



COVID-19 STATEMENT TO EMPLOYEES SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PANDEMIC

We are living in unique and uncertain times. None of us can know what the future holds for sure, but at the University of the Incarnate Word, we know this – we are dedicated to providing our students with a full University experience in Spring 2021. By choosing to work at UIW, we commit to providing excellent academic and non-academic support services and curriculum to our students, who have trusted us with their education during this time of pandemic.

We recognize that you are seeking certainty; we all are. COVID-19, the virus responsible for the current global pandemic, is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. Research supports that the virus primarily spreads through respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. In addition, many people who contract the virus may be asymptomatic and unknowingly spread the virus. However, the full extent of how the virus transmits is unknown. Currently, there is no vaccine available for the virus nor known treatment for the adverse effects attributed to COVID-19.

The risk of exposure and possible infection is real and present in any community environment where large numbers of people are regularly interacting, including on UIW's campuses. We are engaged in numerous efforts to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the spread of COVID-19 on our campuses. Efforts include increased cleaning, implementation of mask and face-covering protocols, social distancing, hand sanitizing stations, and other mitigation strategies.

Despite the University's best efforts, it is impossible to eliminate the risk of positive cases or an outbreak on our campuses – while still operating business-related and campus offices, on-campus classes, residential housing, all in service to our students. We cannot guarantee that you and others on our campuses will not be exposed to and become infected with COVID-19. By engaging in the on-campus community of UIW, you understand there are risks related to exposure to COVID-19 which the University cannot completely eliminate.

As a Catholic institution of faith and education, UIW is committed to acknowledging and honoring the dignity of every person, as each is created in the image of God. We must all take steps to care for each other and our students. Taking steps to minimize the risk of COVID-19 infections (or any other spread of disease) at UIW and in our community is a shared responsibility and a critical part of caring for all who live, work and learn with us. Faculty, staff and administrators can help keep our community healthy by being mindful of their actions at all times and following the University's health and safety protocols, and informing our students and guests to do the same.

Please understand that whether on any UIW campus or remote, a few things are certain:

- UIW holds as paramount the health, safety and welfare of every member of our community.
- None of us can guarantee what shape COVID-19 will take, and none of us – including UIW – can guarantee a COVID-19-free environment. This is simply not feasible. We are taking recommended steps to mitigate this risk, but we cannot categorically guarantee a COVID-19 free workplace.
- Every member of our community – including you – must do their part. This means adhering to national, state, local, and university health and safety guidelines and requirements, whether on or off campus, including complying with mandatory guidelines of the CDC and UIW, and informing students and guests

to do the same. Specific details will be provided as circumstances dictate, but this may include such things as: temperature checks, social distancing, wearing masks or other facial coverings, using other PPE, reporting suspected and positive infections, not reporting to work if sick, and isolating and quarantining when required. We do this not just for ourselves but for the safety of others, and because this is consistent with the Mission and spirit of how we care for one another at UIW.

Dated July 14, 2020

Revised December 17, 2020