



CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

MIKE KENNEALY
SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Professional Licensure
Office of Private Occupational School Education
1000 Washington Street • Boston • Massachusetts • 02118

EDWARD A. PALLESCHI
UNDERSECRETARY OF CONSUMER
AFFAIRS AND BUSINESS
REGULATION

LAYLA R. D'EMILIA
COMMISSIONER, DIVISION OF
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

To: Owners and Directors of Schools Licensed in Accordance with M.G.L. c. 112, s. 263
Date: 3/12/20
Re: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

While the local, state, and federal governments have provided numerous bulletins about how to protect yourself, your students and staff, and how to help prevent transmission of the virus, the Division of Professional Licensure (DPL) is providing the following guidance for DPL-licensed Schools in response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

First, schools should **plan and prepare** in the event COVID-19 appears in their communities and it becomes necessary to temporarily suspend classes and/or school operations. DPL can help give guidance to schools who are considering any potential cessation of operations.

Second, schools should work closely with Boards of Health in the city or town in which the school is located (<https://www.mass.gov/lists/massachusetts-city-and-town-websites>) to determine whether to suspend classes and/or to close the school. Temporarily suspending classes is a strategy to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19 in communities. Class suspension or school closure may be recommended for at least 14 days, or possibly longer if advised by local health officials. The nature of these actions (e.g., geographic scope, duration) may change as the local outbreak situation evolves. If temporary class cancellations or school closure is warranted, please seek guidance from the local Board of Health to determine when students and staff should return to school and what, if any, additional steps are needed.

If the school suspends classes and/or all activity, please inform DPL by email (matthew.keigan@mass.gov) of the date of closure and anticipated date of resumption. When the school officially resumes classes, please notify DPL via email.

If the school chooses to implement an online program in lieu of in-person instruction, please reach out to your licensure specialist for guidance. DPL will work with the school to expedite approval of online courses (where possible) to help minimize student disruption. DPL has included at the end of this document an "Expedited Program/Course Approval Form for Conversion of In-Person Programs to Online Programs" form. Schools should use this form in lieu of the "Program/Course Approval" form only when converting their already-approved in-person program to an online program.

What does this mean for Title IV Schools?

- The U.S. Department of Education has posted guidelines on the impact of the suspension of classes for Title-IV. <https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/030520Guidance4interruptionsrelated2CoronavirusCOVID19>



- ☐ Questions about financial aid issues should be directed to the U.S.D.E. Federal Student Aid Office: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/contacts/gen/index.html?src=ft#financial-aid>
- ☐ Schools should also consult with their accrediting agencies for additional guidance.

Please contact the Board at matthew.keigan@mass.gov or 617-826-5234 if you have any questions. Please also use the following links to stay informed:

- ☐ <https://www.mass.edu/covid-19/home.asp>
- ☐ <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/emergencyplan/covid19.html>
- ☐ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- ☐ <https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- ☐ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-printable-fact-sheets>
- ☐ <https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus?src=feature>
- ☐ <https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- ☐ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-guidance-and-recommendations#for-colleges-and-universities->
- ☐ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-ihe-response.html>
- ☐ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/public-health-emergencies>

- ☐ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/english-2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-0/download>
- ☐ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
- ☐ <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>



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EXPEDITED PROGRAM/COURSE APPROVAL FORM
FOR CONVERSION OF IN-PERSON PROGRAMS or COURSES ONLINE

Name of School: _____ Date: _____

Contact Person: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Program/Course Number: _____ Program/Course Title: _____
(Please use the program/course number and title of same as it appears on the last approval from DPL.)

____ Clock Hours ____ Credit Hours / Tuition \$ ____ Fees \$ ____ Books \$ ____ Supplies \$ ____

The following attachments must be provided with this form. Forms submitted without responses to each of the following will not be reviewed or processed by DPL and the school will not be able to offer courses as requested.

- 1) Indicate whether the school is seeking approval to move the entire program online or only portions of the program.
 - a. If only portions, indicate what portions will be offered by listing the individual courses or modules.
- 2) Attach program/course descriptions that detail how online instruction will take place and any impacts or changes that the school anticipates this will cause to its program/course, including how students will be impacted.
 - a. How is the school ensuring students receive the online classroom instruction? For example, is it providing students with laptops?
 - b. What steps has the school taken to ensure that students have sufficient and appropriate access to online instruction?
 - c. Indicate by what delivery method.
- 3) If the school will still be offering off-campus clinical training experience(s), then please include the number of hours for the clinical training. Please also include a description of any impacts or changes that the school anticipates being online will cause to its off-campus clinical training.
- 4) Is there a clinical/practicum component to the program or course being moved online?
 - a. If yes, what is the school doing to ensure students receive this?
 - b. If the school thinks it will be unable to do so because of COVID-19, then what is the proposed alternative?
 - c. Attach descriptions of any practicum experience(s) and the number of hours for the practicum. Please also include a description of any impacts or changes that the school anticipates being online will cause to its off-campus clinical training.
- 5) Is there a hands-on part of the program or course being moved online?
 - a. If yes, what is the school doing to ensure students receive this?
 - b. If the school thinks it will be unable to do so because of COVID-19, then what is the proposed alternative?
- 6) Is there a state or national or certifying test at the end of the program?
 - a. If so, will having an online program impact that?
 - b. If so, will not being able to do a clinical/practicum (assuming this is the case) impact that?
- 7) Is the program approved by a third party (e.g., accreditor, Board of Registration, national certifying body)?
 - a. If so, has the school received guidance from the third party(ies) about providing online instruction?
 - b. Does the school need to have the program reevaluated/reviewed by the third party(ies)?

*****This form and the expedited processing time for conversion of in-person classroom instruction to online instruction is temporary and will expire on June 1, 2020, unless otherwise extended by the Division.**

Please email this completed form and attachments to matthew.keigan@mass.gov and copy maryjayne.fay@mass.gov. DPL will make every effort to review and respond within 48 hours.

For Division Use Only:	
Approved By: _____	Date: _____
Denied/Revoked by: _____	Date: _____
Copy sent to: Office of the State Auditor, One Winter St., 9 th Flr., Boston, MA 02108	

TELEPHONE: (617) 701-8719

FAX: (617) 701-8612

TTY/TDD: (617) 701-8645

<http://www.mass.gov/dpl/schools>

Updated 3/12/2020