

UConn Cooperative Extension - FAQs regarding COVID-19

Updated 3-25-20

Will UConn Extension continue to offer programs?

As of Saturday, March 14, 2020, all programs will be canceled or postponed until further notice. Consider online program delivery for these programs and any scheduled programs until further notice.

How long will UConn Extension programs be canceled?

Until further notice from UConn President Tom Katsouleas. Future decisions will be made using CDC guidance in consultation with University and state leadership. It is anticipated that a phased approach to face-to-face programs will be approved at a much later date.

I understand Extension programs are canceled, but can I still do one-on-one site visits with farmers and landowners?

Solo site visits can be done by faculty and staff but specific guidelines must be followed:

1. Pre-arrange the site visit. Confirm the reason for your trip and the location. Explain to the landowner or manager that you are not to come into contact with anyone for the duration of the visit. Ask the client to leash or keep pets indoors during your visit to avoid any possibility of COVID-19 transmission.
2. Conduct the site visit. Follow CDC guidelines for illness prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>.
3. When you leave, inform the client so they may return to the site if necessary.
4. Wash your hands with wipes or use hand sanitizer. When you return home, clean your hands thoroughly.
5. Follow up with the client by phone, email or video conference after the visit.
6. Be sure to save a record of your site visit. Include the steps you took to prevent spread of illness.

What specific language can be used when canceling an event or program?

“Due to the public health concern caused by the COVID-19 virus, UConn administration made the decision to cancel all UConn Extension events, programs, and noncredit classes until further notice. The health and safety of our staff and the many members of our Connecticut communities that participate in our programs is most important. We appreciate your understanding and patience during this uncertain time. When possible, we will work to reschedule programs, and if we are unable, we will work to refund registration fees.”

What are the policies for program cancellation and refunds?

If a program is to be canceled, then a full refund would be processed. If the program is to be rescheduled, then an option for a full refund should be given. In the case of multi-day programs, if part of the program is canceled, use your best judgment of what a fair, prorated refund should be.

Will our Extension offices remain open to the public?

As of 3/23/2020 all UConn Extension offices are closed to staff and the general public.

Is there a standard notice we can use at our offices during the office closures?

Yes, the following language is recommended:

"In light of the State of Connecticut and UConn making the decision to reduce faculty and staff working in public locations, our Extension offices are closed. Please call or email the person you trying to visit as they are working remotely if you need to get program materials. Please visit us at <https://cahr.uconn.edu/extension/>."

For all employees, please list the name, email and direct office phone number on the posted sign.

How long with Extension offices remain closed?

Offices will remain closed until further notice from President Tom Katsouleas. Future closure decisions will be made using CDC guidance in consultation with university and state leadership. With supervisor approval, staff may be given limited access to offices during the closure.

Do you want us to keep track of canceled events?

Yes, please keep a record of programs that are canceled/postponed as the result of the COVID-19 concerns. It would be helpful if you could keep a record of the following:

1. Name and date of program
2. Number of students/participants enrolled when canceled
3. Estimate of the loss of registration revenue
4. Total non-refundable costs due to cancellation

This information should be sent directly to Mike O'Neill (mp.oneill@uconn.edu).

What about attending meetings hosted by other organizations?

The guidance is to implement social distancing measures by discouraging/limiting group face-to-face meetings. Whenever possible use distance education platforms, conference calls and/or video conferencing to engage with partners. Note that UConn requires you to work remotely until further notice.

Should we hold face-to-face advisory council meetings?

No face-to-face advisory council meetings should be held, but you should still hold them using alternative means such as WebEx or conference calls.

Is there any guidance on managing our conference rooms and other spaces that may be shared with other groups?

Many offices have conference rooms and other spaces shared with external groups and they may still have public meetings there. Please be in touch with cleaning staff either directly or through your building manager to ensure extra steps are being taken at this time to prevent the spread of the corona virus. The CDC has good guidance on its website:

Read/share <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

What resources are there to help me work remotely?

[UConn COVID-19 Specific FAQs:](#)

- <https://uconn.edu/public-notification/coronavirus/>

CAHNR COVID-19 Information for Faculty and Staff:

- <https://cahnr.uconn.edu/coronavirus/>

UConn Extension Resources for our Audiences:

- <https://blog.extension.uconn.edu/covid-19-resources/>

UConn WebEx Resources:

- <https://its.uconn.edu/webex/>

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) Resources:

- <https://cetl.uconn.edu/>

Is it OK for my work study student or any student to work for me remotely? If not, can they still get paid?

Students can do remote work if feasible. If they are unable to do work remotely, they can still submit hours for time they normally would have worked until April 5th.

Please contact Mike O'Neill at mp.oneill@uconn.edu or Bonnie Burr at bonnie.burr@uconn.edu if you have other questions.