



EDWARD WATERS COLLEGE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT | A. ZACHARY FAISON, JR., J.D.

MEMORANDUM

To: Edward Waters College Community

From: Dr. A. Zachary Faison, Jr., President & CEO

Date: May 15, 2020

Re: Resumption of On-Campus Operations & Plans for Summer/Fall 2020

The local, state, national, and international impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have had broad and substantial impacts upon our Edward Waters College (EWC) academic community and will further require us to transition to a “new operational normalcy” in the weeks and months ahead. Indeed, over the past two months and amidst a rapidly changing dynamic environment I am proud to say that at almost every turn we have been able to adapt our campus operations effectively and with great adroitness.

Nevertheless, the need for us to operate with a high level of adaptability, flexibility, and with a continuing spirit of patience will continue as a necessary constant in the coming weeks, months, and into our foreseeable future. Your resilience, determination and positivity in the face of adversity, and the ways we have come together despite the distance, are amazing. There is a strength of spirit at Edward Waters College that is truly extraordinary. As we continue to work through the challenges of the pandemic together, the health and safety of Edward Waters College students, faculty and staff remain paramount. This point cannot be emphasized enough. We are committed to the health and safety of our entire College community; this is our priority. And every decision we make is through that lens.

Accordingly, over the last several weeks, Florida Governor Ronald DeSantis and City of Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry have presented plans and begun the implementation of a phased reopening of the state and local economy and adjusted safer-at-home orders for the residents of our state, the North Florida region and the Greater Jacksonville Metropolitan Area.

As such, I am writing to inform you of when and how normal business operations will resume at EWC over the coming weeks and months through a similarly phased approach and appropriate state of readiness. Please note, that our resumption of operations plan and its subsequent details regarding the resumption of on-campus operations **will be contingent upon information received through the ongoing and continuous monitoring of infection rates, recommendations from local, state, and national health authorities (i.e. Centers for Disease Control, National Institutes of Health, etc.), and the state of Florida and city of Jacksonville health and safety assessments, testing, and treatment outcomes, guidance and protocols.**

As such, Edward Waters College intends to conduct a phased reopening of its on-campus operations with particular details as follows:

Employee Resumption of On-Site Work Schedules: Campus Operational Protocols

Phase 1 – Return of low risk (i.e., under aged 60 and/or no pre-existing health conditions as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control) senior and mid-management level employees back to the EWC campus. This first group of employees, comprised of the Executive Cabinet, Associate/Assistant Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, etc. **will return to campus on a regular business operating schedule beginning June 1, 2020.**

Phase 2 – **Return of all other low risk** (i.e., under aged 65 and/or no pre-existing health conditions as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control) **college employees to campus for work on a regular business operating schedule beginning June 15, 2020.**

Consideration will be given for the implementation of alternative work arrangements for those employee populations that are aged 65 and above, as well as those with pre-existing health conditions or those who are pregnant, have chronic medical conditions, or immunocompromised conditions that may prohibit their immediate return to on-campus work. Individuals that fall within these parameters are asked to contact the Office of Human Resources. Again, this phased work re-entry plan **will be contingent upon our continuous monitoring of the information received from various health and governmental officials to ensure the safety and wellness of our campus community.** Please take this time to prepare accordingly for the transition back to an on-campus work environment. Relatedly, over the next two weeks Edward Waters College in collaboration with its third party facilities management provider (Sodexo) **will begin implementation of deep cleaning and sanitization beyond the normal protocol of daily cleaning** in preparation for the Phase 1 return of employees to campus. Particular emphasis will continue to be placed on the sanitization of high touch surfaces, bathrooms, common areas, and shared equipment.

Edward Waters College **will require that employees take their temperature at home before coming to campus;** employees must notify their immediate supervisor by email that this has been done. In accordance with CDC guidelines, if an employee's temperature is 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, or higher, the employee must stay home. Employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever, cough, or shortness of breath, etc.) or who have been in recent, close contact with a person with a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 should notify Human Resources and stay home. During the pandemic, and through the end of FY 2021 (June 30, 2021), employees who are, or believe they are, sick from COVID-19 should stay home and not report to work. **Time off for this reason will not result in a reduction of current sick accumulation.** However, employees must inform Human Resources and remain in regular contact with their immediate supervisors.

All Edward Waters College employees **will be required to wear masks when returning to campus.** The College will provide employees with non-medical masks when they return to work.

EWC also approves masks obtained or made by employees according to Florida Department of Health and/or CDC policies. The Department of Health requests non-medical personnel use cloth or fabric masks in order to conserve surgical and N95 masks for healthcare workers. These cloth masks are preferably made using 100 percent cotton material. Fabric masks must be washed after each use and should not be used when damp or wet. **All employees must wear the masks while on campus**, except during break time when they are eating or drinking. Employees are required to wear masks while on premises in public areas such as hallways and restrooms. If you are working alone in a private office, you may remove the mask. Employees **will make every reasonable effort to maintain at least six (6) feet of distance between each other within the workplace at all times**. This includes meal breaks, meetings, or any other gathering. In addition, employees will regularly wash their hands with soap and/or hand sanitizer. The College will also provide cleaning products for employees to clean personal work spaces. Through the work week, Edward Waters College facilities management staff and custodial services team will empty trash can(s), spot vacuum as needed, and clean desk(s) and any conference tables. Employees are responsible for cleaning their work spaces daily. Use of elevators will be reserved for vulnerable populations and those employees unable to take the stairs. The College will be erecting increased signage throughout the campus to notify members of the Edward Waters College community and guests of required safety, personal hygiene and social distancing requirements.

Child Care

Although schools remain closed, child care centers complying with the issued guidance in many cases are open and/or will soon be resuming operations. Members of the Edward Waters College community who are parents of young school-age children (K-5) may continue to telework from home with the prior approval of their immediate supervisor in consultation with the Office of Human Resources. In every case, employees must continue to keep their immediate supervisor informed and must demonstrate the expected level of work productivity from home as assessed by their supervisor.

Campus Guests

Campus guests, including prospective students and their families, alumni and friends, and business vendors must wear masks when on campus.

If visitors do not have a mask, the College will provide one. Access to campus will be denied for individuals not wearing masks. An exception will be made for individuals who cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition (including children under the age of 2 years). Whenever possible, business should be conducted with visitors by appointment only.

COVID-19 C.O.R.E. (Campus Operational Re-Engineering) Task Force

As a part of the phased reopening, **I have appointed a COVID-19 Operational Re-Engineering (CORE) Task Force** charged with the development and implementation of contingency plans that will allow the College to resume comprehensive campus operations safely. This **CORE Task Force** is comprised of various individuals across the campus and local community, including faculty, staff, students, and community officials, who will oversee working groups that will ultimately ensure a comprehensive plan for all aspects of campus operations including academic affairs, business and finance, student engagement, athletics and communications. Over the coming days, those appointed to serve on the Task Force will receive an official invitation to participate, given your expressed interest and/or expertise in areas critical to the planning and implementation of a successful comprehensive resumption of on-campus business and educational operations.

Planned Summer 2020 & Fall 2020 Academic Start Dates

EWC is expected to resume full on-site operations for students, faculty, and staff for the Fall 2020 semester, with a pilot on-site resumption of full campus operations during the Summer School session II, barring no COVID-19 influenced changes and health and safety conditions permitting.

More specifically, **the resumption of on-site campus operations includes, but is not limited to, a hybrid instructional model that involves face-to-face and virtual instructional teaching platforms, modified scheduling, applied social/physical distancing, strategic reopening of campus student residence halls and student dining services, appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and other structured management of space and movement.** The comprehensive plan and correlative protocols are being developed by the aforementioned C.O.R.E. Task Force who will meet regularly to continuously assess the nature and ongoing function of campus operations throughout the pandemic. Their plan, protocols, and recommendations will be shared with College leadership for consideration and made available to the campus community in the coming weeks.

Additionally, the **academic calendar has been shifted** to accommodate these operational changes. The following dates now reflect **the first day of classes** for each academic term:

- **Summer School Session I: Tuesday, May 26, 2020**
- **Summer School Session II: Monday, June 29, 2020**
- **Fall Semester 2020: Monday, August 31, 2020**
- **Spring Semester 2021: Tuesday, January 19, 2020**

The full academic calendar with respective changes will be posted on the EWC website and other forms of official EWC communication.

Additionally, we thank all of you who have participated thus far in enrollment outreach efforts to our prospective and returning students. As such, we continue to solicit the support of faculty and staff in the recruitment and retention of our EWC students. Relatedly, we must remain diligent and steadfast in meeting our enrollment objectives to ensure our continued viability and propitious posterity. Accordingly, I am counting on you and all of our colleagues to share selflessly and generously in this effort. \

As President, I am keenly empathetic to the fact that this has been and remains a dauntingly challenging time for our entire Tiger family. In so many ways this unprecedented period of upheaval has caused us all to rethink the ways in which we move, operate, and function. In addition, this period has also demonstrated our uncanny and extraordinary capacity to adapt, grow, and use our ingenuity to create positive opportunities that have far exceeded even our own cognition. Indeed, our venerable legacy is one that has been largely personified by our ability to rise above even the most formidable of challenges. And in the spirit of that laudable legacy and tradition, Edward Waters College continues to reposition itself, and build upon its longstanding legacy as a premier institution of remarkable distinction, uniqueness, and longevity that is advancing on a forward trajectory towards achieving unparalleled eminence.

Lastly, unbeknownst to the greater campus community it was my intention prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic to establish an end of academic year on-campus employee celebration event to recognize the tremendous work and valuable contributions of our dedicated employees over the past year. Nevertheless, as a way to acknowledge the tremendous effort put forth by EWC employees during this challenging time I am announcing that **the College is extending the Memorial Day holiday by adding Friday, May 22 as a paid vacation day** for all EWC employees. Thank you for ALL YOU DO!

Yours for Edward Waters College,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "A. Zachary Faison, Jr." in a cursive script.

A. Zachary Faison, Jr., J.D.
President & CEO