

Dear UConn Community,

The state of Connecticut is in a fortunate position to have a low transmission rate of COVID-19 overall, though we know some communities are disproportionately affected compared to others. Our UConn community has a big part to play in keeping the transmission rate low. On a broad level, the University has redesigned physical spaces; put comprehensive baseline testing, quarantine and tracing strategies in place; and will continually monitor and test for presence of COVID-19 through random testing and wastewater surveillance.

On an individual level, we must each commit to following recommended public health protocols to keep ourselves and our community safe by adhering to the [UConn Promise](#). And we want to be clear: When we refer to community, we mean more than just our UConn campuses. Each of our campuses is part of the larger communities of the towns and cities where we live, including but not limited to Farmington, Groton (Avery Point), Hartford, Stamford, Waterbury, and Storrs/Mansfield. Whether you are going to a campus building or you're going to the grocery store after our quarantine period, the same rules apply.

The UConn Promise is simple, straightforward, and powerful. These steps will help keep each of us safe, as well as our neighbors and the communities that serve as the backbone of UConn.

Specifically, each of us will:

- wear a mask or face covering in public places – outdoors or indoors;
- avoid close contact, aside from roommates and family, by maintaining at least six feet of physical distancing from others;
- regularly wash my hands — for at least 20 seconds — and use hand sanitizer;
- follow state, local and University rules regarding gathering sizes, pedestrian traffic patterns, and other new regulations designed to promote safety and good health – including limiting social gatherings to very small groups on campus or off campus;
- monitor daily for COVID-19 symptoms and inform health services or my health care provider regarding any changes in my health status;
- commit to medical isolation, quarantine, or other medical direction when advised to do so by a health care provider;
- read all University COVID-19 communications and take action as necessary; and
- maintain all immunizations including an annual flu vaccine, as advised by my healthcare professional.

In line with the specific components of the UConn Promise above, we expect everyone in our community – faculty, staff, and students – to take all necessary steps to be safe at all times. Across our working, learning, and living spaces on our campuses and in our local communities, we are prepared to do all we are able to ensure every member of our University is respecting the health and safety of others. Addressing non-compliance on campus should always begin with a request for compliance. Each of us can ask our fellow community members to put on a mask when we see they aren't wearing one. The two of us had the pleasure of welcoming students and parents as greeters during move-in weekend. There were only a few occasions in which we had to remind individuals to put on or raise their masks, and we were gratified to see how overwhelmingly supportive and appreciative our students (and their families) were of our safety protocols.

While cooperation is overwhelmingly positive, we also know there are cases of noncompliance. It is important for us to share that we take these very seriously, and we will and have taken action to keep UConn and our surrounding communities safe. This action can start with a conversation, but we have measures in place for necessary disciplinary action.

Many of you are aware of a party in a residence hall that violated our health and safety rules; as a result, the students involved have been removed from campus housing. Separately, over the weekend, seven students were written up for minor infractions.

We understand that many of you will come into contact with students as well as other faculty and staff who will be noncompliant with the UConn Promise. Where you are comfortable doing so, you should begin with asking the noncompliant individual(s) to do the right thing. Where that doesn't produce a compliant response, behavior referrals for students can be [submitted to Community Standards](#), or referrals for faculty or staff can be sent to that individual's supervisor or the Provost's Office. The University has also instituted a COVID-19 Information Center for non-emergency inquiries, and can be reached by calling 860-486-COVI or by emailing [covidquestions@uconn.edu](mailto:covidquestions@uconn.edu).

Additionally, we are partnering with local officials to support safety efforts off campus. We are working with the Governor's Office to support the Town of Mansfield's request to enact a local ordinance that will ban gatherings of 25 or more people. Our response in the event of larger gatherings would usually begin with a conversation, but could range from a citation for violating a city ordinance to subsequent student conduct investigation.

In addition to being clear about our expectations and contingency plans to promote safety, we also must be transparent about our status throughout the semester. This includes a [public dashboard](#) with updates on the rate of positive versus negative tests on our campuses that [anyone can access](#). We already have seen a remarkably low rate of positive test results during the move-in process. Moreover, each positive case was met with a clear and detailed plan to ensure the safety of others and limit any further spread.

Finally, we want to hear how we are doing and suggestions for improvements. We know the work of keeping our campuses operating safely and effectively is ongoing, and we will continue to gather and be responsive to feedback from our internal and local communities. Many of the strategies above are aligned with feedback from outreach into our communities, including a thought exchange conducted by our Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP) in Storrs/Mansfield. We want to encourage everyone to email your thoughts to [provost@uconn.edu](mailto:provost@uconn.edu) and to attend the virtual Provost's Office Community Office Hours, [provost.uconn.edu](http://provost.uconn.edu), as well as the upcoming live office hours from President Katsouleas, [president.uconn.edu](http://president.uconn.edu).

COVID-19 has brought significant challenges to our lives and UConn has an important role to play as we move forward. We are in this together, Huskies – let's rise to meet this challenge and protect our community.

Sincerely,

Tom and Carl

**Tom Katsouleas**

President

**Carl Lejuez**

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs