

Dear SkillsUSA Rhode Island students and stakeholders,

With the growing discussion nationwide of the coronavirus and the steps being taken in the wake of its potential spread, I wanted to make sure you were all aware of what SkillsUSA Rhode Island is doing to prepare for any disruptions — minor or major — related to the virus.

You've likely been hearing the phrase "abundance of caution" lately in relation to how other organizations are facing this issue, and I wanted to make it clear that this phrase also applies to SkillsUSA Rhode Island's methodology as we develop our own plan. While we all hope the majority of fears swirling around this issue ultimately prove to be unfounded, we must always be prepared to face any potential scenario. SkillsUSA Rhode Island is working right now to develop a plan designed to do just that. Our events are postponed but not cancelled. We are working on strategies to evaluate our student's as fairly as possible given the current situation.

Stakeholders have been contacted about the postponement and our advisory board is having a virtual meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup>. We're also consulting leaders of other student organizations, vendors, legal counsel and insurance providers for their advice and perspectives. Further, we are relying on data and guidance provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to ensure we're updated on the most current state of the virus as we make decisions on upcoming events.

Please know that we are being extremely proactive on this issue, and that all decisions will be made with the health and safety of our students and stakeholders as our primary concern. The plan of action that results from the information we're currently gathering will be shared with you as soon as it's available.

In the meantime, there are simple things we can all be doing to keep our schools and workplaces healthy:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily (desks, doorknobs, counters)
- Avoid close contact with others who may be sick
- If you experience flu-like symptoms with fever or cough, stay home
- If symptoms escalate, call your doctor
- Stay updated with the latest from the CDC here: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- [Louisville Tourism Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update](#)

Although this is uncharted territory for most of us, we know that the best way to address this current health issue is tried-and-true: with education, focused preparation, open communication, and, of course, skills. That's what SkillsUSA Rhode Island is all about, and that's how we'll face — and overcome — this temporary situation.

Stay tuned for more updates as they become available, and thanks for your continued support.

Respectfully,

Joshua Klempe  
State Director  
SkillsUSA Rhode Island