

April 8, 2020 – 10:30 a.m.

Dear Iowa State faculty and staff,

I want to thank the more than 3300 staff and faculty who completed the Coping with COVID Challenges Survey. We had a 54% response rate, and we appreciate you taking the time to help us better understand how this crisis is impacting you.

I want to address one of the most common questions shared in the survey – *the timeline for resuming full campus operations and what our “new normal” may look like.*

The university’s emergency response continues to be rooted in guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and Governor Reynolds. Last week, Governor Reynolds extended the State Public Health Emergency Declaration through April 30. Earlier this week, she announced additional business and establishment closures. It is clear that the circumstances of this crisis continue to change and escalate.

Consequently, we are directing the campus community to be prepared to continue with our reduced campus operations into May and perhaps longer. At this time, we cannot predict when full operations will resume.

As part of this planning:

- All university events are being canceled, postponed, or moved online through May 31. This may be extended if conditions warrant.
- Supervisors should work with their employees to ensure they have the equipment, supplies, and resources they need to continue working remotely. For example, this may include permitting employees to return to their office while practicing social distancing to retrieve their desk chair, computer monitors, or other office supplies. Additional guidance on tracking equipment is forthcoming.
- Employees are permitted to go to their office while practicing social distancing to perform necessary job functions that they cannot do at home.
- Supervisors and employees should take extra care to communicate frequently with each other about expectations, challenges, and concerns as we continue to navigate our new working environments.

We are also gathering information from a data collection effort with department and unit leaders to determine how we might further reduce campus operations to the smallest footprint possible should conditions warrant. I referenced some of what this planning includes in my [April 3 message](#).

As we look ahead to what our “new normal” may be, the university’s emergency response team has convened a Recovery Working Group with representation from across campus to begin planning for returning to full campus operations. Again, the timeline for ramping up operations will be based on guidance from the CDC, IDPH, and Governor Reynolds, and will likely happen incrementally. As the local and global impacts of this crisis evolve, we will continue to refine our response in ways that prioritize health and safety.

We appreciate your efforts to stay informed and engaged as we work through this changing situation. Please continue to send your Human Resources-related questions to [hr\\_delivery@iastate.edu](mailto:hr_delivery@iastate.edu). Any other questions can be sent to [COVID-19@iastate.edu](mailto:COVID-19@iastate.edu) and we will work to provide answers as soon as possible.

Though we are physically distant from each other right now, we know there is still collaboration, innovation, and achievement occurring every day, and I thank you all for your good work.

Sincerely,

Wendy Wintersteen  
President