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Dear Schools: Just like you and your colleagues/families/neighbors, the **OBPVS** is reminding itself to stay **FLEXIBLE** as we all work to cope with changes and to be as protected as much as possible against **COVID-19** (the Corona Virus). **This OBPVS update responds to the recent most-frequent questions the OBPVS received** since the 1st OBPVS update was issued on 3/11/2020 giving Schools the OBPVS' initial guidance about how to handle this Public Health matter.¹

1. Does the State Department of Education's ("SDE") closure of Schools announced on 3/16/2020 to run through 4/6/2020 apply to OBPVS-licensed Schools? **No. OBPVS Schools are under OBPVS jurisdiction and NOT the authority of the SDE.** OBPVS Schools should *continue to evaluate* whether to close (or to switch to temporary Distance Ed. or other at-home teaching methods) based on such School-specific factors as following LOCAL Government official's health-safety declarations, appropriate class (gathering) sizes, the presence of symptoms by Students/Faculty/Staff, and definitely any School-connected POSITIVE Corona Virus Test results, etc.
2. What about the upcoming mandatory Annual Training sessions? **The April 9th LIVE training in OKC is cancelled**, and it's VERY LIKELY that the Live Training in Tulsa on April 17th will also be cancelled. Instead, **FOR THIS YEAR ONLY all Training may have to be converted to Webinar and 24/7 YouTube®-style Training.** Doing so would avoid creating a gathering size of more than (10) people in one room.
3. Will the Training be rescheduled? **Maybe.** However, **IF POSSIBLE**, the Webinar will still take place on 4/9. **But, again, the date may have to be changed???** If so, you will be notified. Then, following the Webinar it will take a couple of weeks to create the required Transcript to initiate 24/7 Internet Training for anyone NOT ABLE to participate in the actual Webinar.
4. I am a New School in Oklahoma (licensed in Oklahoma less than 3 years), will my School be allowed to take the training by Webinar or the subsequent on-line offering? **This year, under these unprecedented circumstances, yes!** The OBPVS will not determine that a "New" School is out-of-compliance with the OBPVS Rules for failing to attend a LIVE Training event.
5. **Effective Immediately, please:**
 - a. Cease making Hand Deliveries to the OBPVS. Instead, **Mail items** (no need for overnight deliveries) to the OBPVS at **3700 N. Classen Blvd., Ste. 250; OKC, OK 73118**, including:
 - i. Checks to pay Fees for Training, Catalog Changes, or New Solicitors, and
 - ii. Drafts of Catalog, EAs, or Program Changes – PLUS, Email *these* items to be reviewed/ approved directly to angela.moore@obpvs.ok.gov AND nhouse@obpvs.ok.gov
 - b. *Per Update #1*, keep emailing School Closure/Distance Ed. info. to angela.moore@obpvs.ok.gov.
 - c. If you will NOT maintain access the Email that the OBPVS used to reach YOU, today, **CHANGE your Notification Email on file with the OBPVS.** Do so by sending **DUAL Emails to:**
angela.moore@obpvs.ok.gov AND nhouse@obpvs.ok.gov
 - d. **KEEP WATCHING THIS EMAIL OF YOURS** (or your NEWER updated email), **to stay alert to upcoming OBPVS Announcements or Office Staffing adjustments.**
 - e. To leave a Voice Message, Extensions at 405/528-3370 are: Angie, **Ext. 21** OR Nora, **Ext. 24.**
 - f. Due to the current circumstances, OBPVS responses to Emails (**preferred**) or Voice Messages, may take a little longer than usual. But the Staff **will** reply as quickly as possible.

¹ If you didn't receive the 3/11/2020 update, email Angie AND Nora at the OBPVS to receive Update #1, now, by Email.

OBPVS Guidance for a School's COVID-19 Virus Submissions to the OBPVS, 3/10/20

Background - On the Home Page of the OBPVS Website (<https://obpvs.ok.gov>) and in a separate email to School Authorized Administrative and other School Officials, various Links to the authoritative health resources (the WHO, CDC, and OSDH) were posted and transmitted today. A number of licensed Schools also asked the OBPVS what to submit to the Agency ***IF*** (this is a matter at the School's discretion), the School experiences a virus-caused Closure and/or implements temporary Distance Education (D/E) offerings. Following the priorities review, below, guidance is provided about what to submit to the OBPVS AFTER addressing any immediate health/safety needs.

Appropriate Priorities

- 1st - **First and foremost**, as always, the health and safety of a School's Students and its Faculty and Staff are the most important matters.
- 2nd - The OBPVS defers on Health and Safety matters to local codes or other official regulatory bodies. For COVID-19, these include the World Health Organization ("WHO"), the Centers for Disease Control ("CDC"), and the Oklahoma State Department of Health ("OSDH").
- 3rd - The OBPVS Board expects the Agency Staff to use common sense and offer flexibility administering existing regulations that may need to be less restrictively overseen when an emerging issue arises. This is no different than how the OBPVS behaves after a natural disaster strikes like a flood or a tornado.

Submission Guidelines

IF a School makes a decision to suspend classes or to begin to offer classes via D/E, follow these guidelines:

- A. Put the most time and effort to maximize effective communications with Students, Faculty, and Staff ("internal communications"). Notification samples ***may*** (not required) be shared in advance if/when OBPVS input would be helpful ***or*** submit notice samples ***with the other materials listed below.***
- B. PLAN Submissions – ***For all Schools***, if applicable, email angela.moore@obpvs.ok.gov WITH the School's Name ***and*** what alternative telephone(s)/email(s) the OBPVS should use during the School's COVID-19 activities.
 1. **Accredited Schools** - An Accredited School should first make any necessary submissions to the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DOE) and the School's Accreditor. ***After that***, submit a COPY of the Accreditor filing to the OBPVS with any Student/Faculty/Staff Notification Samples not previously submitted. A unique OBPVS submission is ***not*** necessary at the beginning. Make electronic submissions to: angela.moore@obpvs.ok.gov
 2. **Schools That Are Not Accredited** – Review Page 2 of this listing for the kinds of questions to consider ***and details to inform the OBPVS about after internal communications are handled.***

Timing and Other Expectations

- A. The OBPVS ***will*** accept an ***estimated*** duration timeframe for the temporary processes established.
- B. AFTER a PLAN is submitted, if not covered in the PLAN, send a simple email(s) to the OBPVS to report the PLAN's Start and End Dates. Use angela.moore@obpvs.ok.gov
- C. Attendance – Just as Oklahomans do in icy weather, Schools may liberally administer an established Attendance Policy if internal parties are to be isolated/quarantined, or D/E is implemented. This includes allowing retroactive approval of Leaves of Absence, normally NOT permitted, when proper COVID-19 documentation is submitted after an absence began.
- D. Make-Up Policies – Schools may also be flexible, creative, and accommodating to potentially offer an additional mechanism(s) of make-up work when an absence or a missed class was due to COVID-19 or the School's virus precautions.
- E. The OBPVS understands that all Programs or Courses may not be able to be treated identically, and that Clinicals/Rotations/Practicums/Internship/Externships may have additional/alternative PLAN elements.

COVID-19 PLAN Elements to Consider/Address, PB: OBPVS, 03/10/2020

The following list is not exhaustive, but for unaccredited Schools the guidance may be helpful ***IF*** the School takes action related to COVID-19. The OBPVS wishes to thank the various other Agencies whose materials were reviewed and considered to prepare this guidance. ¹

***IF* there will be one**, submit the School's INITIAL PLAN to the OBPVS (angela.moore@obpvs.ok.gov) ***AFTER* preliminary communication with Students, Faculty and Staff is completed.**

1. Will "All," or fewer Program/Courses/Other (Clinicals or Externships, Etc.) be a part of the PLAN? If less than all, list.
2. Will any Class Cancellations occur? If so, when and for *approximately* how long?
3. Will the School Change a Delivery method?
4. For Temporary (not previously approved) Distance Education (D/E): ²
 - a. What type of delivery will be used (Skype®, Go-To-Meetings/Webinars, Other)
 - b. Specifically, how will a Student access technical support for the method(s)?
5. Provide any modified Faculty access details. For example, will any Email Addresses or Telephone Numbers be changed? Or, will access have to take place using #2's D/E method(s)?
6. Will any Instructors substitute for other Instructors due to technology limitations or another reason? If so, who will substitute for whom?
7. If applicable, will access be altered to the Library (Learning Resource Center)? How?
8. Does the School anticipate issuing Grades of "Incomplete" ("I") or similar for the current Term/Semester? If so, under what circumstance(s)? How long will a student have to eliminate the "I"?
9. For Clock Hour Programs, is a Licensing Board approval of the temporary arrangements, such as the Board of Nursing, approval required to initiate even temporary D/E? If so, provide an approval copy.
10. ANY other information helpful to understand and reasonably document the INITIAL PLAN.

Subsequent Submissions, if not a part of the Initial PLAN (above)

1. Are New Enrollments being temporarily suspended?
2. PLAN Start Date
3. PLAN End Date
4. *IF* the duration of the INITIAL PLN is to be extended, for approximately how long?
5. In the future, what documentation will e required to e provided to support an unscheduled Absence or Leaves of Absence not approved in advance?
6. Revised Make-Up Policy Adjustment details, including Classroom, Lab, Clinical-Externship-Etc.
7. Any Attendance Policy adjustments granted.
8. Will any term/Semester be continued, if so to when?
9. ANY other information helpful to understand and reasonably document the PLAN's implementation. ³

Questions

Telephone the OBPVS during business hours at **405/528-3370**,
or, email nhouse@obpvs.ok.gov AND angela.moore@obpvs.ok.gov
Whichever Staff Member is available first will respond to your inquiry.

¹ If you wish to see/study/modify other Schools' activities, you might try to Google® "COVID-19 Preparedness," or "Emergency Plans, Higher Ed.," etc.

² The planned, *temporary* D/E is Virus-specific. Permanent, future (non-Virus) use of D/E requires explicit OBPVS Approval and an ordinary Catalog and Program Change submission to be made and approved in advance.

³ In the future, the OBPVS may provide additional guidance about any eventual statistical details to be submitted at a later date. For example, how many Students were affected, how many never returned, how many used D/E, etc.