

# Clark College restricts activities on campus due to COVID-19



A computer illustration of the novel coronavirus seen microscopically, created by the Centers for Disease Control.

Clark

College is closely monitoring the outbreak of a respiratory virus called

COVID-19. At this time, there are no cases of COVID-19 in Clark County,

according to Clark County Public Health.

Because the safety of students, staff and faculty is top priority, today the college formally activated its incident response team to identify issues and prepare for possible impacts that could be caused by COVID-19.

The best source for information about Clark College's response efforts is [www.clark.edu/covid-19](http://www.clark.edu/covid-19).

**CURRENT STATUS:** On March 13, Washington Governor Jay Inslee signed an executive order restricting activity at all community colleges statewide. To slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect public health, **Clark College will move to remote operations beginning Tuesday, March 17.** The restrictions are in place beginning March 17 through April 24, 2020.

**Essential college operations will continue.** "Essential college operations" include Security, Student Affairs, Facilities Services, IT, computer labs, Administrative Services, Human Resources, the Bookstore, and the childcare center (CFS). Other employees who can work remotely will do so. If you are an employee who is unsure whether you should report to work in person or remotely, please contact your supervisor.

# Ongoing Planning

Clark College is in the process of developing contingency plans for spring quarter, utilizing online learning. More details to be released soon.

We will continue to provide updates on this rapidly developing situation in several ways:

- Text messaging to students, staff and faculty using RAVE
- Emails to college community
- Daily updates at [www.clark.edu](http://www.clark.edu)
- Social media (@ClarkCollege on Twitter, “Clark College – Vancouver, Washington” on Facebook)

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we address this unprecedented situation. We are committed to the safety and well-being of our students, our staff and our faculty.

Clark College is in daily contact with the Clark County Public Health in monitoring the risk associated from COVID-19 and is taking appropriate precautions such as disinfecting high touch surfaces around campus such as doorknobs, handrails and light switches.

Students and staff can help by practicing everyday preventative actions as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Don't share food and drinks.
- Clean and disinfect shared surfaces and objects that are touched frequently.
- If you can, avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.

- Please stay home when you are sick. Do not report to work or attend classes if you are ill. Stay home, rest, and stay hydrated.

The CDC government website is a great resource.

Correct information is a powerful tool and dispels misinformation that can lead to stigma and discrimination.

While

COVID-19 originated in Wuhan, China, the disease is not specific to any ethnic group or national origin. The risk of infection is based on exposure to disease such as travel to an area where the disease is occurring.

Staff and students can help to reduce stigma and discrimination by speaking up if they hear, see or read harassing comments or misinformation.

Everyone is encouraged to rely on trusted sources about the causes of outbreaks from reputable sources such as the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** and the **Washington State Department of Health**.

Clark College is closely monitoring the situation to make timely and prudent decisions that protect our employees and students. The college will practice an abundance of caution during this period of time.

Clark College will update this article when any relevant developments occur. This article was last updated at 6:59 a.m. on March 15, 2020.

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# Supporting survivors at Clark

✖ October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which is a good reminder that domestic abuse, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence affect many of our students. In order to better support them, Clark College is developing a training and awareness campaign to help boost the reporting of these crimes and to help connect survivors to resources.

This work has been made possible by a grant from the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women. Despite the name of the grant, however, remember that these crimes can hurt people of all genders and orientations.

While most of us are willing to help combat these crimes and support survivors, it can sometimes be difficult to know how to do so. Clark College employees may have questions like, “How do I know if a student is in distress? How do I support them? How do I learn the skills I need to handle these situations effectively?” We’re providing some answers below.

## Identifying the signs of a student in distress

Students come to Clark each day with a variety of experiences and challenges in their world outside of the classroom environment. Some easy-to-spot signs that could point to something more going on in a student’s world include: concerning appearance, concerning behavior, and/or concerning comments. These changes can be subtle or drastic. While this is by no means an inclusive list, if you notice changes in hygiene, disruptive behavior, becoming withdrawn or quieter than usual, excessive absence, out-of-proportion reactions, isolation, or references to suicide or self-harm—all of these can indicate a change in the student’s life.

# Responding to a student in distress

What should you do if you suspect a student is in distress? Speak with the student privately, expressing concern and a willingness help; listen to what is causing them distress; and support them to find on-campus resources. If a student comes to you to share what is happening in their life, be mindful of the role you play in reporting. At Clark, the only confidential college resources are the counselors and nurse practitioner in the Counseling & Health Center (CHC). To connect a student with a confidential resource, please call CHC at 360-992-2614 to schedule an appointment. If the situation is more urgent than scheduling a future appointment, call Clark College security at 360-992-2133 or Clark County Crisis line at 360-696-9560.

At Clark, you are required to report when you hear about situations a student may be involved in that includes domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or sexual misconduct. To report instances and connect the student to support on campus, visit the Title IX reporting link here: <http://www.clark.edu/about/governance/policies-procedures/title-IX/index.php>

# Learning skills to help students in distress

As we move into October, we have put together a training series called *Safer Campus, Safe Communities* spread out over three sessions, descriptions of the sessions and speaking topics are listed below. We hope to see you at one or all of the upcoming training opportunities.

# Navigating Conversations with Someone Who is Disclosing Incidents of Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault

Thursday, October 11, 10:00-11:00 a.m., GHL 205

**Facilitator: Heather Adams**

Being able to connect with students and navigate difficult conversations is an integral part of working on campus. However some conversations can be especially difficult or emotional, such as when a student discloses that they have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault. This session aims to provide attendees with a working knowledge of relevant student conduct policies and guidelines around reporting in order to support students without overstepping professional boundaries. Attendees will learn how to spot signs of students in distress and develop strategies for navigating conversations where someone is disclosing incidents of sexual assault, harassment, or domestic violence.

## Minimizing Harassment in Group Work

**Tuesday, October 16, 2:00-3:30 p.m., HHL 121**

**Facilitators: Deena Godwin & Tavish Bell, Clark College**

Harassment can impact a student's ability to learn, feel safe, and often affects their decision of whether or not to continue a class or their academic career. Both anecdotally and in research studies, harassment is known to be a sizable problem in group class activities. This session will discuss common types of harassment in group-work settings and provide practical strategies for how to minimize harassment. Attendees will leave equipped with a working knowledge of relevant student conduct policies and how to report harassment that is happening in both face-to-face and online settings.

# Communicating About Harassment and Assault More Effectively Across Generations

Thursday, October 25, 3:00-4:30 p.m., GHL 213

Facilitators: Deena Godwin & Tavish Bell, Clark College

Experiencing domestic violence and/or sexual assault is life-changing and requires support. Support is often needed though difficult to seek out because of the shame and guilt that accompany the experience. Couple that with differences among generations, and communication can be non-existent. This session aims to bridge the gap across generations specifically by discussing strategies for a survivor to seek support and strategies for support people to respond. Attendees will leave having practiced both seeking support and responding to requests of support.

*This article was submitted by Tavish Bell.*

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## In case of emergency



May 9, 2013 Clark College Evacuation Drill.

Clark College is committed to creating a safe learning environment for students, employees, and guests, but public safety is also the responsibility of each member of our community. Being prepared—both mentally and physically—for the unexpected is the first and best defense to minimize accidents, emergencies, and other incidents.

One aspect of Clark's preparation efforts is the Emergency

Management Planning Committee, which provides leadership, guidance, and solutions on safety and security issues. The committee recently welcomed Michael See, emergency manager, to the team. As a part of his role, See is responsible for helping to communicate emergency procedures to the college community.



Michael See

“In the recent campus climate survey, we found that many Clark employees felt less prepared and knowledgeable about emergency procedures than in previous survey periods,” said See. “We view this as an opportunity to provide further education, resources, and training to our community so that we all can be proactive participants in maintaining a safe environment.”

See, who was hired in November will be working over the summer to update Clark’s emergency procedures and the emergency-preparedness area of the Clark website, which can be accessed via [www.clark.edu/emergency](http://www.clark.edu/emergency).

Small preparations, such as practicing emergency response procedures or knowing the location of designated Assembly Areas on campus, not only help keep us safe as individuals, but also contribute to the well-being of those around us.

Below, you will find guidance on emergency procedures, as well as links to resources and information on how to request additional training.

## **What is considered an emergency?**

An emergency is any incident—caused by human or nature—that disrupts the standard operations of Clark College or its educational activities and requires immediate, responsive action. Large-scale emergencies can include natural disasters,



facilities hazards such as fires or power outages, and acts or threats of violence.

## **How will I know when there is an emergency on campus?**

Clark College has implemented a multi-tiered mass notification system to alert people on campus about emergencies. We have the ability to transmit emergency alerts through multiple methods including:

- The digital telephone system installed in most offices and classrooms
- Networked computer terminals
- Loudspeakers in many of the common areas
- Alerts sent to Clark College email
- Alerts posted to the college's website

Faculty, staff and students can also opt-in to receive text alerts on their mobile devices by subscribing to RAVE, a no-cost service. All members of the Clark community are encouraged to sign up. Click the link for more information about Clark's mass notification system.

## **What am I supposed to do?**

If you discover an emergency, no matter the type, your first priority should be to ensure your own personal safety and the safety of those around you, to the best of your ability.

Once you are safe, notify Campus Security at extension 2133 for Main Campus or 6133 for CTC. Calling 911 may also be appropriate. Emergency Procedures posters, which are widely distributed across the campuses, and Emergency Response Guides, available in all work areas, provide specific directions based on the type of emergency.

Messages delivered through the mass notification system will also provide information about the nature of the emergency. More importantly, it will provide you with some instructions. The most common instructions you can expect will be to either *lockdown* or *evacuate*.

## **When directed to lockdown:**

- Close and lock all doors and windows
- Close blinds or cover windows
- Leave all computers on and turn up the volume on all desk telephones
- Silence all cell phones, but leave them turned on
- When possible, turn off room lights
- Limit movement and be as quiet as possible until the “All Clear” message is transmitted through the mass notification system

## **When directed to evacuate:**

- Leave your belongings where they are
- Walk in an orderly fashion towards the nearest exit, helping others that may need assistance, if you are able
- Each building has an Emergency Building Coordinator (EBC) assigned to guide people out safely; follow any instructions given by an EBC
- Move to a designated Assembly Area
- Wait for further instructions or an “All Clear” message

Clark College and the EMPC are committed to providing a safe environment for the entire college community. Michael See and the rest of the Clark College Emergency Management staff are available to address groups during meetings or other discussions upon request. Please contact [emergencymanager@clark.edu](mailto:emergencymanager@clark.edu) to schedule or to submit specific questions or concerns.

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# Safety Steps



Among the many events organized by the Emergency Management Planning Committee was this evacuation drill held on May 9, 2013.

The Emergency Management for Higher Education (EMHE) federal grant period concluded Sept. 30, 2013. Over the three-year performance period, the \$744,402 Department of Education grant successfully supported expansive steps to create a safer college environment for students, personnel and guests.

Grant-funded activities were overseen by members of the Emergency Management Planning Committee. Key accomplishments include staff development, support and training; equipment and supply selection and acquisition; and creation of detailed plans such as the Emergency Operations Plan and Continuity of Operations Plan. During the grant period, the college accomplished all seven grant objectives. In its summation, the independent third-party evaluation team “found Clark College’s efforts to fulfill the intent and requirements of the EMHE grant to be exemplary. The college took its commitment to the Department of Education seriously and has found a way to overcome each obstacle that surfaced throughout the grant period. Not only did Clark College meet the goals and objectives of its integrated emergency program under the EMHE grant, in the opinion of the third-party evaluation team they exceeded them.”

A video entitled “Clark College: Development of a Community College Emergency Management Program (2010-2013)” was produced by emergency management staff. The project was developed as a “show-and-tell” piece for both contemporary and historical use and to share with other community and technical colleges. Key components of Clark College’s emergency program are featured in the 3:43 piece, which illustrates program building blocks, personnel contributions and the related college culture shift that has occurred. It is open-captioned for accessibility. EMHE grant-funding allowed staff to hire local government CVTV to film the video.

A new Emergency Response Guide was completed and distributed in October. The bright yellow, spiral-bound, 24-page guide serves as a detailed desk reference on college emergency procedures. The guide was revised and enhanced to reflect the content of the college’s Emergency Operations Plan. The cost was paid by the federal Emergency Management for Higher Education grant. Distribution was handled by Environmental Health and Safety staff and student employees, and includes all work sites throughout the college. An electronic version is also available on ClarkNet [login required], with a student version available on Clark’s website.