

March 13, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Learners,

As you know, information about the coronavirus (COVID-19) and its impact around the world is changing at a rapid rate. We are assessing plans on an ongoing basis to make sure that we are prepared and protected, and we are guided at all times by advice from our public health agencies at municipal, provincial and federal levels. We are communicating changes to our college community as quickly as possible, and taking many factors into consideration.

Even though the public health risk associated with this virus is still considered low as stated by the Federal Public Health Agency of Canada, there is heightened anxiety and an increasing number of people who are self-isolating as a precautionary measure. I want to acknowledge that this is creating many challenges for everyone and emphasize that the mental and physical health of our college community is our priority. For this reason, we are adopting new measures, effective immediately.

All face-to-face classes and labs at all campuses and locations have been suspended as of Monday, March 16, 2020 until 10:00 pm on Sunday, March, 22 inclusive in order to provide faculty time to prepare online delivery and term completion plans. Online classes will continue as scheduled. Exams and assignments scheduled during this period of suspended activity are now postponed and new dates will be posted as soon as they are known. Students should monitor their Algonquin College email and Brightspace accounts for updates.

For co-op work-terms, practicums, field and clinical placements, work will continue at host employers as long as it is safe to do so and employers continue to operate. In some cases, this may involve working remotely from the main work environment, if appropriate. Students should continue to complete all of their placement assignments and deliverables. It is important to closely monitor and follow the directions from public health sources and employers. If work placement has been negatively impacted, learners should contact their placement coordinators to discuss next steps.

During this one-week suspension, the College (including services, such as health services and food services locations, the library, and common areas) will remain open. However, learning enterprises including Restaurant International, the Dental Clinic and the Massage Clinic, and Savoir Faire will be closed.

Work will continue for all College employees. If you require accommodation to continue working — for health reasons or due to the closing of your child's elementary or high school — please speak with your supervisor to make appropriate arrangements. Read the employee [FAQ here](#).

For those who have not already signed up for VPN access, instructions will be posted to the FAQ site shortly.

During the one-week suspension, students may remain at home or residence. We would encourage learners to keep up with their course material, either by studying, reading or using online resources to stay in touch with classmates.

Classes will resume on Monday, March 23, 2020 but many will be delivered using alternative instruction methods, primarily online, for the remainder of the term. Learners should monitor their Brightspace accounts for details of their specific courses. We ask our faculty to use the one-week suspension to plan for the delivery of the remainder of their courses until the end of the term. Each faculty member may have different approaches or may use different tools in order to provide instruction and meet course requirements and learning outcomes. The College will be providing support to faculty who need assistance. We realize this presents unique challenges, particularly in some trades or areas of applied learning, but we must find ways rise to this challenge so that our learners can achieve successful learning outcomes.

We ask all employees and students to postpone events scheduled before April 30, 2020.

I encourage all of you to keep up with our College's response to COVID-19 by checking our information page at www.algonquincollege.com/coronavirus. You will find all the latest updates as well as a place where you can submit your own questions and concerns.

I understand that these changes to our daily routines can cause some upheaval. We are dealing with unprecedented circumstances and trying to find the best solutions for everyone who works, studies and lives at Algonquin College. I thank all of you for your support and your feedback, and for your efforts in the days ahead as we adapt to this ever-changing situation.

The next few weeks will be challenging. We will continue to keep you informed about any new developments as they arise. I would ask all of you to continue to show understanding, patience and, above all, caring.

Sincerely,

Claude Brulé
President and CEO