

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 27, 2020

Statement about Covid-19 Cases and Response at Johnston Community College

Johnston Community College is experiencing isolated cases of coronavirus infection. As of August 27, 2020, the College is tracking 18 positive cases which are distributed across campus. Of those positive cases, 16 are students, 2 are employees.

Upon learning of a potential case, JCC's COVID-19 Response Team initiates a series of procedures. The individuals affected are requested to follow the protocols established by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) when exhibiting symptoms or believe they have had direct exposure to someone with confirmed coronavirus. JCC support teams communicate with any potentially impacted campus community members, maintaining appropriate confidentiality, while ensuring that any student or employee who may have potentially been exposed is promptly notified so that they can self-monitor. Housekeeping services provides thorough disinfection and sterilization of the classroom and public spaces associated with the case. Throughout the process, the focus remains on student and employee health and wellbeing.

Prior to the start of fall classes, JCC decided to deliver 60% of all instructional coursework online. Class size was reduced in relation to the square footage of each classroom in order to keep students six feet apart. Housekeeping teams continue to thoroughly clean and disinfect classrooms and high-touch and high-traffic campus spaces multiple times a day. Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes are readily available throughout buildings and in every classroom.

JCC also made the decision to start fall classes on August 10, 2020 – a full week earlier than originally scheduled – in order to close the semester on December 3, 2020, prior to the onset of influenza season. Furthermore, fall break has been cancelled to ensure that coursework can be completed in a timely manner.

An additional 42 instructional classes will move to an online synchronous format by Tuesday, September 8, 2020. Synchronous refers to courses provided online in real time with faculty teaching from the classroom environment while students participate remotely. JCC has been offering remote course delivery since 1997 and is uniquely prepared to meet the demand for online instruction. Teaching modalities such as Blackboard Collaborate have been recently implemented to facilitate optimal learning at a distance.

Cases are being closely monitored to ensure that individualized learning and college operations are minimally affected while also ensuring the wellbeing of the College community. JCC leadership is continually assessing any further need to transition seated classes to remote models.

The College is following guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as the guidance of the Governor of North Carolina, and local state and county public health officials. The College is working collaboratively with Dr. Marilyn Pearson, Director of Johnston County Public Health.

As of August 27, a total of 4,837 unique students are enrolled at JCC for the fall semester. A total of 700 full-time and part-time employees currently serve Johnston Community College.

JCC will continue to communicate pertinent information. The College's COVID-19 procedure manual can be found via www.johnstoncc.edu/covidprocedures.

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Established in 1969, Johnston Community College is a comprehensive community college within the North Carolina System, offering more than 35 academic programs and numerous continuing education programs, services, and opportunities. The College provides programming through its main campus in Smithfield as well as the Arboretum, Cleveland Center, Rudolph Howell & Son Environmental Learning Center and the Workforce Development Center. JCC is fully accredited by the Commission of Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, to award certificates, diplomas and associate degrees.