



## UNIVERSITY *of the* WESTERN CAPE

### University of the Western Cape Coronavirus Disease Protocol

Given the global concern about the health implications of the spread and treatment of the COVID-19 virus, the University of the Western Cape (UWC) takes very seriously the health and safety of its staff, students and visitors. A UWC COVID-19 Advisory Team consisting of University management, officials and medical experts is closely monitoring and following recommendations from the [National Institute for Communicable Diseases](#), the [National Department of Health](#), the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) and other official sources. In addition, the team, and other professional staff, have set in motion academic and business continuity plans in the event of an emergency.

#### Are you at risk?

Firstly, determine whether you were potentially exposed to the virus, evidenced by answering yes to one or both of the following questions:

1. Have you travelled to an [affected country](#) in the last four weeks?
2. Have you had direct contact with someone who has travelled to an affected country and has symptoms suggestive of the illness, or someone who has tested positive for the illness?

#### Symptoms?

- high fever over 38°C
- a dry cough
- body ache and pain
- nasal congestion
- a runny nose
- sore throat

*(Please note that having symptoms without having travelled to an affected country or not having been in direct contact with someone who has been diagnosed, does not mean you have the virus. Most other viral infections also present with the same symptoms.)*

#### What should you do?

**If you have responded positively to Questions 1 and/or 2, irrespective of whether you are exhibiting any of the above mentioned symptoms, you should follow these self-isolation procedures immediately:**

1. **Remain in your room** – whether off-campus or at residence. Only make direct contact with others if absolutely necessary.
2. **Do not present yourself at the campus clinic or any health care facility** as this may facilitate the spread of any infection and compromise the staff and other patients.
3. **Make contact with UWC officials** by calling X3900/01, emailing [admissions@uwc.ac.za](mailto:admissions@uwc.ac.za) or using the [UWC Web Chat](#). Trained staff will inform you about what to do and will contact the National Institute for Communicable Diseases ([NICD](#)).
4. **You may also contact the NICD** hotline on 082 883 9920 or 0800 029 999, or visit [www.nicd.ac.za](http://www.nicd.ac.za).
5. **The NICD will send out a team of professionals** to conduct tests and transport you to a hospital with facilities for isolation and the proper treatment of patients. In the Western Cape, that would be Tygerberg Hospital.
6. The direct contact number for the **Tygerberg Hospital Infectious Diseases Unit** is 021 938 5229.

The University will be in constant communication with the relevant health authorities.

While University management will alert the Campus Community if someone has tested positive for the virus, it will, for ethical and confidentiality reasons, not disclose the name of the individual. If necessary, the NICD, in conjunction with UWC management, will contact people who have been in close contact with the infected individual, as they may have to undergo tests.

### **Protocol for arriving travellers**

Students, staff and/or guests to the University are required to self-isolate for 14 days before returning to campus.

During self-isolation, do the following:

- **Stay away from others** by remaining in your room - do not interact with anyone. Only leave your room if absolutely necessary and for the shortest time required.
- **Wash your hands** as often as you can with soap and water. Do not touch surfaces unless you have to. Wipe down surfaces with a household disinfectant regularly.
- **If you cough**, make sure you cough into a tissue, clean towel or your handkerchief. Dispose of the tissue paper after each use, and wash your towel/handkerchief regularly.
- **Monitor your temperature** throughout the day. A fever is anything over 38°C.
- **If you develop symptoms**, such as coughing, fever, sore throat, body aches and/or a tight chest, call the NCID or the UWC Helpline.

### **International travel**

International travel, especially to affected countries, should be restricted to University-critical business only.

Try to avoid the following countries and use technology such as video calling for meetings:

- China
- Italy
- Iran
- South Korea
- France
- Spain
- Germany

Visit <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/> for up to date information about each country.

**Useful websites to verify information:**

<http://www.health.gov.za>

<http://www.nicd.ac.za>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

**Useful safety tips:**

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser as doing so kills viruses that may be on your hands. Dry your hands with a paper towel and dispose of it safely.
- Maintain a distance of at least two metres between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing, as droplets from their nose or mouth may contain the virus.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, because if your hands are infected with the virus it can be transferred into your body in this way.
- Practice respiratory hygiene by covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue/handkerchief when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of the used tissue immediately and wash your handkerchief regularly.
- Avoid large groups and events that foster close contact between persons.

- Ensure that you modify your lifestyle to increase your level of health and wellbeing. This includes stopping smoking in all forms, eating healthy foods and drinking plenty of fresh water.
- Make sure that you are compliant with taking any prescribed medications for chronic conditions.
- Spread the correct information about containing the virus.