



Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

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FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND BASILEUS



March 17, 2020

Brothers,

In light of the current situation related to COVID-19 as a rapidly evolving global threat, I have had the opportunity to have many discussions with the Supreme Council, our International Medical and Health Initiatives Committee, and our Grand Counselor and his team over the last week. Based on these discussions and in the interest of protecting the entire brotherhood and our communities in this time of great uncertainty, the fraternity is adopting aggressive new public health measures.

Other countries and organizations who have faced or are facing this crisis have proven that immediate, decisive public health measures are necessary to prevent the spread of the virus and protect public health. The steps we've been taking and those to come in the days ahead will help determine how Omega limits the spread of this virus and protects public health and the health of our brotherhood. While these measures may seem extraordinary, and to some extreme, these are extraordinary circumstances, and our response must rise to the challenge.

That is why, effective immediately, all district meetings have been postponed or cancelled (with the exception of the 13th district meeting that occurs at our international meetings). Please see your district representatives for particulars as we are working through the specifics of virtual meetings and secure online voting. All chapters who choose to "meet" between now and June 1, 2020 should only do so by teleconferencing or video conferencing. All other fraternally-related gatherings of more than 10 people, scheduled to occur before June 1, 2020 are to be postponed or cancelled. This includes community forums and programs, social events, and others. All gatherings of less than 10 people should give consideration to postponement unless it can be assured that social distancing of at least 3 to 6 feet can be maintained between participants, messaging is provided around ill persons not attending, and there are adequate hand washing/sanitizing facilities. This directive is in line with that of the Center for Disease Control (CDC). If there is what the CDC considers to be *substantial* spread of COVID-19 in your community or the community of the event you are considering, you are directed to cancel fraternity-related events of any size. We will revisit these requirements the last week of May 2020.

The fraternity also discourages brothers from travelling to and from areas where there is known to be mild or moderate community spread of COVID-19. If you have traveled to an area where there is community spread, you are encouraged to self-quarantine outside of that community for at least 14 days before attending any fraternal events. Brothers who are ill with flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, etc.) should also self-quarantine for at least 14 days from the start of their illness.

We encourage brothers to keep your families and each other healthy. Develop and discuss a plan for what might need to change if you and your loved ones need to stay home for extended periods.

This situation continues to rapidly evolve, and we know brothers will have lots of questions. One of the questions you have is, "will we have our Grand Conclave in July?" We currently are finalizing our plans for a successful Grand Conclave. We will communicate to the brotherhood by June 1, 2020 if a decision is made to postpone or cancel the Grand Conclave and if so, how we'll conduct the business of our fraternity virtually. We may not have every answer today, but we will provide regular updates via our website and social media outlets and respond to your questions as quickly as possible. Be assured that Omega will continue to work closely with the experts on our International Medical and Health Initiatives Committee and our health partners to monitor developments around the world. The Supreme Council recently participated in an Emergency NAACP Tele-Town Hall meeting with the United States Surgeon General and other leading public health and policy experts and 21,000 participants to learn more about the coronavirus and in particular how it is impacting our communities. If we need to implement additional measures to protect each other, we will do so. The health of our brothers and our communities will always be a top priority.

In Friendship,

David E. Marion, Ph.D.
Grand Basileus