

UC San Diego's Current Strategy for On-Campus Isolation Housing

Grad Family Housing <gradfamilyhousing@UCSD.EDU>

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To: Travis, Stacy <stravis@ucsd.edu>

TO: ON-CAMPUS RESIDENTS

FR: ANGELA SCIOSCIA, M.D., Interim Executive Director Student Health and Wellness
JAMES ANTONY, Dean of The Graduate Division
JOHN MOORE, Dean of Undergraduate Education
ALYSSON SATTERLUND, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
HEMLATA JHAVERI, Executive Director of Housing, Dining & Hospitality

SUBJ: UC San Diego's Current Strategy for On-Campus Isolation Housing

As you may know, a March 28 campus-wide notice indicated that two students who live in on-campus housing tested positive for COVID-19 and have been placed into isolation housing. As the notice said, "For resident students at UC San Diego, we have created safe, isolated housing space, with academic, nutritional, medical and mental health support."

Isolating an individual of concern in a private room is the best practice recommended by public health officials worldwide. COVID-19 is primarily transmitted by direct contact, and proper social distancing mitigates against transmission of the virus. The self-isolation steps we are taking are consistent with medical advice and public health recommendations.

We realize that many of you are concerned and have questions about how isolation housing may impact you, your health, and the health of your loved ones. Therefore, we are taking this opportunity to outline the campus' current procedures to promote safety.

When an individual seeks medical attention at student health and is assessed by medical staff to warrant testing for COVID-19 the best practice is for the student to self-isolate while awaiting test results. Keep in mind, the individual may have a regular cold, or another common respiratory infection and a diagnosis of COVID-19 has not been made. Results from testing generally take 3 to 7 days.

For students with on campus housing who require isolation, there are a number of steps to safely relocate the student and inform the household contacts (i.e., the others living in the suite of the student).

- a. The suitemates who live with the student are contacted and told to temporarily leave their suite so that a few things can happen:
 - i. Allow the student who is going into self-isolation to enter the suite to gather their personal belongings;
 - ii. Allow custodial staff to disinfect the suite. The custodial staff members will wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and clean the common areas, including the kitchen, living areas and bathrooms and the bedroom of the student;
 - iii. Following disinfection, the suitemates may return;

- iv. Suitemates are provided basic guidance and precautions, as well as encouraged to monitor their health and stay in touch with medical personnel.

- b. The self-isolating student is transported from Student Health, wearing a mask and gloves, to their suite to collect belongings. Then they are transported to the new self-isolation housing unit. The driver wears protective gear and is separated from the student by a plexiglass divider.

- c. The self-isolation housing unit offers the student their own room and bathroom. The student is directed to stay in their room until medical personnel advise them otherwise. All meals are brought to them, and medical personnel regularly check on their health.

- d. Isolated students will stay in their rooms and should have no contact with any other residents of the building. There should be no possibility of other residents contracting COVID-19 from these students. The students have been uniformly appreciative of the care we are taking to protect them and the community, and they certainly understand the importance of staying in their rooms.

We understand that this is a challenging time, so now more than ever we must rely on the best science and medical knowledge available. Proactively and quickly moving persons of concern to places of social isolation is the best way to protect the community at this time.

To maintain confidentiality, and to be compliant with federal law (please see Notice of Privacy Practices: <https://wellness.ucsd.edu/studenthealth/about/HIPAA/Pages/default.aspx>), we are not identifying isolated students nor their locations. Please keep in mind that just because someone is in self-isolation does not mean they are ill with COVID-19.

We appreciate your support and understanding of everyone's efforts to deal with this difficult situation. Our Principles of Community promote respect and promotion of well-being. Your continuing compassion and empathy will make a tangible difference on our campus.