



# THETA XI FRATERNITY

## ***Response to COVID-19 Pandemic***

This week, many of the universities who host Theta Xi chapters and colonies have made announcements regarding changes to course instruction, altering of school breaks, and campus closures. These changes may impact chapter, colony, and association operations. Effective immediately, The Grand Lodge and Headquarters Staff advise you of the following procedures.

### ***Guidance for Chapters & Colonies***

#### **CHAPTER/COLONY SUPPORT**

Fraternity Headquarters operations will not change. Staff members will continue work from the headquarters office in St. Louis and/or from their remote offices. Any changes in hours or staffing will be announced if they become necessary. Fraternity Headquarters staff are committed to supporting our members and chapters. Please direct questions to your contact at Headquarters.

Advisors and Volunteers should stay in touch with chapter officers, assisting with the adjustment of schedules and other tasks as needed.

#### **ASSOCIATE MEMBER EDUCATION & INITIATION**

***All chapters and colonies with current associate members must conduct initiation immediately and no later than Monday, March 16, 2020.*** Please note that Theta Xi initiation requires only 5 brothers perform the speaking parts of the ceremony. This should limit the number of members needed to accomplish a meaningful initiation ceremony for your associate members. The entire chapter does not need to be present for initiation to occur. Initiation may have to take place in a different location than is normal for the chapter. Additionally, you should limit contact through handshakes during this time.

If your university procedure does not allow for immediate initiation of associate members, please advise Headquarters as soon as possible. You should report this to Emilee Danielson-Burke at [emilee@thetaxi.org](mailto:emilee@thetaxi.org). You should also consider the following to keep your associate members engaged virtually, so that initiation can occur at the earliest possible date:

- Identify any opportunity for remote learning for new member meetings that would traditionally take place in-person. Please reach out to your headquarters contact to discuss running remote meetings or gaining access to remote video conference software.
- If your institution moves to online learning for the remainder of the semester, consult with your advisor, alumni association, or Headquarters staff on how to best keep your new members engaged.
- The Chapter is still required to report all new members and any initiations that have occurred on the roster to Fraternity Headquarters.

## **CHAPTER MEETINGS, PHILANTHROPY EVENTS, AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS**

Follow the recommendations made by your educational institution on regular gatherings for all registered student organizations.

If your school recommends canceling all in-person meetings/gatherings or has moved instruction online for a period of time, look to utilize programs for group phone calls or online meetings. Other chapter-sponsored events such as social events, brotherhood events, and philanthropy events should be considered non-essential.

Consult with your advisors and/or alumni association regarding any existing contracts for space and events. Contracts should be reviewed by the booking party to review any “act of God” clause or otherwise to mitigate cost.

## **CHAPTER FINANCES**

**Dues:** Whether you are affected by a campus closure or not, dues collection should continue as planned. Chapter Treasurers should consult with your advisor or alumni association if you need to consider prorating dues because of a campus closure, but make sure you are collecting enough to cover any fixed expenses.

**Billing:** Payments to the Fraternity Headquarters, including dues, risk management assessments, AM and initiation fees continue to be owed as planned. The Fraternity will work with chapters and colonies impacted by campus closures. Contact [Amy Collins](#) if you have any questions.

## **ACCREDITATION & NATIONAL AWARDS**

The deadline remains **May 1, 2020**. Contact [Emilee Danielson-Burke](#) if your campus closure impacts your ability to collaborate on your awards packet.

## **HOUSING**

Chapters/colonies living in university-owned housing must follow the guidelines announced by the university. Questions about and procedures that might affect access, resources, and support should be directed to them.

Chapters/colonies living in Theta Xi-owned houses must work with their alumni association/house corporation to determine appropriate measures for brothers and residents.

Chapters/colonies who rent housing should follow university guidelines for classes and should contact the landlord or property manager for guidance.

In the case that an individual within one of your housing facilities is feeling ill and/or is diagnosed with COVID-19, follow the recommendations made by your educational institution immediately for next steps.

We ask that all Alumni Association/Housing Corporation officers communicate with the host institution to learn more about any precautionary measures or steps that should be taken.

## ***Guidance for Alumni Associations (House Corporations)***

The Fraternity understands that house corporations will have questions and concerns about the potential spread of Coronavirus and best handling an unexpected closure of the facility. We suggest that you consider the following:

- Follow all guidance provided by the [CDC](#), state/province/local authorities and/or the college or university. If you have not already, we suggest that a member of the house corporation contact the college/university regarding recommendations specific to the campus.
- Encourage members of the chapter to review the [everyday preventive actions](#) recommended by the CDC to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases.
- In the case a member living in, or an employee working in, the housing facility is feeling ill, or is diagnosed with COVID-19, alert local officials and follow their recommendations.
- Individuals should not be quarantined in a chapter house, nor would it be allowed if there was a known case of the coronavirus. Local authorities will be in the best position to provide guidance as to where members should/could be quarantined.
- Should the coronavirus be present in any facility, the facility needs to be properly decontaminated prior to approved re-entry.
- Review all contracts and contact your vendors (food service, cleaning, etc.) to understand your obligations and with any concerns or questions regarding scheduling impacts due to COVID-19.

If the campus has taken steps to remove students from campus, contact campus officials for clarification and/or direction regarding chapter house facilities. We suggest that all chapters and house corporations follow the directions provided by host institutions.

- House Corporation officers are responsible for making the decision to close a chapter facility in consultation with the chapter and campus.
- Determine with campus officials if it is appropriate for students to remain in the facility if classes are cancelled or moved to online platforms. Also determine housing options for students who are not able to return home.
- If closing the house, work to ensure the safety and security of the facility, referencing seasonal reminders for [housing security](#).
- If necessary, work to provide students the opportunity to retrieve personal property before returning home.
- Review rental agreements/contracts and begin to develop a plan for collections and vendors in the event of a long-term closure.
- Review any relevant or related insurance coverages.
- Prior to reopening the property, ensure proper cleaning and regular opening procedures.

## ***Guidance from Holmes Murphy (Theta Xi's insurance broker)***

Additional guidance has been provided by Holmes Murphy, our insurance broker, that you may find helpful:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring the novel coronavirus outbreak. This is an emerging, rapidly developing situation and the CDC will [provide updated information](#) as soon as it becomes available, in addition to updated guidance.
- Per the CDC, there is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. Additionally, the CDC recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
  - Stay home when you are sick.
  - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- If a member feels they have been in contact with someone with coronavirus or has symptoms of having coronavirus, they need to go to the hospital immediately for testing.
- Should the member test positive for the coronavirus, the CDC and the local health department will conduct contact tracing which will likely lead back to the fraternity/sorority facility (if applicable). Please also make your Headquarters and Fraternity & Sorority Programs is aware as soon as possible.
- It will be under the control of the CDC and the local health department to determine the next steps, including, if necessary, where and for what length an individual must be quarantined.
- Should the chapter facility need to be decontaminated, please consult the [Global Biorisk Advisory Council](#) website for guidance and resources.

*March 12, 2020*