Pandemic Preparedness Plan

I. Purpose

Roane State Community College (RSCC) has created this Pandemic Preparedness Plan to guide the College in preparing for and responding to a pandemic outbreak. The purpose of this plan is to minimize the impact of a pandemic on students, faculty and staff by describing the specific actions to be taken by the college. This plan is consistent with relevant guidelines developed by the Tennessee Department of Health and CDC.

This Plan will be authorized by the President of the College. The plan is designed to work in conjunction with plans by the local health department and shall be subordinate to all local, state and federal pandemic plans. A copy of the plan will be provided to the regional health departments in the RSCC service area.

II. Background

A pandemic occurs when a new virus strain appears against which the human population has little or no immunity and for which there is no vaccine. The disease spreads easily from person to person and can sweep across the country and around the world in a relatively short period of time. Predicting the timing or severity of the next pandemic is a difficult task but it must be appreciated that large numbers of individuals around the world will be at risk. In the event of an emerging pandemic, countries might employ such measures as border closures and travel restrictions which might delay the arrival of the virus but would not likely prevent the eventual occurrence of disease in a particular geographic location. Pandemic may evolve in waves, each of which can last for six to eight weeks; the overall pandemic period may extend over 18 to 24 months. An especially severe pandemic could lead to substantial levels of illness, death, social disruption, and economic loss. Impacts can range from school and business closings to the interruption of basic services such a public transportation and food delivery. With large numbers of persons requiring medical care, the health care system could be overwhelmed.

III. Objectives

A. To protect the lives, safety, and health of all students, faculty, staff, and visitors at every Roane State Community College campus.
B. To effectively communicate with all involved parties throughout the duration of a pandemic.
C. To provide for the continuation of college operations and services as long as it is safe to do so.
D. To prevent the spread of infection through health and hygiene education.

IV. Assumptions

    A. In the event of a pandemic, the State of Tennessee will have minimal resources available for local assistance and local authorities will be responsible for community based response plans.

    B. A pandemic will easily and rapidly spread from person to person resulting in substantial absenteeism at the College.

    C. Vaccines and antiviral medications will be in short supply during the initial months after the onset of a pandemic.

    D. Direction to close schools, cancel public events, restrict travel, and quarantine areas may come from the State or County Health Departments, TBR or other entities.

    E. During a pandemic RSCC may need to close facilities for an undetermined amount of time.

V. Communication

The Emergency Management Team will monitor information from national, state, and local public safety and health agencies, and will forward pertinent information to the RSCC President and Cabinet. The Emergency Management Team will advise the College President of official information regarding potential or existing pandemic which can directly influence the operation of RSCC.

The Office of the President will disseminate pandemic information received from state agencies and other governing authorities. Because the nature of the college response to a pandemic will be based upon complex factors including directives from the Department of Education, location of illness, severity of the pandemic, numbers of college employees and students affected, and emerging needs in the service area, the Pandemic Response Team will assist the President during Level 2, Level 3, and Recovery. Alternates will be identified for each Pandemic Response Team member in the event these members are unable to serve.

    A. Pandemic Response Team
1. President of the College
2. Vice President for Financial Services
3. Vice President for Academic Services
4. Vice President for Students and Enrollment Management
5. Vice President for Oak Ridge Branch Campus and Satellite Campuses
6. VP of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, Institutional Effectiveness / Research
7. Chief Information Officer
8. Director of Human Resources
9. Emergency Management Response Team

B. Communication to Public
1. RSCC will maintain updated information on its website with links to state and federal agencies to create awareness and educate people on pandemic prevention and plans for the College.
2. RSCC has identified a chain of command and established backups to include an appropriate lead spokesperson.
3. RSCC will follow business interruption and closure procedures utilizing outside communication resources to include:
    a) Local television news services
    b) Local newspapers
    c) College Website: www.roanestate.edu and Momentum course management system
    d) Outdoor sign
    e) College switchboards
    f) Raider Alert

C. Communication to Employees
1. Communications to employees shall be managed per the RSCC operating procedures and the Pandemic Preparedness Plan. RSCC will advise employees in advance where to find current and reliable information.
2. Communication will be via the internet website, a dedicated website, telephone system, or other communications systems that provide for the dissemination of information to employees.
3. Educational communications will be provided to encourage employees to obtain personal, regular healthcare services.
4. Educational communications will be provided regarding school policies for employee's compensation and sick leave absences that may be unique to a pandemic.

D. Communication to Students
1. Communications to students shall be managed per the RSCC operating procedures and the Pandemic Preparedness Plan. RSCC will advise students in advance where to find current and reliable information.
2. RSCC will maintain updated information on its website with links to state and federal agencies to create awareness and educate people on pandemic prevention and plans for the College.
3. Educational communications will be provided to encourage hygiene habits to promote wellness and protect against infection.
4. In the event of Alert Level 2, communication of college response will be via the college website, a dedicated website, Momentum course management

system, telephone system, text messaging or other communications systems that provide for the dissemination of information to students.

VI. Staffing and Support

Preparing for a pandemic is significantly different from planning for manmade and natural emergencies. Disasters such as tornadoes, fires, or hazardous material releases are site specific and pose an immediate threat to personnel and property, and recovery usually begins within days of the incident. In planning to respond to a pandemic, the focus is on preparing for extended interruption of college activities, including long periods of class cancellations, campus closures, and significant increase in student and employee absenteeism. Recovery may not begin for four to twelve weeks. It is important to identify essential personnel and critical functions in order to continue to deliver the vital services required to keep the College functioning.

A. Faculty and Student Support
1. Develop procedures for emergency actions such as reducing the required hours of instruction if a semester should end early, leaving dates open for finals and allowing grades to be turned in whenever a student completes a course, or other methods for course completion.
2. Utilize the course management system (Momentum) as a means of communicating policies for instruction.
3. Develop a list of courses that could be offered completely online with no need for students or faculty to attend any campus.
4. Develop a policy or guidelines to address academic concerns of students absent from classes due to illness or quarantine.
5. Develop contingency plans for issues related to tuition payments and refunds, withdrawal policies, and registration.

B. Human Resources Issues
1. Identify and document key positions with high risks of exposure and establish expectations and standards of operation for these key positions.
2. Prepare work at home guidelines that address telecommuting issues.
3. Develop policies and procedures for absences related to the pandemic including reporting absences, continuation of benefits and pay.
4. Establish understanding of pandemic illnesses as related to workers compensation.
5. Prepare policy to restrict travel to and from infected areas.
6. Develop partnerships with healthcare facilities to provide service to employees.

7. Prepare insurance processes to include health, disability and supplemental insurance.

C. Information Technology Systems
   1. Prepare for increased demand on information technology infrastructure for voice and data communications in the event the College is closed and classes are canceled.
   2. Prepare for the technology support required for developing the list of online courses to be offered when the College is closed during a pandemic.
   3. Consult with departments to determine what is needed to continue college operations for alternate work policies such as telecommuting, teleconferencing, and videoconferencing.
D. Public Safety
   1. Prepare for increased hours and rotating shifts as needed
   2. Maintain command center with 24/7 point of contact and camera monitoring.

VII.   Control Measures
A. Educate the college community on ways to limit the spread of disease through a campaign to stop the spread of viruses.
B. Establish a social distancing policy to further reduce the risk of spreading disease.
C. Enhance housekeeping to provide infection prevention supplies such as soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, tissues and disposal receptacles.

VIII.   Student / Staff Travel
As the pandemic spreads from country to country and regions of the United States the TN Department of Health will review updated country-specific travel on the CDC Travelers' Health website (http://cdc.gov/travel/) and disseminate recommendations to stakeholders. Faculty and students traveling outside the United States as a part of International Education activities will be informed of the CDC website. Advisories might include:
A. Travel Health Precautions that describe steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of infection (e.g., avoiding travel to high-risk settings and communities where transmission is occurring).
B. Travel Health Warnings that recommend postponement of nonessential travel.

IX. Alert Levels
Table 2 outlines the general actions to be taken by the College during a pandemic event, based on the Federal Response Stages and WHO pandemic response alert phases. Additional actions taken by the College will be based on information provided by federal, state and local government through the local health departments.

Table 2

	Level 1: **Preplanning up to and including confirmed cases of human-to-human transmission**	**Level 2:** **Suspected cases on campus or suspected/ confirmed cases in service area**	**Level 3:** **Confirmed cases on campus**
Action Taken		Reduce Employee and Students onsite and practice social distancing	Only essential personnel required to report to affected building or campus
President's office	Review Pandemic response plan. Determine financial resources for plan.	Consult with planning team and TBR concerning status. Maintain contact with planning team &/or TBR.	Maintain contact with Planning team &/or TBR
Pandemic Preparedness Planning Team	Identified planning team Consulted with county health director & continuing ongoing dialogue. Communicate plan with Presidents office. Reviewing updates from health department and TBR. Evaluate need for protective equipment fit and training.	Continue communication with health department & TBR. Brief President on status of pandemic	Maintain communication with health department & TBR

Student Learning	Provide training opportunities for faculty that will enable them to convert courses to online format.	. The decision to defer classes will be made in conjunction with local health departments and state agencies. The decision to defer online courses will be made if the President determines that these courses cannot be effectively taught.	Same as level 2. Impact to students and faculty will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
	Roane State will continue in its efforts to provide training opportunities for faculty members that will enable them to convert their courses to an online format.		
	Develop procedures for check out of computers by faculty/students should level 2 be reached.	Be prepared to share coursework via multiple electronic options and or paper copies as needed.	
	Develop educational materials for students for dissemination via multiple venues.		
Student Services	Disseminate educational materials.	N/A	N/A
Infection Control Policies & Procedures	Standard precautions in place.	Distribute protective equipment to essential personnel, following guidelines of TBR and local health departments when needed	Same as level 2
	If need determined, train and fit essential personnel with protective equipment.		
Communications	Dedicated webpage developed.	In the case of a Pandemic Outbreak, which forces the college to be closed, PR staff will provide regular news	Update webpage, telephone messages as needed.

		updates using email, webpage, radio, TV, telephone message and, for more in-depth coverage, local newspapers. PR will piggyback on its inclement weather calling system. People will be directed to the web for further updates.	Provide oversight for student, staff, and faculty notifications if appropriate.
	Establish internal & external communication channels. Review best practices in crisis communications		
Human Resources	Identify essential personnel Communicate with TBR to determine appropriate leave policy and compensation under Levels 2 & 3 Provide educational resources for faculty and staff	Implement appropriate leave/compensation policy as needed.	Same as level 2
Director of Public Safety	Inform security personnel of their role in pandemic plan.	Establish stations to control access to campus entrances and maintain and secure our sites.	Maintain level 2 and restrict access to only designated essential personal.
Facilities Management		Set Environmental Controls to proper level for occupancy load.	Set Environmental Controls to proper level for occupancy load.

X. Recovery

It is expected that a major pandemic event would seriously challenge the College in many ways and would require considerable effort to plan and achieve a successful recovery.

Recovery will be dependent on several factors such as the duration of the pandemic, the length of time the College is closed, the number of students, faculty and staff affected and the time of year. In this regard, a Recovery Planning Team will convene and address the following:

A. Documentation of temporary and permanent personnel losses among faculty, staff and students. Develop proposals for dealing with these losses.
B. Documentation of revenue, property and equipment losses and planning for dealing with these losses.
C. Obtaining a functional status report from each division or department of RSCC. These reports should include assessments of faculty/staff availability, equipment and supply needs and a determination of the feasibility of resuming pre-pandemic work functions.
D. Identification of conditions allowing for partial and complete resumption of various work functions at the College and establishing a timetable to reach these goals.
E. Notification of faculty, staff and students about recovery plans and the eventual resumption of services at the College sites. The resumption of college business will be communicated by the procedures outlined in the plan for Communication to Public, Communication to Employees, and Communication to Students.

XI. References & Additional Resources

A. TN Department of Health
   https://www.tn.gov/health
B. World Health Organization
   https://www.who.int/home
C. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
   https://www.cdc.gov/