

# COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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## Policy and Procedures Manual

SUBJECT: GOVERNANCE

Policy 131: CSUS Board Public Health Emergency Response Policy

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### Board Policy

The Colorado Constitution and Colorado Revised Statutes vest the supervision and control of the Colorado State University System and its institutions in the Board of Governors. The System Institutions are Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado State University – Pueblo, and Colorado State University – Global Campus. The Board of Governors has such powers, rights and privileges that are granted to it under applicable law, including, but not limited to promulgating rules and regulations for the health, safety and welfare of students, employees and campuses, and promulgating rules and regulations necessary for the governance and operations of the System and its institutions. Also, under Colorado law, the Board is specifically responsible for managing the operations of the System and its institutions during a public health emergency and may temporarily suspend a university's operations in case of any prevalence of disease or other unforeseen calamity. Accordingly, the Board of Governors is adopting this policy in order to fulfill its responsibilities, particularly with respect to managing and responding to a public health emergency, such as a pandemic or large-scale contagious disease, that may impact the System and its institutions.

A public health emergency from a pandemic, including a new coronavirus or novel influenza virus, may result from a local, regional, national or global outbreak of a serious illness that is highly contagious and can cause mild to severe illness, or even death. For example, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services describes a pandemic flu as a virulent flu that causes a global outbreak of serious illness, and because there is little immunity, the disease can be spread easily from person to person. In essence, a pandemic is “a local crisis worldwide.”

The Board, System, and the System Institutions prepare for and will respond to a potential public health emergency or pandemic, because such an event has the potential to spread rapidly and could place extraordinary and sustained demands on public health and healthcare systems, in addition to negatively impacting the health and safety of the campus communities. A pandemic or potential pandemic could significantly interrupt normal System and System Institution functions for a significant amount of time and may require the closure of, or modifications to, on-campus housing and university operations. Importantly, the Board, System, and the System Institutions comply with applicable executive and public health orders when responding to a public health emergency, and their response is further informed by applicable public health recommendations and guidelines.

In response to a public health emergency, the Board authorizes the Chancellor and the President of each System Institution to immediately take any action in order to comply with an executive order and/or public health emergency order, including without limitation temporarily closing or limiting access to campus and campus facilities, including but not

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limited to classrooms, offices, and on-campus housing, as well as temporarily closing or modifying university operations and modifying the method of academic instruction from in-person to remote or online instruction, or such other academic modifications as may be reasonable and necessary in response to a public health emergency. Similarly, in response to a public health emergency or potential health emergency, the President of each System Institution, in consultation with the Chancellor, may take such action as needed to comply with public health emergency guidance and recommendations. The Board reserves the right to approve any long-term actions or modifications in response to a public health emergency, and the Chancellor will inform the Institutional Presidents when Board approval must be obtained in the context of a particular public health emergency.

**Procedures and Guidelines**

In accordance with this policy, the System and each System Institution must adopt its own policies, procedures, or guidelines to assure that this policy is followed in order to help protect the health and safety of the campus community and prevent disruption to the normal conduct and operations of the System and the System Institutions in the event of a public health emergency or potential public health emergency. These policies, procedures or guidelines should be informed by applicable public health orders, guidelines and recommendations. They should be revised as new information regarding a public health emergency becomes available, as new planning and response techniques emerge, and as practices evolve.

In addition, these policies, procedures or guidelines may address certain rules that must or should be followed by students, employees, volunteers, guests, invitees, contractors or any other persons on the campuses or who are connected with the System Institutions (collectively, “Students, Employees and Others”) before, during or after a public health emergency. These policies, procedures or guidelines may address certain actions to be taken or that must not be taken by Students, Employees and Others in order to: (a) protect and preserve human life, health and well-being; (b) minimize exposure to infectious disease; and (c) minimize disruption or possible disruption to the System Institutions and their facilities, resources and operations.

**Policy Priority and Compliance**

This Board policy is meant to supplement those emergency response policies and plans for the System and at each System Institution. In light of the risk to health and safety from a public health emergency, this policy and any System or System Institution policy, procedures or guidelines adopted in accordance with this policy shall take precedent and priority over and will temporarily supersede any other conflicting policies, procedures or guidelines, including any such policies, procedures or guidelines at or for a System Institution, during the management of or when responding to a public health emergency.

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This Board policy and any System or System Institution policy, procedures or guidelines adopted in accordance with this policy shall apply to all System and System Institution Students, Employees and Others, and all such persons must comply with this policy and the respective System or System Institution policy, procedures or guidelines adopted in accordance with this policy. Failure to comply with this policy or the respective System or System Institution policy, procedures or guidelines adopted in accordance with this policy may result in disciplinary action, employment action, removal from campus or a campus event, or such other consequence as set forth in the System or System Institution policy, procedures or guidelines adopted in accordance with this Board policy.

### **Disclosures**

Tuition and fees for any academic year are approved by the Board and are posted by the respective System Institution. Students are advised that in response to a public health emergency or potential public health emergency, some or all instruction for all or part of any particular academic year may be delivered remotely. Tuition and fees have been set regardless of the method of instruction and will not be refunded in the event instruction occurs remotely for any part of the academic year.

It is important that the System and each System Institution takes steps to help minimize risks to public health, although the Board recognizes that the System and the System Institutions cannot and do not guaranty protection to Students, Employees and Others from illness. Similarly, the health and safety of persons who attend events and activities is critically important to the System and the System Institutions; however, Students, Employees and Others must understand and acknowledge the potential risks associated with a contagious disease or other public health emergency. Students, Employees and Others voluntarily assume the risks related to exposure from a public health emergency.

History: Effective June 5, 2020 by Board Resolution