



President's Office

Letters to the UMB Community

Reminder about Coronavirus Vigilance and Telework

November 11, 2020

Dear UMB Community:

The severity of the COVID-19 pandemic is increasing in Maryland with cases at an all-time high, and those of you who saw Gov. Larry Hogan's *news conference* yesterday heard him announce the additional guidance and actions aimed to slow the spread in the state. The higher rates of infections, hospitalizations, and deaths in Maryland demand that we each need to redouble our efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus.

In his news conference, Governor Hogan specifically mentioned teleworking. Teleworking is one of the best ways to keep our community safe. I want to remind you that the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) is still in a state of *Moderate-Density operations*, which means **a UMB employee whose job can be performed through telework, as determined by the employee's direct supervisor, is required to do so**. No mandatory teleworker should be allowed or required to return to campus unless the appropriate review processes have been completed and required approval has been obtained. As a family-first institution, I also want to remind supervisors to be flexible in giving employees the leeway to schedule around family and caregiver demands.

For the limited number of employees who are approved to be on campus, I cannot overemphasize the importance and value of following all of our COVID-19 safety protocols (e.g., masking, physical distancing, symptom monitoring, and hand hygiene). Your attention to these protocols is critical to the safety of our workplace.

This has been a difficult year, and though we may feel COVID fatigue, the virus continues to infect more and more people across the state and nation. UMB's first responsibility is to the safety of its employees and students. I want to remind you that our safety efforts on campus must be matched by our safety efforts at home and in our communities. Data show that a significant percentage of transmission occurs in social and family gatherings where individuals are less vigilant about safety precautions. Please remember as leaders in Maryland that it is your responsibility to adhere to the highest standards for COVID-19 safety, including teleworking as required, avoiding gatherings, wearing masks, washing hands frequently, and physically distancing to protect yourself and those around you.

As the situation changes in Maryland, UMB may need to make additional modifications. My hope is that we each do everything we can to stop the spread of the virus, and keep ourselves and our loved ones healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS

President

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