

Diocese of Saint Augustine
CORONAVIRUS TOWN HALL
March 17, 2020
10:30am-11:00am
The Catholic Center

Opening Remarks – Deborah Tauro, Risk Manager

Deborah Tauro opened the meeting by saying that this particular gathering would not address concerns such as building closings, working remotely, or employee pay in the event the building closes. She explained that such decisions have not been made at this point as our situation does not require us to make such a decision, and that if the time comes for such decisions to be made, directives would be communicated through the Chancellor's office.

Deborah Tauro: Statistics are as follows: There have been 160 cases confirmed in the State of Florida; 5 in Duval County, 2 in St. Johns, 1 in Nassau, 2 in Alachua; 5 deaths in Florida. New cases being confirmed are not related to travel which has prompted guidelines and mandates handed down on a Federal, State and County level. The object of these mandates, such as social distancing, is to slow the contagion of the virus.

President Trump has instituted a 15-day plan that meetings should be limited to 10 people or less. This recommendation is for both work, social and home. The plan also states that children should be taught from home through virtual education, delivery services for basic necessities should be utilized as much as possible as well as drive through restaurants.

Here at DOSA, employees are encouraged to use the cleaning and sanitizing products provided throughout the Catholic Center and Varella Center to sanitize their workspaces as the virus can live on paper for up to 18 hours and on cardboard for up to 24 hours. The virus can live on hard surfaces up to 72 hours. Public workspaces such as copy rooms, supply rooms, should also be sanitized daily.

Deborah then opened the meeting to questions, concerns and comments.

Mike Day: Can anything be done to ensure that these mandates and guidelines are being adhered to within DOSA? For example, I am aware of an employee who has returned to the US after a trip abroad and has not quarantine themselves for the recommended 14 days.

Deborah: Such incidents should be reported to the Chancellor's office.

Donna Wilhelm: Is there a timeline as to when the decision will be made whether or not to close the Catholic Center?

Deborah: At this point in time, based on government guidelines, we are not in a situation where we are required to close our building. No one in our building has exhibited signs of being ill so we are not knowingly faced with contagion. Currently, our Directors are meeting with their staff to discuss whose job can be done remotely should the need arise. Each Director needs to look at their group and its operations and determine how would we function if we could not meet at the Catholic Center.

Beverly DeNucci: So that would be individual contingency plans per office, correct?

Deborah: Since every ministry's activities and job description is so different from each other, each ministry will form its own contingency plan.

Mike Day: To be clear, we cannot decide for our department as Directors, whether our staff can work remotely, is that correct? We need to wait until that decision to close the Catholic Center has come down from the Chancellor's office.

Deborah: That is correct. As a Director, you should be making a contingency plan but cannot execute it without word from the Chancellor.

Robin Shipley: Is there a contingency plan in place for the building as a whole in the event that a contagion has been identified?

Deborah: We have discussed how to sanitize the building, how long it would take before we could re-enter the building. But again, that would come from the Chancellor.

Roseanne Dye: Have we discussed limiting traffic coming into the Catholic Center from the outside?

Deborah: We haven't but we have to remember the 50 people gathering rule. The mandate that the mayor put in said it does not apply to people coming into work. When we invite people from the outside, we must adhere to the 50-person rule for those occasions.

Lester del Rosario: I would encourage all ministry heads to use technology to have conference calls, video calls etc., in place of the traditional person to person meetings whenever possible.

Deacon Scott Conway: I agree. We've already begun meeting only via phone or video.

Deborah: That is the mindset we should be in. We have to leave home to come to work, but if we can limit the amount of people we are all exposed to by having remote meetings, that will lessen the chances of contagion. Also, just because the vaccine tests are now being conducted, it's still going to be 12-18 months before it is marketable. We have to rely on sanitizing our personal spaces, limiting outside contact and personal hygiene. But when it comes to working remotely, you will need to speak to your director.

Vicki Rispoli – Has the Diocese set up guidelines for what events we need to cancel and is there a window for how long this process will last?

Deborah – the Chancellor hasn't established such guidelines; we just have the guidelines put out by the mayor – so 50 people or less.

Steve – You'll want to reach up through your organization structure and ask for their opinions.

Deborah – I have spoken with my other counterparts throughout other Diocese and, like us, they have not closed their administrative offices yet, but are working on contingency plans as we are.

Beverly De Nucci – Is there any commentary or discussion forthcoming regarding this session to the Chancellor's Office?

Deborah – We did talk a little before the Chancellor left and what I had hoped to take away from this town hall are your concerns and questions so that they could be relayed to him. Having this information could potentially help him to form a decision.

Roseanne Dye: What if we have already been in contact with individuals who work in health care and could have possibly been in contact with one who is contagious?

Deborah: You would advise your supervisor and self-quarantine. We can't discuss the pay portion of that time in self-quarantine yet. There are items passing through the Senate at this time that could possibly offset that cost.

Mike Day: Good to remember that with the drive-thru testing that has begun to take place, the numbers will go up, but we should remember that is to not necessarily a product of more exposure, but rather confirming cases already present.

Deborah: That is true. For the drive through test, you will need to contact your doctor's office first. They will ask questions and if they feel your symptoms are in line with the need to be tested, they will provide you with documentation necessary in order to receive the test. Tests will not be administered without that documentation.

Michelle Clark: I know we're in this meeting for all of us here at the Catholic Center, but we need to remember that we have clergy, seminarians that need our prayer. People will be looking to us for guidance. We need to be able to assure them that we are praying for them.

Deborah: This is a very fluid situation. We are making decisions today based on recommendations and mandates for today. It may change tomorrow in which case we'd need to maybe re-adjust our guidelines and decisions. We have to be flexible.

Joe Ariet: The air filters in this building have all been changed within the past month, so rest assured that the air you're breathing is clean.

Vicki Rispoli: if we do have a building closure or a situation of contagion, will the carpets be cleaned?

Joe Ariet: they were cleaned last year, but yes, they would be cleaned again.

Deborah: if that is all of the questions for now, we can be dismissed. We will get the Minutes to the Chancellor in a timely manner. Thank you for your attendance.

Respectfully submitted: Lisa Castro