Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Columbus Tech FAQs

Please understand that Columbus Technical College is taking the coronavirus pandemic very seriously and is committed to communicating regular updates. We encourage students to check the CTC website, official social media sites, Blackboard, and college emails frequently.

What is COVID-19? According to the Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH), coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is believed to have originated in the Wuhan, Hubei Province of China. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath and may appear two to 14 days after exposure with the average incubation period to be about five days. Some 80 percent of patients have mild symptoms but in severe cases, others have developed pneumonia and, in rare cases, have died. The elderly and those with other underlying health issues are most at risk.

Should I be tested for COVID-19? What if I, or a loved one, get exposed? The GDPH recommends seeking testing for COVID-19 if you feel sick with fever, have a consistent cough or difficulty breathing or if you've been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you've recently traveled from an area with a widespread infection. Please call your healthcare provider BEFORE going to the doctor's office, emergency room, or urgent care. If you are contagious, you want to minimize the chance of infecting others.

What can I do to stay healthy? To prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends everyday preventive actions, including:

- Practice social distancing by putting at least six feet between yourself and other people.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

If you believe that you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to the novel coronavirus, please contact your primary care doctor or an urgent care clinic. Please do not show up unannounced at an emergency room or health care facility. You can also refer to guidance on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website.

The State of Georgia has a new COVID-19 hotline where you can hear and share more information: (844) 442-2681.

How is CTC handling COVID-19? The campus is deep-cleaned frequently to reduce the spread of germs, safe distancing is encouraged, as is frequent hand-washing. Columbus Tech is complying with Georgia Governor Brian Kemp's Executive Order from March 16, 2020 that all classes are to be held in an online environment only. This is to help prevent the possible spread of COVID-19. The fewer face-to-face interactions, the smaller the chance of contracting COVID-19.

How long will Columbus Tech classes be online only? Since the news surrounding COVID-19 is changing frequently, the length of time classes will be online only is uncertain. As it stands now, CTC classes will be held in an online environment until at least April 6.

I don't have Wi-Fi/Internet access at home. I am not sure how to work in the online class format. What do I do? As of Mid-March, Charter Communications is offering free Wi-Fi/Internet access for 60 days to qualified Georgia students. To see if you qualify, visit Charter Free Access. Comcast is also offering free 60-day and low-cost basic internet access. For Comcast information, click here. For help accessing and navigating your online courses, contact the Columbus Tech CLICK Computer Support Lab at computerhelp@columbustech.edu or call 706-641-5020. You may also call the CARE Center at 706-649-7512 for assistance.

What about registering for classes? Columbus Tech's next registration window is for summer of 2020. Registration for summer term will be available online and more information will be posted soon.

How will this affect my financial aid? Columbus Tech financial aid officials are working diligently with state, federal, and military financial aid providers to ensure there is minimal – if any- change in or interruption to your financial aid. If you have any specific questions, call our financial aid team at 706-649-1859 or email finaid@columbustech.edu. You may also check the FASFA website.

I'm supposed to graduate this term. How will that be affected? Your ability to graduate on time is a top priority of the college. Every effort is being made to ensure online instruction meets your course requirements and all of your required lab or clinical hours are met in a safe and allowable manner. Columbus Tech instructors are working diligently to provide learning environment options so you can satisfy each of your competencies. If you have questions or concerns, contact your instructor or program director.