

**To:** RIT Community

**From:** Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Sandra Johnson, Senior Vice President for Student Affairs

**Subject:** Ebola Update: A Caution for Winter Break Travel

**Nov. 18, 2014**

With winter break approaching, we have important updates related to travel guidelines to areas in West Africa where there is a significant risk of Ebola transmission.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is urging all U.S. residents to avoid nonessential travel (Level 3) to Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia. A precaution on travel (Level 2) is in place for Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Please see CDC travel recommendations here: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

The CDC and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security have enhanced layers of entry screening at major U.S. airports and new tracking for all people entering the United States from Ebola-affected countries.

(<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/travelers/index.html>)

At the local level, the Monroe County Department of Public Health will be working with the RIT Student Health Center to advise against travel, in particular, communicating with students who have a history of visiting West Africa. Those who do opt to travel will be closely monitored and may be quarantined for up to 21 days upon return to the United States, depending on the most current CDC guidelines for their level of exposure risk, or at the discretion of local health officials.

As stated in previous notifications, RIT faculty and staff must obtain advance approval from their division vice president before making travel arrangements for university business to these locations. No university or sponsor funds may be used, or sponsorship provided, in support of travel to West Africa without prior approval.

We again want to stress that the risk to the RIT community remains very low. Ebola is very difficult to contract and is spread only by close contact with the bodily fluids of individuals who are already ill with the infection. It is not airborne or spread by coughing, sneezing, or sharing food. Additionally, significant transmission is limited to just a few areas, and an evaluation process is in place for anyone returning to New York State and Monroe County from those areas.

For the most updated information about the Ebola outbreak, we encourage you to review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website:

[http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html?s\\_cid=cdc\\_homepage\\_feature\\_001](http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html?s_cid=cdc_homepage_feature_001)

We will continue to monitor Ebola closely and we will provide updates as new information becomes available.

**Previous RIT notifications related to Ebola include:**

- Oct. 22: <http://www.rit.edu/news/story.php?id=51084>
- Aug. 15: <http://www.rit.edu/news/story.php?id=51083>

**Additional Resources:**

- Questions and Answers on Ebola by the CDC:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/qa.html>

Cases of Ebola in the United States - <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/united-states-imported-case.html>