



March 5, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Family of USC students,

You may have seen the news that Los Angeles County and California officials declared a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 situation. I wanted to reach out to you directly and reassure you of the steps we're taking to protect our students' health. Many of you are far away from your student at this time, and we know that can be unnerving and you may feel overly removed from what is happening on our campuses. My own children are on the other side of the country, so I have a real understanding of how you may be feeling.

I write today to assure you that we are following developments by the minute. We have a dedicated [web page](#) that is updated as soon as we have important news to share, and a phone hotline set up at (213) 740-6291. We have also sent regular communications to our community since January.

We haven't had any cases at USC. Classes are in session, students are in the libraries, and there's enough sun to ensure that benches and tables are filled at lunch time. Health experts have not recommended any closures or cancellations at this time, so we are continuing to go about our lives and to move our work forward.

In preparation for spring break, we have told students to avoid nonessential international travel, to halt all travel to CDC Level 3 countries, and to be prudent about domestic travel. As things continue to change, there may be a need for more stringent measures.

In the meantime, we are looking at all campus events on a case by case basis, and we have dramatically stepped up our sanitation efforts. Since the news of the virus first broke, my leadership team has held daily conference calls and meetings. These have included leaders from Student Health and Student Affairs, as well as all members of our Emergency Operations Center (EOC). I have been updated throughout the day and night, and I am very grateful for the vigilance and compassion everyone has brought to our response.

We have been following the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines closely and working with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. We have brought home students who are studying in areas that have reached the CDC's Level 3. We also cancelled all spring and Maymester study abroad programs. Should health and medical experts recommend that we move classes online, our provost and his team have prepared plans to shift quickly to online instruction and to continue coursework.

This last step is part of a much larger, university-wide contingency plan, one that foresees a range of developments with the virus. We are approaching all decisions thoughtfully and nimbly—and will continue to provide updates. My main goal in writing to you today is to assure you that we have your student's health and wellbeing at the top of our minds. Their safety is our absolute highest priority.

I encourage you to visit our [web page](#), stay in contact with your student, and make informed decisions together. University services will be up and running throughout spring break, and if we can be of any help to you or your student, please feel free to call our hotline at (213) 740-6291 or write to [studenthealth@usc.edu](mailto:studenthealth@usc.edu).

Sincerely,

Carol L. Folt  
President