



MIT Department of Public Safety

*MIT Police
MIT Emergency Management
International Safety and Security
MIT EMS*

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, MA 02139

April 3, 2020

Dear MIT Managers,

Public health experts are currently projecting that Massachusetts will reach its peak number of COVID-19 cases in mid-April. As we near that point, all MIT employees will need to prepare for the possibility that they could fall ill, or that they could find themselves caring for loved ones who are ill. Given the severity of symptoms experienced by some COVID-19 patients, all employees should feel prepared to step away from their work responsibilities for two weeks — at any time, and on short notice.

With our statewide peak drawing closer, we in MIT Emergency Management are urging the staff members of all MIT departments, labs, centers, and offices to engage in planning to ensure the continued operation of their units. Such advanced planning will help ensure that the Institute's critical operations continue even as our community passes through the worst of the current crisis. It will also help individual employees feel less anxious should they fall ill, knowing that plans have been made for their work responsibilities to be handled in their absence.

This process will almost certainly look different from one unit to another. In some cases, this preparation may require nothing more than a conversation between managers and their direct reports to identify back-ups for each team member and to determine essential functions that must be preserved even if staffing is disrupted due to widespread illness. Other units may benefit from more rigorous, written planning. To assist you with the continuity planning process, we have posted two worksheets on [our website](#) that may help you and your staff develop individual continuity plans as well as a department continuity plan.

Please know that if you do become ill, MIT wants you to focus on your health and well-being. Even in our community of high achievers, no one is expected to work while their health is compromised. If you are sick, your first priority is to get the rest you need to recover. The same thing goes if a member of your household becomes sick: You need to prioritize their care.

We hope you will stay healthy — but we all have to plan for disruptions in the coming weeks. It's a service to ourselves, so we can focus on our recovery without worrying about work. It's also a service to colleagues who may need to help at a moment's notice: We want to give those colleagues all the resources they need, should they be called upon to act on our behalf.

We are here to help as you prepare for the impacts of COVID-19 as well as any emergency we may face in the future. Please connect with us at em-staff@mit.edu if you need any assistance in developing your preparedness plans. We thank you for helping us create a more prepared and resilient MIT.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Suzanne Blake".

Suzanne Blake
Director, MIT Emergency Management