



# COVID-19 FAQ Builder

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Preparing Advancement Frontline Staff to Answer Questions from Key Stakeholders

Advancement Forum

# Advancement Forum

Project Director

Kate Cudé

Managing Director

Liz Rothenberg, PhD

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# Helping Frontline Staff Handle Difficult Questions

Answering questions about COVID-19 from external stakeholders can be difficult for university personnel who are not apart of day-to-day response and strategy conversations among leadership. To help frontline staff answer these difficult questions from external stakeholders, the Advancement Forum recommends developing a cheat sheet with key information and talking points.

The cheat sheet approach is beneficial because it equips staff with easily accessible information, provides ready-to-use scripting, and helps direct stakeholders to institutional next steps.

The format of such a cheat sheet is also easily tailored and updated for different teams within advancement.

When the cheat sheet is complete, save it as a PDF and email it to all staff members.

## A Guide for Talking About COVID-19 with Stakeholders

### COVID-19 FAQ

#### *Sample Categories and Questions*

#### **Current Campus Status**

*Is the campus open? Are students on campus? Have there been furloughs or layoffs? How has the surrounding campus community been impacted?*

#### **Summer and Fall 2020**

*Will the campus remain remote for the summer? Are you planning to re-open in the fall? What safety measures will you take to protect the college community?*

#### **University Community COVID-19 Initiatives**

*What has the University done to help fight COVID-19 and those effected (research to fight COVID-19, new resources for students, faculty and staff, community impact initiatives – education through webinars etc.)*

#### **Events**

*What is the status of commencement, reunions, and homecoming? What is the plan moving into the summer and fall for athletic events?*

#### **Opportunities to Help**

*How can donors and alumni help? Can they be a panelist on a webinar? Send a note of encouragement to students? Fund a lifetime alumni association membership for a 2020 graduate?*

#### **How to Stay In the Loop**

*Who should this constituency contact for more information? What channels provide COVID-19 related information (social media, athletics pages)?*

### Benefits of the Cheat Sheet

- ✓ Provide ready-to-use, approved scripting for interactions with key constituents
- ✓ Prompt staff to pro-actively script answers to difficult questions
- ✓ Help direct stakeholders to institutional next steps and proper university resources
- ✓ Format is easily tailored and updated for different teams within advancement;
  - Frontline Fundraisers
  - Alumni Relations Staff
  - University Volunteers

# Frontline Staff COVID-19 FAQ Template

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## Purpose of the Tool

Answering questions about COVID-19 from external stakeholders can be difficult for advancement staff who are not immersed in day-to-day strategy conversations. To help frontline staff answer difficult questions, use this template to develop a FAQ (or cheat sheet) with key information and talking points. When complete, ensure staff have the most up-to-date information by sending a notice each time the document is updated with new information.

## Six Essential Components for COVID-19 FAQs

### 1 Current Campus Status For Key Groups (Students, Faculty, Staff)

*Are there students on campus? Have there been furloughs or layoffs? How has the campus community been impacted?*

### 2 Summer and Fall 2020

*Will the institution remain remote for the summer? Are you planning to re-open in the fall? What safety measures will be taken to protect faculty, staff, students and the community? What events have been postponed or canceled?*

### 3 University Community COVID-19 Initiatives

*What has the University done to help fight COVID-19 and those effected (research to fight COVID-19, new resources for students, faculty and staff? community impact initiatives? education through webinars?)*

### 4 Events

*What is the status of commencement, reunions, and homecoming? What is the plan for athletic events in the next couple months for different teams?*

### 5 Opportunities to Help

*How can donors and alumni help? Can they be a panelist on a webinar? Send a note of encouragement to students? Fund a lifetime alumni association membership for a 2020 graduate?*

### 6 How to Stay In The Loop

*Who should this constituency contact for more information? What channels provide COVID-19 related information; i.e. social media or athletics pages?*