

Policy regarding the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Prefectural University of Kumamoto (PUK) has been reviewing the situation with regards to COVID-19 periodically since January of this year. According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan, the number of infected people in Japan reached 11,496 yesterday. On April 7th, it was noted that the number of infections whose origin is unknown is large, and the rate of increase in the number of cases is accelerating. On April 16th, the state of emergency earlier declared in seven areas was expanded to the whole country.

In Kumamoto, our first case was announced on February 21st, and as of April 23rd the number of confirmed cases was 43. A large proportion of those (29) have all been discovered this month, and we appear to be at a stage of rapid increase in the number of cases.

Faced with the continued spread of the virus inside and outside the prefecture, the university is introducing the measures described here, aimed at reducing the likelihood of students and staff becoming infected. These measures are effective for an indefinite period, and the policy may be amended if the situation changes.

I. PREVENTION OF INFECTION

(1) Regular Measures

- (a) Check your temperature before leaving home every day and be aware of your own condition.
- (b) Stay at home and rest if you have a fever, continued coughing, or shortness of breath, or fatigue.
- (c) Staff and faculty should make appropriate use of staggered working hours to prevent infection when taking public transportation.
- (d) Students should come to the campus only when absolutely necessary.

(2) Infection Control at Work

- (a) Deans and heads of sections should pay attention to the health of the members of their sections, and faculty and staff should look out for each other's health.
- (b) Maintain proper hand hygiene and observe proper coughing etiquette.
- (c) Avoid coming to work if you have cold-like symptoms.
- (d) Wear a mask and keep a distance of at least 2 meters when you are face-to-face with others, for example working at a counter.
- (e) Please be sure to wash your hands often with soap or use hand sanitizer, especially when you arrive at the office or get home, before and after meetings, and before meals.
- (f) In addition to the above, please be sure to take any steps necessary to avoid mass infection in your place of work or study, and elsewhere.
- (g) Staff and faculty are encouraged to work at home when possible.

(3) Infection Control at Meetings

Postpone or cancel meetings if possible, or consider holding them in an alternative way, such as by

circulating documents. When meetings are absolutely necessary, those with cold-like symptoms should not attend. Also, be sure to take steps to minimize the chance of infection, such as sitting at a distance from each other and making sure that all participants wear masks.

(4) Trips by Faculty Members, Staff Members and Students

(i) Trips outside the country and even outside Kumamoto Prefecture are in principle prohibited. Part-time teachers living outside the prefecture should not visit the campus.

(ii) Business and other trips even within the prefecture are discouraged, and those that are not strictly necessary for research or education purposes should be canceled or postponed. Part-time teachers should also avoid coming to the campus.

(iii) Teachers and staff with other employment outside the university should stop going immediately.

(iv) Travel whether within or outside the country is strongly discouraged.

2. IN CASE OF INFECTION

(1) If staff or faculty are infected or suspected of being infected...

Report the infection or suspected infection to your dean or head of section. Part-time teachers should report to the Academic Affairs Division. The dean/head of section should report the situation to the General Affairs Division and instruct the infected person to contact a Public Health Center and follow any instructions given. The person infected must also be instructed to report the instructions given by the Public Health Center to the university's General Affairs Division. The dean/head of section should take this opportunity to check on the health of the other members of the section.

The person infected should absent him/herself from the university.

If found to be infected, submit proof of full recovery provided by a medical institution before returning to work. Do not return to work if there is any doubt as to your status.

If you are confirmed as a close contact with an infected person, you will need to absent yourself from the university for a period of 14 days, counting from the day after the last contact.

If you have discussed your situation at a Public Health Center, you will need to absent yourself from the university until your status is clear.

(2) If a member of your family or anyone who lives with you becomes infected or is expected of being infected...

First, inform your dean or head of section. The dean/head of section should report the situation to the General Affairs Division.

In most cases, the dean/head of section will instruct you to stay at home for 14 days to minimize the risks of infection.

3. CLASSES AND OTHER EVENTS

(1) Regular Classes

(a) Please refer to the separate document on the conduct of 2020-21 first-semester classes.

(b) (i) If a student or someone in close contact with a student is infected or suspected of being infected, the student must contact the Academic Affairs Division or Student Affairs Division. That division will contact the teachers of the courses taken by the student in question.

(ii) A student advised to contact a Public Health Center must do so and follow instructions given by the Public Health Center. The student must absent him/herself from school and submit proof of full recovery provided by a medical institution before returning to school.

(iii) If you are confirmed as a close contact with an infected person, you will need to absent yourself from the university for a period of 14 days, counting from the day after the last contact.

(iv) If suffering from a temperature of more than 37.5°C for four days, shortness of breath, or strong fatigue, you must contact a Public Health Center and follow the instructions given. Absent yourself from school until your situation is clear, and submit proof of full recovery provided by a medical institution before returning to school.

(v) Special consideration will be given to students absenting themselves from school because of symptoms associated with the novel coronavirus such as cough, fever, and fatigue, to avoid them suffering academically.

If students or faculty/staff are infected, the university will, in consultation with the relevant prefectural authorities, evaluate the situation according to the number of people who have been in close contact with those infected and the status of the epidemic in the wider community, and may if necessary close the school for a period of time.

(2) Extension Courses, CPD Courses, Public Program

In principle, these events, and any other events attended by members of the public, are cancelled. We are consulting with the prefectural government regarding the Agriculture Academy.

(3) Other Events Sponsored by PUK

All university-sponsored events including conferences, seminars, symposiums, and the like should in principle be postponed or canceled.

Social gatherings sponsored by the university are also postponed or canceled in principle. We encourage everyone to refrain from private gatherings and parties and the like as much as possible.

4. USE OF CAMPUS FACILITIES

(1) Use of the student cafeteria, the Global Lounge, the gyms, the tennis courts, the training rooms, and the athletics field (except when used as part of classes) are prohibited. Lease of university facilities to outside groups is also suspended except in exceptional cases (such as national or regional exams where it would not be practical to hold them elsewhere).

- (2) Use of the Library is restricted to students, researchers, faculty members, staff members, emeritus professors, and part-time teachers. Student use is restricted to borrowing and returning books.
- (3) Use of club and circle rooms is prohibited.
- (4) Posters with information on infection prevention measures will be displayed in building entrances and areas where students tend to gather.

5. STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES

(1) Job Searching, etc.

Students should follow the policies of each company or organization. Take reasonable care to minimize the possibility of infection.

In the case of an interview or other job search-related event outside the prefecture, contact the organization regarding the possibility of remote participation or postponement. Where the company or organization is not able to accommodate you, contact the Career Center for advice on what to do.

Face-to-face consultations with Career Counselors/Advisers are not allowed. Please use email or call them on the telephone.

(2) Company Information Sessions on Campus

These are all canceled.

(3) Vocational Training

Face-to-face university-sponsored vocational training sessions will not be held. Where possible, events will be held remotely over the Internet.

(4) Extra-Curricular Activities

- (a) Camps, games, performances, and collaborative practice and social gatherings with anyone not affiliated with the university are canceled.
- (b) Use of the Extra-Curricular Activities Building is prohibited.
- (c) Lending of classrooms, gyms, athletics field, etc. to students is canceled.

INQUIRIES

Classification	Inquiries	
Faculty Members / Staff Members	General Affairs Division	+81-96-321-6605
Students	Student Affairs Division	+81-96-383-7896
International Students	Center for International Education & Exchange	+81-96-234-6867
Part-time Lecturers	Academic Affairs Division	+81-96-321-6609