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Jimmy H. Baker
CHANCELLOR

MEMORANDUM #2020-EXE-014

DATE: March 12, 2020

TO: Presidents, Alabama Community College System
ACC System Office Division Heads

FROM: Jimmy H. Baker, Chancellor 

RE: Urgent Travel Directive

When I accepted the role of Chancellor the Alabama Community College System three years ago, I pledged my commitment to safeguard the health, safety and interests of our students, faculty and staff to the best of my ability and authority. I know that as presidents, you also share this commitment. Yesterday, understanding that we are facing a significant and evolving national health crisis, I took the extraordinary step at the Board of Trustees meeting to strongly encourage restrictions on out-of-state travel. However, in light of the declaration of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak as pandemic by the World Health Organization late yesterday afternoon, I believe the circumstances now dictate a stronger position on travel. I am therefore issuing the following directive concerning all college-sponsored or supported and system office travel:

Out-of-State/International Travel:

All college-sponsored, supported or work related out-of-state travel and all system office work related out-of-state travel is canceled until further notice. This prohibition includes international travel. My office will continue to work closely with and seek recommendations from the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Governor's Office and will heed advisories issued by the State Department and representatives of the federal government. We will issue updated guidance as appropriate.

Further, while it is the responsibility of employees and students to seek reimbursement for expenses surrounding canceled travel arrangements, employees and students unable to obtain reimbursement for canceled travel arrangements should contact their institution's designated point of contact for further guidance and assistance.

In-State Travel:

All personnel planning college work related, or system office work related in-state travel are encouraged to consider whether meetings and other events can be successfully and effectively conducted via alternative meeting methods (e.g. Skype, ZOOM, teleconference, etc.). We will issue updated guidance as appropriate.

As you are aware, we are constantly receiving information that may require us to issue modified guidance. Please be assured that additional guidance regarding leave, instructional programs and other college matters will be forthcoming soon.

I have established a work team in my office that is harnessing relevant information and preparing guidance for you. You may direct your questions regarding travel to the team's point of contact, Rachel Adams, Communications and Marketing Administrator, at rachel.adams@accs.edu, (o) 334-293-4651, (c) 334-328-6191. She will forward those questions to the team for prompt response. Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation; I rely upon your continued vigilance during these unprecedented times.

JHB/lmt

cc Presidents' Assistants
System Office Staff