

## SMC Remains Open

Kathryn Jeffery

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- Kathryn Jeffery <kathryn.jeffery@yahoo.com>

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Dear SMC Colleagues & Students:

This memo is to confirm that Santa Monica College remains open and all classes—with the exception of SMC Emeritus—are in session. Please know that there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 (the “2019 novel coronavirus”) at SMC at this time, and, [per LA County Public Health](#), the risk is still considered low with 20 confirmed cases in a county of over 10 million people. We understand the fear, uncertainty, and anxiety that surrounds this situation, and wish to reassure you that the safety and wellbeing of SMC’s students and employees remain our highest priority. The college is in constant touch with LA County Department of Public Health and the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as with sister community colleges and other agencies in Santa Monica and Southern California. There is continuous assessment—and reassessment—of confirmed facts and local risk. SMC has just rolled out [an instructional continuity plan](#) to train instructors for a shift to an online teaching and learning environment, should that need arise.

SMC has taken the following steps based on guidance from the CDC and the LA County Department of Public Health:

1. Temporary suspension of classes and in-person activities at SMC Emeritus, the college’s program for older adults (in keeping with guidance from the CDC regarding older adults being at greater risk of getting very sick from COVID-19); and
2. Cancellation of study-abroad trips scheduled for spring break.

SMC decisions are being guided by the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s direction to follow the [guidance provided to higher education institutions](#) by the California Department of Public Health. We understand that there are questions arising from the actions taken by universities in the area, such as UCLA, USC, and Loyola Marymount University; these institutions have a different set of risk and decision-making factors such as residential halls, medical facilities, and more.

Public Health officials continue to advise that the best way to prevent the flu and COVID-19 is frequent hand washing, and to stay home when sick. Please check out [www.smc.edu/coronavirus](http://www.smc.edu/coronavirus) for more resources and information on preventive measures, as well as the latest information on actions taken by SMC so far, and the college’s preparedness info and activities.

**A more comprehensive update will be sent on Wednesday, March 11 regarding SMC’s preparedness efforts in the coming weeks.**

Kathryn E. Jeffery, Ph.D.

Superintendent/President