
SOUTHWEST

TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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September 15, 2009

Dear Students, Faculty, Staff and Parents,

As you may know, flu can spread easily from person to person. Therefore, we are implementing steps to prevent the spread of flu at Southwest Tennessee Community College for as long as possible, **but we need your assistance to accomplish our goal.**

We are working closely with the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department to monitor flu conditions and to prevent the spread of flu at Southwest. We will update you with new information as soon as it becomes available to us.

Presently, we are operating the College under normal conditions. We have provided information below for your awareness of flu and its prevention:

- **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers also are effective.
- **Practice respiratory etiquette** by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth; germs are spread this way.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** A fever is a temperature taken with a thermometer that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius. Look for possible signs of fever: if the person feels very warm, has a flushed appearance, or is sweating or shivering.
- **Stay home if you have flu or flu-like illness for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever** (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Don't go to class or work.

Talk with your health care providers about whether you should be vaccinated for seasonal flu. Also if you are at higher risk for flu complications from 2009 H1N1 flu, you should consider getting the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. People at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications include pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes). For more information about priority groups for vaccination, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm

Macon Cove Campus • Union Avenue Campus • Fayette Site • Gill Center • Millington Center • Southeast Center • Whitehaven Center

Southwest Tennessee Community College, a Tennessee Board of Regents institution, is an affirmative action/equal opportunity college.

If this year's flu season becomes more severe, we may take the following additional steps to prevent the spread of the virus:

- **Allow students, faculty, and staff at higher risk for complications to stay home.**
These students, faculty, and staff should make this decision in consultation with their health care provider.
- **Find ways to increase social distances** (the space between people) in classrooms such as moving desks farther apart, leaving empty seats between students, holding outdoor classes, and using distance learning methods.
- **Extend the time sick students, faculty, or staff stay home or in their residence.**
During severe flu conditions sick people should stay home for at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. Those who remain ill after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away. Symptoms of flu include fever or chills *and* cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.
- **Suspend classes.** This decision will be made together with local and state public health officials. The length of time classes should be suspended will depend on the goal of suspending classes as well as the severity and extent of illness.

For more information about flu in our community and what our institution has implemented to prevent the spread of flu, please visit the College's Web site at <http://www.southwest.tn.edu/>.

We will notify you by e-mail, College's Web site, and text message of any additional changes to our institution's strategy to prevent the spread of flu on our campus.

Sincerely,

Nathan L. Essex
President