

THRIVE: CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR FRATERNITIES  
TO EMERGE STRONGER AFTER COVID-19

# COVID-19 Planning



NORTH AMERICAN  
INTERFRATERNITY  
CONFERENCE



## Is your fraternity chapter/council prepared to operate through a public health pandemic?

**DEVELOP YOUR PLAN EARLY.** On the following pages, topics have been assembled to initiate planning discussions among inter/national fraternity headquarters, chapters, advisors, housing corporations, interfraternity councils and vendors.

ADDITIONAL ARTICLES, RECORDED WEBINARS & RESOURCES TO ASSIST PLANNING CAN BE FOUND AT:

**[NICFRATERNITY.ORG/COVID-19](https://nicfraternity.org/covid-19)**

# Public & Individual Health:

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about impact of COVID-19 with Dr. Jodie Guest, Professor and Vice Chair, Epidemiology, Emory University

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

Any gathering over 10 people will be a risk this fall, including philanthropy, meetings, parties. No big gatherings in June. July is questionable.

Must have a way to isolate and treat students who get sick when they return to campus. Encourage students to report if they are feeling unwell and not be scared of the stigma.

How can we establish a culture of hand washing in our chapters? Students will need access to supplies, processes for facility cleaning, commitment to offering hand sanitizer stations.

## DISCUSS

- ☐ Review federal, state and local guidance as it relates to COVID-19 and then communicate to the members how these guidelines will impact their fraternal experience.

### **What level of monitoring is appropriate:**

- ☐ Review the feasibility of doing temperature checks before major gatherings.
- ☐ Review with campus health center the campus' COVID-19 testing procedures. Consider how to communicate this information to the chapter.
- ☐ Review the feasibility of daily temperature check or sample of at least 20% of residents and members. Consider requiring a temperature check for all guests.

# Housing/Facilities/Meal Prep:

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about the impact of COVID-19 on fraternal housing with Jack Dawson of College Fresh; Allan Lutes of Alpha Management; Woody Ratterman of CSL Management; Heith Sheeley of Greek House Chefs; Clay Wardlaw of Safety Plus LLC

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

Budget for additional operations funds for cleaning and related services.

Consider health screenings for employees and staffing needs. How can you help team members avoid getting sick?

## DISCUSS

### **Considerations for your house or facility:**

- ☐ Review a process for determining who should be permitted in the chapter facility? Residents? Staff? Chapter Members? Guests?
- ☐ Purchase hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies well in advance of academic year.
- ☐ Develop a process for daily disinfecting of chapter facility.
- ☐ In advance, secure isolation room(s) in chapter facility if not provided by campus.

### **Consider how best to safely serve meals:**

- ☐ If social distancing is still in effect, place 6 foot markers in the serving area for proper distancing while waiting in line for meals.

- ☐ Install sneeze guards in all serving areas if they do not already exist.
- ☐ If utilizing a buffet line, staff should serve - no "help yourself."
- ☐ Consider all meals served preset (disposable containers and utensils not required).
- ☐ Consider all meals served in disposable containers and utensils.
- ☐ Treat the kitchen like a quarantine zone. Keep the foot traffic to only the people that have to be in day in and out (if applicable, staff only - no guests or residents).

# Recruitment & Chapter Operations:

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about the impact of COVID-19 on fraternity recruitment with Justin Tinkler, Sigma Alpha Epsilon at Kansas State University; Brett Tilton, Sigma Alpha Epsilon at Kansas State University; Will Branstetter, Beta Theta Pi at Oklahoma State University; Josh Orendi, Phired Up Productions

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

Building interpersonal relationships can be challenging over video and phone.

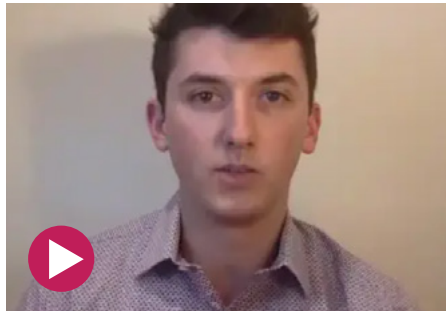
Shifted focus on social media and video calls after major summer events already canceled.

Financial strain on families is a concern and affordability of fraternity membership.

Establish regular touch points with new members, particularly at new colonies.

*Phil Rodriguez, CEO of Delta Sigma Phi Fraternity, discusses online initiations starting at time: 14:29*

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about chapter operations and recruitment and how chapters are adapting due to COVID-19 impact with AJ Fidanzo, Delta Upsilon at Bradley University; Zach Gaubert, Pi Kappa Alpha at University of Kentucky; Michael Haber, Pi Lambda Phi at Ohio State University; Brad Welch, FarmHouse Fraternity at Iowa State University

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

### Chapter Ops

Form new committees and expand number of brothers in volunteer roles to increase engagement.

Strategic planning for maintaining brotherhood in various scenarios (limitations on group sizes, how to bond online, what if some live in the house and some don't).

Restructure study groups and academic support systems to virtual.

Start to plan now for fall philanthropy events, especially if transitioning to online.

### Recruitment

Expand size of recruitment committee and ensure it has tools to take action.

Create strong presence for your chapter through campus communication channels and social media.

High school seniors are less busy than normal right now since major events like prom and graduation are canceled, so they're looking ahead to fall and excited to think about university experiences.

## DISCUSS

***With expected declines, recruitment will be key:***

- ☐ Ensure recruitment activities align with gathering guidance issued by governmental entities.
- ☐ Ensure the chapter has a plan to recruit their brothers back and incoming students to campus. The plan should focus on proactive recruitment which should start before the academic year.
- ☐ Review the chapter's social media and web platforms to ensure they are focused on engagement with potential new members.

# Student Life & Gatherings:

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about the impact of COVID-19 on the fraternal community and how technology can be used for virtual experiences with Mike Bourassa of WBT Systems; Holly Rider-Milkovich of EverFi; Chris Woods of Plaid

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

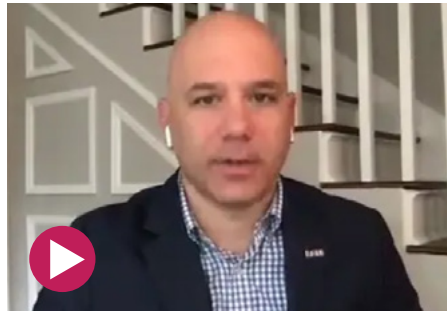
Recognize that students are more comfortable with technology than organizations are.

Provide tools for chapters to continue operations, philanthropy and service.

Shorter is better, students will not be willing to sit through long virtual experiences.

Find ways to retain personal touch or students won't connect well.

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about impact of COVID-19 on student life and fraternity community with Chris Graham, Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, Florida State; Jenny Loeffelman, Assistant Vice President for Student and Campus Life, Cornell University; Jeremiah Shinn, Vice President of Student Affairs, LSU

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

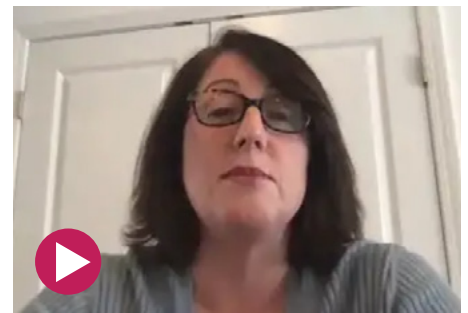
Major changes are coming for Fraternity/Sorority Life. Fraternities need to have hard conversations going into fall.

How can fraternities support campuses as they deal with sick students? Connections with health departments and residence life will become critical.

Modify protocols from past situations (Example: Mumps cases).

Prepare to coach students who are unwilling to follow protocols.

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about impact of COVID-19 on collegiate athletics and campus life with Mary Ellen Gillespie, Deputy Director, Women's Basketball Coaches Association

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

Expect delays and changes, particularly with football season and tailgate culture.

How can fraternities get a seat at the table to reiterate the importance of our role as a retention tool for the athletics department?

## DISCUSS

- ☐ Develop a plan for gatherings which aligns with federal, state and local guidance.
- ☐ Decide if gatherings should be held outside of chapter facility with local social distancing guidelines - with or without guests.
- ☐ Ensure hand sanitizer is readily available upon entry of gatherings.

# Communication:

## DISCUSS

**Early, clear communication is important:**

- ☐ Develop a plan to communicate for with members, parents and campus administration.
- ☐ Review with your inter/national organization their crisis management communication plan.
- ☐ If you have member(s) exposed to COVID-19 or a confirmed case, have a plan for communicating to members, parents, campus administration and inter/national headquarters.



# Legal Affairs:

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about legal affairs impact of COVID-19 with Toby Eveland of Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr; Stanton Jones of Arnold & Porter; Micah Kamrass of Manley Burke; Jennifer Riso of Cokinis | Young

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

It is key to educate and help chapters stay informed of applicable shelter in place and social distancing orders.

One important issue is monitoring for consistent application of public

health orders/guidance across campuses. The government does have the authority to restrict constitutional rights, such as the freedom of association, in the context of a national emergency, but this authority is not limitless. New university policies and guidance should be neutral with respect to different types of organizations.

We should anticipate that neutral policies, consistently applied, will receive great deference from a court. It is important to note that private schools will have broader flexibility to implement policies they see fit. Chapter officers need to be cognizant of both civil and criminal liability if these policies are violated.

Virtual recruitment and meetings likely comply with the existing orders. Planning for start and stop

scenarios is key as there could be more flareups of the virus.

Regarding Force Majeure provisions, the language of the contract is key. Be sure to comply with any required notice provision.

Houses with food service should take a close look at how that is addressed in leases.

Chapters should have policies and protocols in place for how to address a positive diagnosis within its membership, especially if that person lives in a chapter facility.

If your entity is involved in pending litigation, you should be pursuing early resolution.

# Fundraising:

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about the impact of COVID-19 on fundraising with Patrick Alderdice, Pennington & Co.; Ryan King, Associate Executive Director at Delta Upsilon Educational Foundation; Jen Polley Webb, Executive Director at Alpha Delta Pi Foundation; Allison Rickels, Executive Director & CEO at FarmHouse Foundation

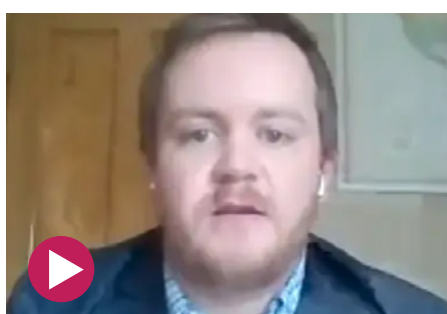
## REVIEW KEY POINTS

Keep fundraising despite the temptation to stop. Focus on stewardship.

Use this time to invest in connecting with your alumni and recruiting volunteers.

# Financial Operations:

## WATCH VIDEO



Q&A about financial impact of COVID-19 with Matthew Clare, Officer, Commercial loans, Union Bank & Trust; Jill Robisch, Vice President & Senior Business Development Officer, National Bank of Indianapolis; David Barber, Vice President Commercial Lending, Campus USA Credit Union; Tom Bomberski, President, Billhighway; Fred Maglione, CEO OmegaFi; Greg Buehner, Director, Pi Kappa Phi Properties

## REVIEW KEY POINTS

Reconfirm good cash management and fraud protection practices with chapters.

Be working on budget scenarios at the headquarters level now and how you can manage decreases in revenues.

House corporations should proactively communicate with their lenders before there are problems.

Do you have a plan to apply for SBA loans?

## DISCUSS

**Your budget will be impacted:**

- ☐ Develop budget scenarios based on your campuses plan for the 2020-21 academic year that maximizes membership while providing essential services.