



Dear UHD Community,

We hope this note finds you and your families in good health.

Last week, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott relaxed COVID-19 restrictions on businesses in 19 hospital regions in Texas (including the Houston area). Retail outlets, restaurants and other establishments can expand their respective capacities to 75 percent. Additionally, area school districts have started returning students to their respective campuses.

At UHD, the campus is at Step 2-Orange on its Response Step Matrix. [A recent message with details on what this means for faculty, staff and students](#) was recently distributed and information also is available on the [Response Matrix Website](#).

While area K12 schools have started a shift to being fully back on campus, UHD plans to remain at Step 2 at this time. If this situation changes, and it becomes necessary for UHD to switch to another step level, every effort will be made to provide a minimum of one week's notice to students, faculty and staff.

During Step 2, designated employees continue to work on campus while other staff members telecommute; students are allowed on campus for classes and to access student services; and faculty are able to access their offices, conduct on-campus research and engage in instructional activities. This staggered approach allows UHD to provide critical services to students, while minimizing the population density in order to promote social distancing and protect the health and safety of students, faculty and staff.

The University's Response Step Matrix guides UHD's reopening processes and aligns with both the [opening guidelines](#) from the UH System Board of Regents and [Phase Three](#) of the Texas Governor's reopening plan. The University will continue to base its decisions on the most updated information regarding COVID-19 and the recommendations and directives from the UH System and the Governor's Office.

The reopening of K12 schools throughout the region will no doubt impact some of your schedules and perhaps pose challenges with regard to childcare. Faculty and supervisors should exercise flexibility for those students or employees with children returning to school. Employees may also request workplace accommodations through Employment Services and Operations at Benefits@uhd.edu and students may request accommodations through the Office of Disability Services.

We realize that COVID-19 presents our community with unique, complex challenges that extend beyond the virus itself. Please know that the University is here to support you during this time.

If you have questions, regarding the Response Matrix and other concerns related to UHD and COVID-19, please continue to direct them to coronavirus@uhd.edu and updates can be found on the [Coronavirus website](#).

Thank you for your commitment and flexibility during these extraordinary times.

Stay safe and stay healthy, Gator's.