



CHAPTER RESPONSE GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19

WHAT IS COVID-19?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)), on Feb. 11, 2020 the World Health Organization [announced](#) an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan, China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV".

There are [many types](#) of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans. The name of this disease was selected following the World Health Organization (WHO) [best practice external icon](#) for naming of new human infectious diseases.

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Colleges and universities are taking a number preventative measure to slow the spread of COVID-19 in college/university communities. In the event your college/university takes preventative action, your chapter should follow expectations released by your college/university administrators.

WHAT TYPES OF ACTION MAY NECESSITATE A CHAPTER RESPONSE?

The chart on page 2 is designed to assist you in understanding potential college/university actions and the appropriate chapter response. If your college/university takes actions other than what is listed below, contact your chapter advisor and Theta Phi Alpha National Office for assistance.

| COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ACTION | COVID-19 STATUS | THETA PHI ALPHA CHAPTER ACTION |
|--|---|--|
| College/University remains open | No COVID-19 cases present on campus or in the local area | <p>Theta Phi Alpha chapter meetings and activities continue operating as normal, with standard CAB support.</p> <p>Should questions arise as to changes within the campus and community, please notify your advisor and thetaphino@thetaphialpha.org.</p> <p>Should the circumstances change, please follow the chart based on applicable college/university action.</p> |
| College/University moves to online courses, allowing limited meetings | No COVID-19 cases present on campus or in local area | Theta Phi Alpha chapter meetings and activities continue virtually, with only essential chapter functions in person. See below for essential functions. |
| College/University moves to online courses, allowing limited meetings | Presumed positive COVID-19 cases present on campus | Theta Phi Alpha chapter meetings and activities continue virtually. No in person meetings should occur. |
| College/University bans group meetings | No COVID-19 cases present on campus or Presumed positive COVID-19 cases present on campus | <p>Theta Phi Alpha in-person chapter meetings and activities cancelled in conjunction with the timeline specified by the college/university.</p> <p>Follow Chapter Response Guidelines for COVID-19.</p> |
| College/University closes student housing | No COVID-19 cases present on campus or Presumed positive COVID-19 cases present on campus | <p>Theta Phi Alpha in-person chapter meetings and activities cancelled in conjunction with the timeline specified by the college/university.</p> <p>Follow Chapter Response Guidelines for COVID-19.</p> |
| College/University closes (i.e. cancelling classes, limiting operations to essential personnel) | No COVID-19 cases present on campus or Presumed positive COVID-19 cases present on campus | <p>Theta Phi Alpha in-person chapter meetings and activities cancelled in conjunction with the timeline specified by the college/university.</p> <p>Follow Chapter Response Guidelines for COVID-19.</p> |



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who should I notify if my college/university takes preventative action?

If your university takes preventative action that requires your chapter to cancel meetings or activities, contact your chapter advisor and the appropriate Theta Phi Alpha staff member listed below. These volunteers and staff will help you assess your chapter calendar to identify if events need to be cancelled or rescheduled based on the action taken by your university. Only essential chapter business needs to be completed this academic year.

| | |
|---|---|
| Candice Bender, Coordinator of Programming, programming@thetaphialpha.org | Information regarding new member education, ritual ceremonies, completion of chapter programs |
| Ashley Crews, Director of Collegiate Services, collegiateservices@thetaphiapha.org | Information on chapter operations |
| Kathryn Hartmann, Executive Director, executivedirector@thetaphialpha.org | Information on chapter house closings, these guidelines, essential business to be conducted, campus updates |
| Alexandra Ziton Bigley, Coordinator of Finance, finances@thetaphialpha.org | Information on chapter finances |

What is essential chapter business?

Essential chapter business for the remainder of the academic year includes:

- Approving chapter budget for the 2020-21 academic year
- Discussing proposed bylaw amendments in preparation for Convention 2020
- Selecting a Convention delegate and alternate delegate
- Reporting all new members on the officer portal as initiated, **regardless of ability to hold the in-person initiation ceremony**

What is non-essential chapter business?

- In person chapter meetings, sisterhood events, philanthropies, rituals, etc. All in person events should be cancelled in accordance with the chart listed above.
- Pending standards board and chapter advisory board meetings. All standards board meetings should be postponed until they can be done in person. Exceptions should be granted to timelines where necessary.
- In person new member education--all remaining sessions should be conducted virtually. Any questions regarding new member education can be directed to the staff member listed above.
- Initiation ceremonies--all new members should be reported as initiated and the in-person ceremony should be conducted as soon you are able to return to campus. Emerging Chapters should contact the [Director of Growth and Outreach](#) or the [Director of Emerging Chapters](#).

What if our college/university has cancelled activities through the remainder of the academic year?

You can conduct chapter business virtually.



How will campus closures affect rituals?

Please email the staff member above to create an individual plan.

How should we host virtual meetings?

This will depend on how much and what business your chapter still needs to conduct at the time that in-person meetings and activities are cancelled. For example, if you have already presented your chapter budget and simply need to vote this may be best conducted via email. Conversely, if you need to present the budget this might be better accomplished via web conference. Work with your chapter advisor to determine the best option for your chapter in the event that activities and meetings are cancelled.

What should we do about chapter dues and fees if activities are cancelled due to COVID-19?

Chapter officers should work with their finance advisor and chapter advisor, to determine if it is appropriate to pro-rate and refund dues. Chapters should consider the amount of activities that have already been offered during the academic term to make determinations about appropriate pro-rate/refund amounts.

We have members returning from study abroad, what should we do?

Members returning from study abroad should follow guidance from the college/university's study abroad office regarding returning to campus.

Will members returning from abroad due to college/university recall be charged for national dues and fees?

No.

What if my chapter had events planned for Spring 2020?

We encourage you to reach out directly to all venues and vendors to notify about potential event cancellations and inquire about deposits to ask if funds can be transferred to a future date for the event. MJ Insurance provides advice on contracts which can be [accessed through their website](#).

Will Theta Phi Alpha's National Convention still be occurring in July 2020?

We are continuing to monitor the situation closely. At this time, Convention will still go on as planned.