DATE: March 13, 2020
TO: Community College Presidents
FROM: Dr. Brian Durham, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Coronavirus: Instructional Continuity Procedures

The ICCB is monitoring the rapid developments around the coronavirus/COVID-19. The agency is working closely with the Governor’s Office, our sister education agencies (ISAC, IBHE, ISBE), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), the General Assembly, and other stakeholders to assess continually the situation. As we have learned more about the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus and its potential impact, the situation has quickly advanced to a point where mitigation procedures must be implemented at the community level.

Per CDC guidance, one of the primary ways to slow the progression of the virus is through social distancing. To this end, recently several public universities took significant actions to reduce the density of their students, faculty and staff in relation to one another by implementing plans to move instruction online and to work with their HR departments to implement social distancing procedures for those remaining on campus, among other changes. More Illinois universities, both public and private are expected to follow suit. Other institutions across the country are implementing similar procedures. In an abundance of caution for the safety and security of students, faculty and staff across the system, it is critical that community colleges consider appropriate mitigation measures, for their community, in concert with local health officials. Some things to consider include, but are not limited to:

- Moving the majority of instruction online, particularly those courses where this is more feasible;
- Implementing social distancing procedures for those disciplines that cannot continue instruction without some direct interaction (e.g. welding courses, nursing, etc.). This would mostly apply to the CTE disciplines;
- Considering telework procedures for non-essential personnel;
- Limiting the time spent on campus for those that are deemed non-essential;
- Limiting large gatherings of people consistent with, or more strictly than CDC guidelines; and,
- Canceling or postponing non-essential meetings or gatherings

Regarding the shift to remote / online course delivery, the ICCB does not approve modes of instruction. Colleges are free to offer their courses through a variety of modalities, as long as they adhere to ICCB administrative rules requirements. Furthermore, institutions must make reasonable and necessary accommodations for students not able to access online resources or coursework and communicate all institutional response plans in a timely manner to their campus community.

As you make these decisions, it is important that you notify the ICCB. Please email me directly with this information and cc: Matt Berry at matt.berry@illinois.gov. Additionally, as many of you already know, the Higher Learning Commission has requested that you notify them of any changes to educational offerings due to the coronavirus.
In addition, Governor Pritzker also issued statewide guidance on March 12, 2020, available here and attached. This guidance covers several topics that are pertinent to community colleges, which I have summarized below. It is my recommendation that you fully review this information. While the full guidance incorporates references to the City of Chicago, it is intended for the entire state.

- **COMMUNITY EVENTS:** Mandating the cancellation of large-scale events (1000+) and encouraging cancellation or postponement of smaller scale (250+) events and using good judgement about whether to continue with events, particularly as it relates to the most vulnerable populations. The guidance also recommends postponing all major sporting events with large spectator crowds until May 1.

- **BUSINESSES AND WORKPLACES:** The State encourages businesses across the state to take advantage of teleworking capabilities. Every business that can have employees work remotely should consider doing so immediately. For those who cannot, we encourage employers to take proper precautions to keep individuals safe in the workplace. This includes reminding staff to stay home when sick or with a fever; considering a plan for teleworking where feasible; remaining flexible on leave policies; and promoting robust mitigation approaches, such as hand washing, cleaning, and offering hand sanitizer.

- **ELECTIONS:** The election will proceed as scheduled on Tuesday, March 17. This is a fundamental function of government, and the state is committed to making sure the election proceeds with as little disruption as possible. Local jurisdictions are encouraged to expand hours for early voting over the weekend to reduce the number of people who would need to vote on Election Day.

- **VULNERABLE POPULATIONS:** The State continues to focus outreach efforts for those most vulnerable to the coronavirus, including our elderly and immunocompromised residents. Individuals who fall into these categories should take extra caution when attending gatherings of any size and avoid exposure to large groups of people whenever possible.

For information and resources regarding the Coronavirus, refer to the following: