To all members of Universität Hamburg

3 March 2020
Staff code: P/P1

Precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus

In light of the spread of the coronavirus in Europe and Germany, the University has reassessed the situation and associated precautionary measures. Our primary objectives are to protect the health of all employees and students and to assist the German federal government in its coronavirus containment strategy. The Executive University Board has therefore consulted with the Hamburg Ministry of Science, Research and Equalities (BWFG) and the University's crisis management team to issue the following regulations for the coming weeks (currently valid until 31 May 2020):

1. Work-related travel, private travel, and stays abroad
   1.1. Travel ban for high-risk areas
       Until further notice, a travel ban is in place for work-related travel to the high-risk areas identified by the Robert Koch Institute (RKI). Transit through these areas is also not permitted. As the situation is evolving dynamically, the high-risk areas could change at any time. Therefore, be sure to check the RKI website for the latest developments before you plan—or depart for—any trips.
       www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Risikogebiete.html
   1.2. Travel to non-risk areas
       With immediate effect, the necessity of all work-related travel must be reviewed. If not essential, work-related travel should be postponed.
   1.3. Returning from a high-risk area
       If you are returning from work-related travel or a stay abroad in a high-risk area, you must contact your supervisor before you return to work. In principle, you may not return to work until 14 days after your return. You may work from home instead during this time. If you are unable to work from home and cannot be assigned any alternative tasks, your supervisor will release you from your duties for the 14-day period. In exceptional cases, it may be agreed in consultation with University management to allow you to return to work sooner. These precautionary measures also apply if you are returning from a private stay abroad.
1.4. Visitors and international delegations from high-risk areas
Visits by guests or international delegations from high-risk areas must be canceled.

1.5. Visitors and international delegations from non-risk areas
The necessity of all visits by guests and international delegations from non-risk areas must be reviewed beforehand and canceled wherever possible.

2. Precautionary measures for individuals

2.1. Contact with someone infected with the coronavirus
If you have had contact with someone infected with the coronavirus, contact your local health authority immediately, inform your supervisor, remain at home, and follow the health authority’s instructions. To minimize the risk of infection, do not go to a doctor’s office.

2.2. Option to work from home (in exceptional circumstances)
If you have had contact with someone infected with the coronavirus, returned from a high-risk area, or belong to a high-risk (health) group, you will be permitted to work from home. You may also take advantage of this option in case of unforeseen care situations, e.g., if the childcare centers are closed. The arrangements for working from home as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of the coronavirus must be agreed directly between you and your supervisor (in writing—via email). Any questions that arise must also be clarified between these parties.

2.3. Employer’s duty of care
In case of obvious signs of a flu-like infection, you are instructed to stay at home. Supervisors are called upon to meticulously uphold their duty of care to their employees.

3. Events

3.1. Review of the event’s necessity
The necessity of each event must be reviewed beforehand. If not essential, the event must be canceled or postponed. The decision as to whether an event is necessary will be reached by the management staff of the respective institution or department, or the faculty dean—in individual cases, in consultation with the Executive University Board.

3.2. Alternative event formats
Alternative formats should be considered for events and meetings, e.g., a telephone or video conference, Skype, etc.

3.3. Participation of high-risk persons
Event organizers must advise participants in advance that anyone who has been in a high-risk area may not attend the event. Participants must also be informed that there is an increased risk of infection due to the international nature of the event.

3.4. Participant lists
With immediate effect, a list must be kept of all participants in meetings, events, and sessions involving more than 10 people (first and last name, institution, email). This is to ensure that people who have potentially come into contact with the coronavirus can rapidly be identified afterwards.

3.5. Summer Semester 2020
At present, we do not see any need to cancel the Summer Semester 2020. We will
review whether attendance courses are necessary or can be replaced with other formats (e.g., Lecture2Go).

4. Hygiene measures

4.1. Personal hygiene measures
   To protect against infection, observe the general coughing and sneezing etiquette and maintain your personal hygiene—especially with regard to regular (and correct) hand washing. People with flu-like symptoms should remain at a sufficient distance (approx. 1–2 meters).

4.2. Physical contact
   Wherever possible, avoid physical contact during encounters with other employees and customers. Avoid rituals such as shaking hands until further notice—signs to this effect will be displayed throughout the University.

4.3. Protective equipment
   The RKI does not consider it necessary nor has it ordered the use of any additional personal protective equipment, such as face masks or respirators and protective gloves.

The above measures apply with immediate effect. Given that the spread of the infection in Europe and Germany is developing dynamically, the precautionary measures may have to be adjusted at short notice. So far, no pandemic has been declared. Should this happen, Universität Hamburg’s coronavirus pandemic plan will come into effect—it is currently being updated.

Up-to-date information is available in the coronavirus FAQ on the University website. We ask that all employees check this FAQ daily for the latest information.

Sincerely,

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Dieter Lenzen