

August 21, 2020

As mentioned in my latest COVID-19 update distributed on August 18, attached you will find the comprehensive *Faculty and Staff: Return to Campus Guidelines* to support the Phase Two Return to Campus Plan. Guidance in this document is subject to change, even after these plans are implemented. The University community should remain flexible, patient and empathetic as plans are implemented and campus operations are expanding. The South University COVID-19 website should be consulted for ongoing developments in policies and procedures related to university operations and efforts related to the pandemic.

All staff and faculty are expected to comply fully with the policies, protocols, and guidelines set forth in this guide.

Enjoy the weekend,

Steve

**Steven K. Yoho**  
Chancellor  
University Administration



# RETURN TO CAMPUS: GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

August 2020

COVID-19 Task Force

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# Introduction

South University has remained focused on the health and safety of our faculty, staff and students throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This commitment has never wavered and it remains at the forefront as the University prepares to enact a carefully planned and measured reopening of its campuses. The University COVID-19 Task Force continuously reviews the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance on COVID-19 and complies with the Executive Orders and directives from local jurisdictions and public health departments as they evolve. The information contained in this document is based on the CDC guidelines and information gathered from the CDC website.

Guidance in this document is subject to change, even after these plans are implemented. The University community should remain flexible, patient and empathetic as plans are implemented and campus operations are restored. The South University COVID-19 website should be consulted for ongoing developments in policies and procedures related to university operations and efforts related to the pandemic.

All staff and faculty are expected to comply fully with the policies, protocols, and guidelines set forth in this guide.

## COVID-19 Task Force

South University COVID-19 Task Force is responsible for the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chancellor's COVID-19 Task Force is responsible for collective decision making regarding phases (see page 6), communication strategy, and implementation, including planning, training, safety precautions, supplies, and technology.

The Health and Safety Committee, comprised of faculty and academic leadership with background in medicine, healthcare, public health, and pharmacy, advises the Chancellor's COVID-19 Task Force utilizing CDC Guidelines, research, and collective experience in the treatment and prevention of infectious diseases.

### Chancellor's COVID-19 Task Force

- Steven Yoho, Chancellor
- Brian McAulay, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Gina Scarboro, College Dean for Health Professions and COVID-19 Health and Safety Committee Chair
- Alisa Krouse, Vice Chancellor for Student Success and Administration

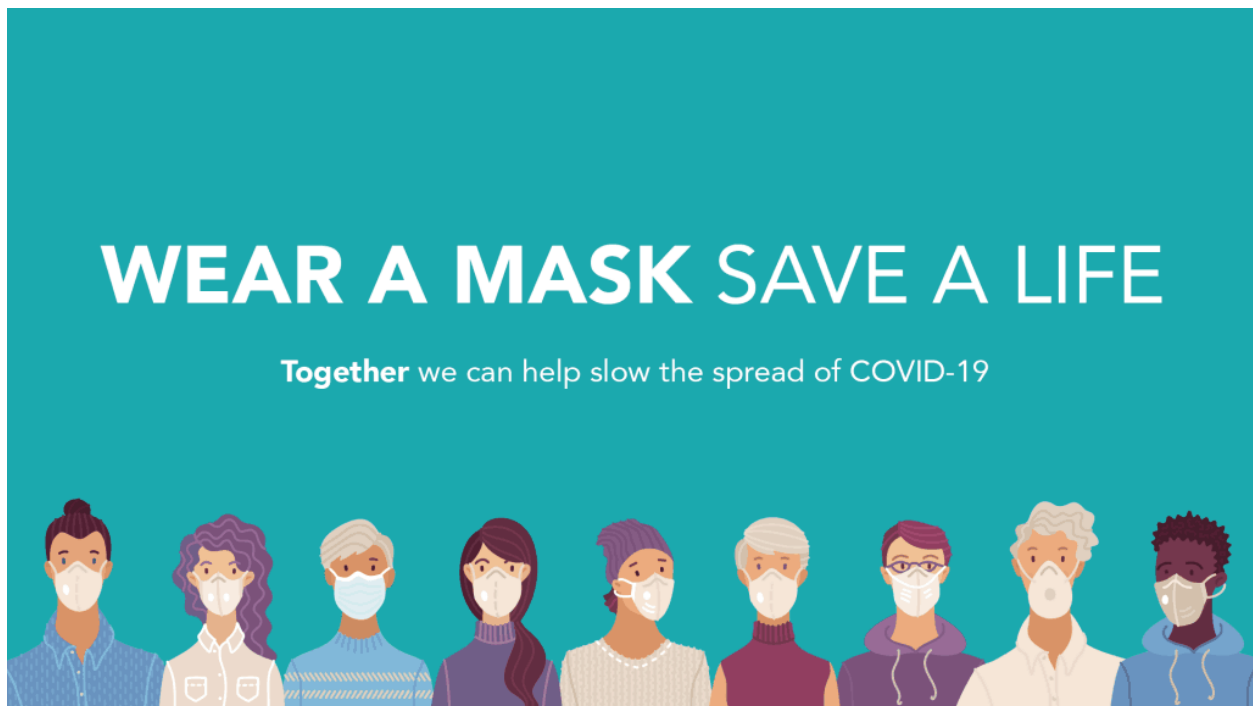
- Lynne Haines, Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
- Jennifer Flatt, University Director of Local Marketing
- Valarie Trimarchi, Savannah Campus President
- Jason Crittenden, Richmond Campus Director
- John Bialowas, Director of Facilities
- Dustin Barrett, Associate Vice Chancellor for IT
- Patti Adams, Assistant Dean for Operations, School of Pharmacy

### **COVID-19 Health and Safety Committee**

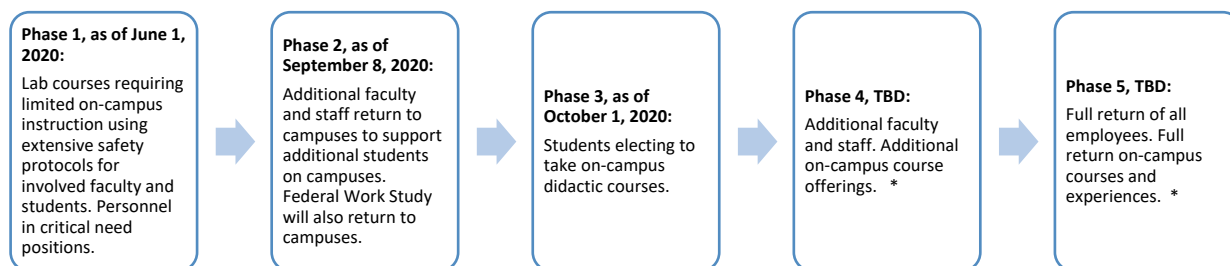
- Gina Scarboro (Committee Chair), Dean of the College of Health Professions, DBA, CAA
- Margaret Andrews, Assistant Dean, College of Nursing, DNP, RN, LNP, WHNP-BC, FNP-BC, CNE, CDP
- Elizabeth Kostal, DC, Academic Program Director, Health Sciences & Public Health
- Angelique Pereira, Pharm.D., BCPS, Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice, School of Pharmacy
- Kristen Smethurst, PA-C, Director of Didactic Education, Physician Assistant Program, West Palm Beach
- Lilia Macias-Moriarty, Ph.D., M.P.H., Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences, School of Pharmacy
- Sandra Tucker, MSN, RN, CNE, Undergraduate Nursing professor, Columbia

## What is South University doing to ensure a safe working environment for Staff and Faculty?

- Following best practices from the local department of health offices and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Taking a gradual and phased approach for staff and faculty to return to work
- Providing training modules for staff and faculty
- Providing masks/face coverings for all staff and faculty
- Requiring all staff/faculty to self-monitor and acknowledge they do not have any signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 before coming to campus each day; as this includes asking each staff/faculty member to take their own temperature and complete a self-check-in through an automated system
- Implementing enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocols across all campuses
- Providing assistance and resources to supervisors to assist them in their efforts to create a safe work environment prior to the return of all students, staff and faculty
- Using signage and other communications to encourage all members of our community and visitors to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by practicing good hygiene



# Phases



\*South University Online will return to Online Student Support Center in Phases 4 and/or 5.

South University's return to operations will take place in a gradual manner utilizing the five phases summarized below. Vice Chancellors, Campus Leaders, Deans, Department Heads, and Directors will have the responsibility to develop campus/department plans for the staggered return of their faculty and staff as well as the flexibility to determine those who should be brought back to campus during each phase.

## Phase 1

Started: June 1, 2020,

- This first phase began with identifying lab courses that required limited on-campus instruction using extensive safety protocols for involved faculty and students.
- Personnel in critical need positions return/Campus Leaders, Supervisors, etc.

## Phase 2

Scheduled to start: September 8, 2020,

- Supervisors (including Program Directors, Chairs, Assistant Deans, etc.) who did not return to campus during Phase 1.
- Faculty teaching in-person during fall quarter and all staff return to campuses to support additional students on campuses.
- Federal Work Study will also return to the campuses.
- Individuals in those populations defined as at risk, who need to care for a child or have someone at risk in the same household, and who have applied with appropriate documentation for accommodation and have been approved for such, should remain in a teleworking/rotational schedule or other accommodation as approved by South University's Human Resources Office.



**Phase 3**

Scheduled to start: October 1, 2020,

- Students electing to take on-campus didactic and lab courses in fall quarter will return.

**Phase 4**

Date to be determined

- Additional faculty and staff on campus and additional coursework offered on campus.

**Phase 5**

Date to be determined

- When an effective COVID-19 vaccine has been developed and available to staff/faculty, all approved at risk staff/faculty return to campus.
- Full return of on-campus courses and experiences.

# Required Staff and Faculty Training Modules

The self-assessment portal is an online platform that will allow students, staff, faculty, vendors and visitors to virtually “check in” to campus, complete a symptom assessment, and attest to their health on a daily basis. It is very important that an honest assessment of health is provided, as it is everyone’s responsibility to be mindful of not only our wellbeing, but also those around us.

A self-assessment portal account will be created for every staff and faculty member. South University has collaborated with (SymTem) to provide a health screening assessment via an app easily downloaded on a smartphone, accessible online, or by QR code available on posters located at each entry point of the campus.

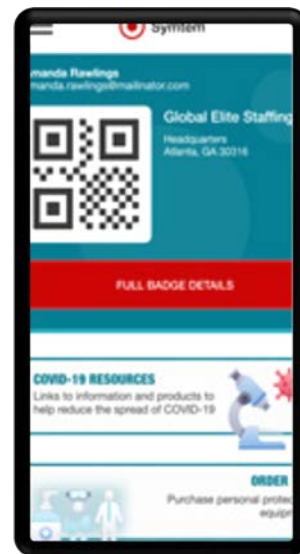
Students, staff and faculty are required to take the self-assessment at home prior to reporting to campus to receive their daily digital badge, which allows entrance to the facilities. Faculty and staff must check in at a designated meeting spot on campus before reporting to their respective office or work space.

### Setting up your SymTem account:

- Download the app or log into the webpage
- Use the QR or specialized South University code
- Select your password

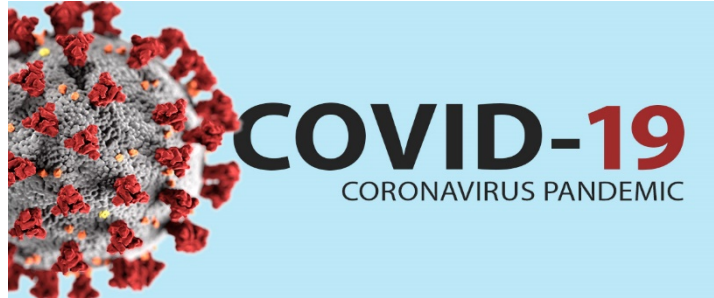
### Every day before coming to campus:

- Receive a daily reminder at home
- Complete the symptom assessment
- Review and submit results
- Receive the digital badge



## What is COVID-19 and How Does It Spread?

- COVID-19 is a mild (or no symptoms) to severe respiratory illness caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).
- COVID-19 is primarily spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets, generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, shouts or sings.
- You may also become infected by touching your mouth, nose or eyes after sharing or handling any object or touching a public surface contaminated by the virus.
- Since SARS-CoV-2 spreads between people who are in close proximity to one another, it is important to avoid contact and physically distance (at least 6 feet) from others when possible, and all employees are required to wear a mask when on campus.
- Since SARS-CoV-2 can be spread through contact with surfaces and objects, frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizer, and cleaning and disinfection of public surfaces also are critical to prevention of disease spread.
- For additional information regarding the spread of COVID-19, please visit the CDC website.



## Self-Monitoring and Symptoms of COVID-19

All staff and faculty should consider the health and safety of each other and themselves. There are a few basic principles of self-monitoring that are expected for those individuals coming to campus, whether they are faculty, staff, visitors, or contractors. You must self-monitor and acknowledge that you are not aware that you have signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 before coming to campus each day. According to CDC, people with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of symptoms, ranging from mild to severe. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose



- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 symptoms, transmission, and prevention, faculty and staff should consult the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website: <https://www.cdc.gov>.

By coming to campus, a staff or faculty member is acknowledging that they have completed the self-monitoring requirements earlier that day and confirmed that they do not have signs/symptoms of COVID-19. A self-assessment portal will be provided for staff/faculty to report in each day. This system is provided by SymTem. You will have an app on your phone to check-in one hour prior to your start time on campus.

## Temperature Checks

At this time, the University will not conduct daily temperature checks of faculty and staff at work locations. You are asked to self-monitor by taking your own temperature each day before reporting to work and not come to campus if your temperature is not normal.

## What to do if symptoms develop

If any symptoms develop, you must:

- Stay home. (Do not report to work if you are sick; if you become ill while at work, go home immediately.) Faculty and staff can use accrued leave for this purpose.
- Immediately inform your supervisor, dean, program head, or department chair.

## If staff or faculty think or know they had COVID-19 symptoms

You may not return to campus until:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication **and**
- Symptoms have improved

*OR*

1. Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
2. Improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, etc.) **and**
3. Negative results from two COVID-19 tests.

## If staff or faculty tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms

If you continue to have no symptoms, you may return to work after:

- 10 days have passed since test

Depending on your healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, you might get tested to see if you still have COVID-19. If you will be tested, you can be around others after you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

## For faculty or staff who have been around a person with COVID-19 at work or in the community

Faculty or staff who had close contact with someone with COVID-19 must stay home for 14 days after exposure before returning to campus.

## Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is a strategy in which public health officials work with a patient to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the timeframe while they may have been infectious. The Department of Public Health will be responsible for all contact tracing on our campuses. For more information contact your local Department of Public Health Office.

## Safety Practices

### General Safety Practices

- South University faculty, staff, students, and visitors are required to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings in all common areas. It is not required to wear a mask in a private office when you are alone in the office.



- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for a least 20 seconds – use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home if you are sick. If you become ill at work, go home immediately.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Get a flu shot. A flu shot will not protect against COVID-19, but if you do get the flu, your symptoms will be less severe, easing the burden on healthcare facilities. It will also reduce your chances of being mistakenly quarantined for COVID-19, when you have an unrelated illness.
- Avoid sharing common office supplies such as pens and notebooks.
- Develop sanitizing procedures for work areas with commonly used or shared equipment, tools, computers, copiers, etc.

## Social Distancing

Since people can spread the virus before having symptoms, it is important to keep physical distance from others when possible. When possible, faculty and staff should use the following safety practices:

- Maintain six feet (about two arm's length) of distance from other people.
- Avoid gathering in groups in common areas in buildings.
- Continue to limit large group meetings – utilize distance communication tools like GoToMeeting or teleconference.
- Use signage to remind to practice social distancing in shared areas.



## Face Coverings and Masks

- South University requires individuals on South University property to wear face masks/coverings when inside facilities/buildings.
- Face coverings must be properly worn while on South University campuses (covering both nose and mouth):  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html>
- Face covering use will be in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing.
- Face coverings will not be required when alone in an enclosed office, or on-campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met.
- Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or leave the facility.
- Refusal to comply with the requirement may result in discipline through the applicable code of conduct for faculty, staff, or students.
- Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for a documented health reason.
- Disposable face masks are available at all campus reception areas for faculty, staff, students and visitors to campus.



## Personal Safety Practices when AWAY from Campus

To protect the health of the entire South University community, on campus and off campus, staff and faculty are responsible to follow the safety guidelines in this document while away from campus. All staff and faculty share in the commitment, with our students, to ensure we provide a safe learning environment and part of that commitment requires personal safety practices be followed when away from campus.

# Visitors to Campus

- Must check-in at reception and adhere to all social distancing and face-covering requirements.
- Must follow posted protocols and signage on university campus.
- Meetings must adhere to social distance requirements and should be held virtually if at all possible.
- Must adhere to South University campus protocols while on South University properties/campuses.
- Children should not accompany an adult to campus at this time.

# Workplace Scenarios

## Working Environments

All work areas are different and may require different types of risk mitigation strategies. Supervisors will assess work environments to determine the best mitigation strategies.



## Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Campus facility personnel will continue to evaluate university cleaning practices regularly as more is known about preventing the spread of COVID-19.
- South University utilizes a natural and safe Bioesque Disinfectant Solution product as our first choice to disinfect all areas.
- Additionally, South University has purchased Victory Electrostatic Sprayers with their patented technology to provide an electrical charge to the Bioesque Disinfectant Solution, allowing them to wrap conductive surfaces with an effective and even coverage of disinfectant.
- Facilities staff will clean touch surfaces, restrooms and common areas on a more frequent basis.
- Frequently touched surfaces may include interior/exterior doors, door handles, chair armrests, tabletops, handrails, podiums, light switches, trash receptacles, elevator buttons, drinking fountains, shared computer rooms, and lounge spaces.
- Additional disinfection between classes may be performed by faculty and staff as desired using provided Bioesque Disinfectant Solution. Sanitizing wipes may also be used to disinfect classroom surfaces including tabletops, chair armrests, and computer workstations.
- For items such as keyboards and other types of technology equipment, alcohol based wipes may be used.
- Hand sanitizer has been placed in all common areas, labs, restrooms and other shared spaces for regular use as needed.



- Additional cleaning supplies can be obtained by contacting the Director of Facilities at [jbialowas@southuniversity.edu](mailto:jbialowas@southuniversity.edu).

### **Using Elevators**

- Use stairs whenever possible.
- Occupancy on elevators should be limited to two people in most situations.
- Masks are required in buildings/facilities and should be worn in elevators.
- Avoid touching the elevator buttons with exposed hands/fingers when possible.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon departing the elevator.

### **Restrooms**

Use of restrooms should be limited based on facility size to ensure proper social distancing whenever possible. Wash your hands thoroughly afterward for at least 20 seconds.

### **Laboratories**

During Phase 1, laboratory instruction protocols required students and faculty providing instruction to participate in daily temperature checks and health screens in addition to protocols for adequate spacing, with a maximum group size of 15 including faculty and students.

### **Phase 2 Laboratory Instructional Protocols**

1. The maximum number of students and faculty members in each session is limited by the ability to accommodate a required 6-foot distance with a maximum of 50% of room seating capacity.
2. Classroom modifications to ensure adequate distancing include:
  - Space seating/desks at least 6 feet apart when feasible. Consider taping off seats and rows to ensure a six-foot distance between seats.
  - Host smaller classes in larger rooms.
  - Offer distance learning in addition to in-person classes to help reduce the number of in-person attendees.
  - Provide adequate distance between individuals engaged in experiential learning opportunities (e.g., labs, simulation, or skill-building activities).
  - Excess seating should be removed.
  - The floor should be taped to identify appropriate distancing if not seated.
3. Rooms will be cleaned between groups by janitorial staff or assigned personnel. The On-Campus Student Laboratory Coordinator will work with faculty and facilities staff to determine breaks between instructional sessions.
4. Students should enter and exit through separate specified doors on each campus. These doors should be marked accordingly.

5. Students and faculty must wear masks at all times in the building during clinical lab experiences. Masks and hand sanitizer will be provided and located at the building entry point.
6. Students are only permitted on campus for the duration of the learning activity.
7. The use of learning spaces should be limited to minimize the burden on housekeeping.
8. Students may only visit the restrooms one at a time.
9. Students, faculty, and staff are required to perform self-monitoring each day for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to arriving on campus using the [CDC guidelines and symptom self-checker application](#).

## Travel

- Non-essential business-related travel of any kind is currently prohibited by South University staff/faculty until further notice.
- Essential business travel will be limited during the pandemic; this will require a travel authorization form approved by the Chancellor.

## Anti-Stigma Statement

South University is committed to mitigating COVID-19 stigma by:

- Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of those seeking healthcare and those who may be part of any contact investigation.
- Quickly communicating the risk, or lack of risk, from contact with products, people, and places.
- Correcting negative language that can cause stigma by sharing accurate information about how the virus spreads.
- Speaking out against negative behaviors and statements, including those on social media.
- Making sure that images used in communications show diverse communities and do not reinforce stereotypes.
- Using media channels, including news media and social media, to speak out against stereotyping groups of people who experience stigma because of COVID-19.
- Suggesting virtual resources for [mental health](#) or other social support services for people who have experienced COVID-19 related stigma or discrimination.

# Human Resources Policies

## COVID-19 Related Accommodation Requests

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined that older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk from COVID-19. The CDC has provided a guideline of age 65 for those at risk due to age and we will use this as our guideline when considering approval of alternate work arrangements.

Individuals who are younger than age 65 may provide documentation from a health care provider that their age is a determining factor for risk that should prevent them from working on campus as scheduled. Individuals who have other high risk illnesses as identified by the CDC will be required to complete the request form and submit to human resources at [UAHR@southuniversity.edu](mailto:UAHR@southuniversity.edu).

## COVID-19 Related Leave and Absences from Work (Personal Leave)

Staff/Faculty experiencing COVID-19 type symptoms should not report to work. If an employee experiences such symptoms while at work, they should report to their supervisor that they are ill and should leave work immediately. A supervisor has the authority to send an employee home if the employee exhibits COVID-19 symptoms identified by the CDC. Employees may use PTO or apply for a leave without pay. Contact human resources for additional information regarding unpaid leave options.

## Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Eligible employees may be granted up to 12 work weeks of job-protected leave during a 12 month period for certain health-related and/or military deployment situations. FMLA leave eligibility is not performance-based. While on FMLA, employees can request to use their PTO in order to receive pay during the leave or apply for Short Term Disability, where applicable.

## Short Term Disability

South University provides Short Term Disability at 60% salary to all full time benefit eligible faculty and staff members. If you were to become seriously ill and meet the definition of disability as defined and approved by Unum for more than seven calendar days, you would qualify for short term disability payments while on leave beginning on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of disability, or sooner when accompanied by a hospital admission. Please note, Short Term Disability does not cover quarantine, or any illness/injury that does not meet the definition of disability.

## Emotional and Mental Health

It is recognized that COVID-19 creates stress from fear of becoming ill, loved ones becoming ill, financial insecurity, and its impact on our normal routines, including having to practice social distancing. We want, therefore to make sure all staff/faculty are aware of South University's support resources:

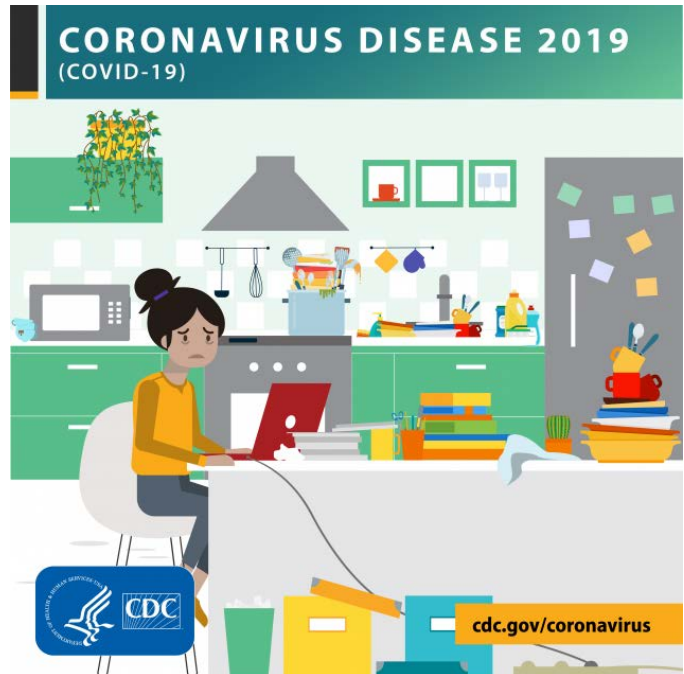
### Employee Assistance

If you are feeling overwhelmed, reach out to a licensed, professional counselor for coping techniques to help you feel more calm and in control. South University partners with Health Advocate to offer up to three free and confidential counseling sessions in person, by phone, video or text.

Call 1-800-854-1446 or visit [www.unum.com/lifebalance](http://www.unum.com/lifebalance)

**Additional Information:** Please visit the HR SharePoint site for additional information including the Employee Handbook and full policies at <https://mycampusoffice365.sharepoint.com/teams/suhrgeneralinformationandresources/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

**Human Resources Contact:** For assistance with any of the human resources policies listed above, please contact Hilary Donahoe, [hdonahoe@southuniversity.edu](mailto:hdonahoe@southuniversity.edu).



## Employee Resources

Human Resources:	Hilary Donahoe	<a href="mailto:hdonahoe@southuniversity.edu">hdonahoe@southuniversity.edu</a> 912-250-0505
Facilities / Security:	John Bialowas	<a href="mailto:jbialowas@southuniversity.edu">jbialowas@southuniversity.edu</a> 912-201-8049
South University Website:	<a href="https://www.southuniversity.edu/about/coronavirus-info-resources">https://www.southuniversity.edu/about/coronavirus-info-resources</a>	
The Centers for Disease Control COVID-19 Guidelines:	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html</a>	
South University Communications or Media Relations:	<a href="mailto:Media@southuniversity.edu">Media@southuniversity.edu</a>	

**Disclaimer:** Notwithstanding the University's efforts to implement prevention and mitigation measures, employees may be exposed to the coronavirus and may become ill with COVID-19, and such exposure and illness may result in personal injury, illness, temporary or permanent disability, or even death.