Dear UNC-Chapel Hill and UNC Health Care System Faculty, Staff, and Students:

We have been following the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and its potential threat globally with our deepest concern for those whose lives have been devastated or disrupted by this virus. We also have been humbled by the courage and professionalism of so many health care workers who are willing to help when the world is in such serious need.

Consistent with our public service mission, UNC seeks to address major issues facing the global community, including this outbreak. While we are deeply aware of the need for service and research related to Ebola, the University and the Health Care System must also balance those needs against a full commitment to protecting our community.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina Health Care System are closely monitoring the recommendations of state and federal agencies and public health authorities regarding the Ebola virus outbreak. The following message is intended to clarify the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina Health Care System’s travel policies in light of the ongoing international response to Ebola, particularly in three West African countries: Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia. Additionally, this message provides information about the University’s and Health Care System’s response and available resources.

Please note: This statement does not apply to the Health Care System/Medical Center’s other affiliated entities.

**CDC Guidance on Ebola-Affected Nations**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Level 3 Travel Warning (the highest level of warning) urging all U.S. residents to avoid nonessential travel to Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia. Additionally, the CDC has advised universities that all education-related travel to these countries be postponed until further notice. Visit [http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/advice-for-colleges-universities-and-students-about-ebola-in-west-africa](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/advice-for-colleges-universities-and-students-about-ebola-in-west-africa).

**UNC-Chapel Hill and UNC Health Care System Travel Restrictions**

1. University or Health Care System Related or Sponsored Travel:
   - Effective immediately, under current UNC policy, travel to the three affected nations by undergraduate, graduate, and professional students—including travel by health professional students—is prohibited.
   - University faculty or staff who wish to petition for approval to travel to these countries for humanitarian or scientific/clinical purposes related to the Ebola response must seek explicit, advance approval—first from the dean of their school and subsequently from the Office of the Provost. The Office of the Provost has convened a UNC Global Risk Response Team of advisors who will be consulted on whether to grant such approval. After receiving school approval, contact the Office of the Provost at 919-962-2198.
   - Employees of the Health Care System must receive approval for any proposed Health Care System-related or sponsored travel to these countries by the UNC Health Care System CEO’s office prior to travel. Contact 919-966-4161.
2. Voluntary/Personal Travel Not Sponsored by the University or Health Care System:

Voluntary travel (defined as not University/Health Care System-related or -sponsored) to the Ebola affected countries above is strongly discouraged and should be reported to that individual’s employer as outlined above.

Additionally, as a global university, many members of our community have close family ties in West African countries touched by the Ebola outbreak. While we recognize the desire to visit loved ones in affected nations, we recommend that you refrain from making this visit until the epidemic passes. Please know that our thoughts are with those who are separated from loved ones facing such struggle.

3. Implications of Travel:

In the event permission is granted to a faculty or staff member to travel to these West African countries to assist in the Ebola response, such an employee should be aware that UNC’s ability to offer medical care and evacuation in the event of illness or exposure is extremely limited. Currently, medical evacuation may not be possible. Persons exposed to the disease may face barriers to leaving the country of exposure and may be held in quarantine.

Any employee who chooses to travel to the affected areas without institutional approval does so at his or her own risk.

Employees are subject to all applicable Human Resources policies regarding leave including policies about paid leave time, sick leave, and Worker’s Compensation (http://hr.unc.edu/ or https://www.unchealthcare.org).

Any employee traveling to these nations must submit to a screening before returning to campus or to a UNC Health Care System facility. Based on this screening, there may be a 21-day isolation period as directed by the local health director, N.C. Department of Health and Human Service and/or the University or the UNC Health Care System. This is consistent with UNC policies including:


Additional Information

UNC has placed considerable information about its response to the Ebola epidemic on the following website: http://ehs.unc.edu/emergency/ebola.shtml. Plans and policies are in place to address any potential cases of Ebola on campus, to reduce the risks for our students, patients, faculty, staff, and the community.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services offers specific Ebola-related guidance at: http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/ebola/EbolaProviderGuidance101514.pdf. Anyone who travels to an Ebola-affected area is required to contact both the NC Communicable Disease Branch and UNC Environment, Health and Safety for a risk assessment prior to their return to campus and/or UNC Health Care facilities. 24-hour contacts:
UNC Health Care has been preparing for the possible but unlikely arrival of a patient with Ebola in a UNC Health Care facility or hospital. Current information on UNC Health Care’s preparations can be found at http://news.unchealthcare.org/news/2014/october/ebola.

As a reminder, all international travel by University employees and students should be registered in the UNC Global Travel Registry (http://globaltravel.unc.edu/). The registry also provides specific travel and risk-related guidance. The University monitors travel warnings and alerts from the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and communicates critical updates with individuals who are registered in the UNC Global Travel Registry.

Additionally, anyone traveling internationally in affiliation with the University must enroll with the travel and evacuation insurance program established by General Administration and administered by HTH Worldwide, unless given specific approval for an alternate travel and evacuation insurance policy by the Office of the Provost.

In conclusion, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the entire Carolina community. You are working together to contribute to addressing this global challenge in inspiring and meaningful ways. You are also demonstrating extraordinary commitment to protecting local and global communities.

With gratitude,

Carol L. Folt
Chancellor
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

William L. Roper
Chief Executive Officer
UNC Health Care System

This message is sponsored by: Office of the Chancellor