon your return, such as denial of entry or a mandatory 14-day quarantine on arrival.
- Allow additional time for arrival procedures, or when passing through affected area airports, taking into account temperature and health screenings.
- If you are traveling from COVID-19 affected areas, anticipate more stringent scrutiny and reconfirm the status of flights with your carrier or the airport.
- Follow all official directives by authorities.
- Monitor developments through the U.S. State Department and CDC websites.
- Do not travel if you are sick; travelers who are sick risk being quarantined and having health testing.

If you choose personal international travel to affected countries over Spring Break, we request that you complete the North Park University travel registry and also register with the U.S. Department of State through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. We are requesting this information out of an abundance of care for our community and in recognizing the quickly changing circumstances related to the spread of COVID-19. Given this rapidly changing and uncertain global situation, North Park University wants to provide quality curricular and co-curricular experiences for the remainder of the semester.
University Sponsored travel

With the increasing spread of coronavirus outside of China, North Park University is urging all study abroad students to strongly reconsider personal travel to areas currently experiencing a coronavirus outbreak or that have been assessed as high risk.

As previously mentioned, the Italy (Rome) Academic Trip has been cancelled. All other Academic Trips, Global Partnerships and Choir tours are not impacted at this time. The University will continue to monitor these health and travel advisories and may provide updated information as appropriate.

Health advice

There are simple actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. It cannot be emphasized enough that good self-care habits are vitally important, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Cover your cough with your sleeve, not your hands
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe
- Don’t share food or drinks
- If you get sick, stay home and rest

On campus

After consulting with local and state health department officials, we have no reason to believe there is any risk to anyone on North Park University’s campus, and the American College Health Association has advised that there still is “no basis for changing business as usual regarding housing, campus events, and other circumstances under which large groups of people will be gathering.”

However, many members of our community have deep concerns about their families and friends in China, South Korea, Italy, Japan and elsewhere. Our staff in the Center for Student Engagement and Office of International Affairs are working closely with these students to help reduce their concerns and offer support. Please offer support should you interact with anyone who is impacted. If you have any concerns, please submit an EARS referral so the University can offer additional support.

Staff members in Health Services and International Affairs are available for questions and consultation. Local resources include IDPH. National resources include the CDC and U.S. State Department.

The University will continue to closely monitor this health risk and provide updates when warranted.