



*From the Office of the President*

**John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.**

REGIS UNIVERSITY | DENVER, COLORADO

**COVID-19 Case Reporting Protocol  
Office of the President  
August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

To all Regis faculty and staff:

We have had a very promising start to the traditional semester with high compliance with mask and distancing mandates and with faculty innovating in the classroom, on Zoom or on the Commons, to teach our students.

The pandemic, however, does impose additional responsibilities upon us all in terms of handling information about testing and positive cases of COVID-19. Please note the following directives of what to do and what not to do:

**DO**

If you become aware or are notified of a positive case, you are strongly encouraged to report this confidentially and directly to either Patrick Romero-Aldaz, Dean of Students, if the case involves a student, or Liz Whitmore, AVP of Human Resources, if the case involves an employee. This allows Patrick or Liz to swiftly initiate the safety and protection protocols for the person who tests positive and the community.

**DON'T**

If you become aware or are notified of a positive case, show respect for the individual's privacy, regard for the law and do not share this information in email, anecdotally or through social media.

As it relates to students, be aware that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allow institutions to disclose an overall number of COVID-19 cases on a need-to-know basis for protection of community health. However, FERPA experts advise that if a reasonable person can determine the identity of a student who tested positive from this disclosure, then universities (and their employees) should not release that kind of information. Therefore, a small university such as

ours must be very careful to avoid any public disclosures that could violate a student's privacy. We must not disclose information that could put you or the university in any legal jeopardy. Private universities in this state are not indemnified for liability in such cases.

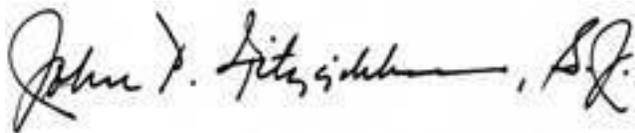
Note that FERPA explicitly permits the university to inform instructors which students in their classes have tested positive, and Regis will certainly do so. But it is incumbent upon the faculty member to be discreet. Someone could discern who the positive student is on the basis of classes taught or other information you shared.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) generally prohibits healthcare providers from disclosing protected health information to the patient's employer without permission. There is no general exception of COVID-19 but the act does allow disclosure if necessary to prevent a serious or imminent threat to the health and safety of a person or the public. That said, it expressly defers to "professional judgment," thus disclosure of any health information should not be done without careful consultation with the legal counsel.

We have been fortunate to have only one known COVID-19 case among students on campus this semester. That student was immediately quarantined and contacts were notified to monitor their health. That student will be provided with meals and faculty will work to keep the student engaged in coursework virtually. The student will not be permitted to return to the classroom until completely recovered. We have no known cases among employees.

We will continue to take every precaution to help keep our community safe so Regis students can receive the education they deserve and the enriching campus experience for which Regis is known. Thank you for all your effort to guide students, keep campus clean, keep masking up and maintaining safe distances. We are all in this together.

Gratefully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.  
President