



KAPPA ALPHA THETA

Theta and COVID-19 FAQ

GENERAL CONCERNS

WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the official name for the disease causing the novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan, China, in 2019. In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV".

There are many types of human coronaviruses, including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.

COLLEGE CHAPTER BUSINESS

WHAT IF A MEMBER OF OUR CHAPTER HAS COVID-19 SYMPTOMS?

If a member of your chapter is suspected of having coronavirus due to symptoms and/or recent international travel or has been diagnosed with the illness by a medical professional, whether they live in our facility or on their own, [please follow CDC guidelines](#). You should also contact your school's administrators immediately and submit an incident report form.

WHAT MIGHT MY COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY DO IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19?

Colleges and universities are taking a number of preventive measures to slow the spread of COVID-19 in their communities. These actions include banning group meetings, moving to online courses, and closing the school altogether. In the event your college or university administration takes any of these actions, your chapter should follow the guidelines released by your administrators and cancel meetings and activities in conjunction with the timeline they establish.

WHO SHOULD I NOTIFY IF MY COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY TAKES PREVENTATIVE ACTION?

If your university takes preventive action that requires your chapter to cancel meetings or activities, contact your chapter advisors and college district director. They will help you assess your chapter calendar to identify if events need to be cancelled or rescheduled based on the action taken by your university. Only essential chapter business needs to be completed this academic year.

WHAT IS ESSENTIAL CHAPTER BUSINESS?

Essential chapter business for the remainder of the academic year may include:

- Changing bylaws,
- Voting on inactivity,
- Handling member discipline issues,
- Voting on an officer appointment/re-slate,
- Paying vendors,
- Processing payroll,
- Voting on the chapter yardstick.

WE HAVE SCHEDULED INITIATION SERVICES FOR OUR NEW MEMBERS. CAN WE CONDUCT THAT VIRTUALLY? IF SO, HOW?

If your chapter has new members to initiate—whether or not your school has imposed restrictions on meetings—please contact [Madison Cannon, assistant director of collegiate services](#).

SHOULD NEW MEMBERS NOT YET INITIATED BE CHARGED THE FULL NEW MEMBER DUES?

Chapters may prorate new member dues for the end of this semester or quarter. Please contact your budget district director or Theta staff if your chapter needs help with calculating a prorated amount. New members who cannot be initiated this spring should not be charged an initiation fee.

WHAT IF OUR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY HAS CANCELLED ACTIVITIES THROUGH THE REMAINDER OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR?

You can conduct chapter business virtually.

HOW SHOULD WE HOST VIRTUAL MEETINGS?

This will depend on how much and what business your chapter still needs to conduct at the time that meetings and activities are cancelled. Votes may be most easily conducted via email. Conversely, discussions might be better accomplished via web conference. Work with your chapter advisors and college district director to determine the best option for your chapter if activities and meetings are cancelled.

WHAT ARE SOME VIRTUAL OPTIONS TO HELP OUR CHAPTER CONNECT AS A GROUP?

There are several online platforms that allow large groups to meet. Chapters have had success with Zoom, Vimeo, Twitch, and Microsoft Teams. While all platforms seem to offer a free base-level experience, you may need to upgrade if you anticipate having more than 100 participants or are meeting for a longer period of time. Your campus may also provide some free resources for online gatherings.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT CHAPTER DUES AND FEES IF ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19?

If an event a chapter has budgeted for must be cancelled, it's possible the chapter will have excess funds at the end of the year. Fraternity staff is currently revising the year-end discretionary form to increase the discretionary portion chapters are allowed to retain for the year ending June 30, 2020. This will allow for excess funds to be used for an activity in the fall. Chapters within FHC's Facility Management Program (FMP) do not have a surplus calculation and will continue to be able to retain ALL funds they have at year-end.

If a chapter would like to refund a portion of dues in lieu of retaining excess funds, they have the option of voting to refund a prorated portion of chapter dues for this academic year. Chapters are encouraged to vote on this refund and issue this refund only after all member payments have been made. Please ask that your members continue to keep their Billhighway accounts current. Theta staff is currently working with Billhighway on steps needed to process refunds for those chapters that choose this option. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

WE HAVE MEMBERS RETURNING FROM STUDY ABROAD; WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Members returning from study abroad should follow guidance from the college or university regarding returning to campus.

COLLEGIATE HOUSING

WILL FACILITY-RELATED FEES BE PRORATED OR REFUNDED?

New and current members should not anticipate a refund or prorated charge of facility-related fees. Because housing expenses remain constant, facility corporations (FC) and the Fraternity Housing Corporation (FHC) operate on a budget that is based on set revenue and expense projections for operating chapter houses, suites, and lodges. At this time, FHC has no plans to close its chapter houses. However, if it becomes necessary for FHC to close a house, chapter members will receive a prorated refund of usage, room, board and out-of-house board payments. These refunds will be processed after the final installments for the academic year have been invoiced and paid by each member.

WE HAVE MEMBERS WHO SPENT OR WILL SPEND SPRING BREAK ABROAD. WILL THEY BE ABLE TO RETURN TO OUR CHAPTER HOUSE?

If a member traveled or is traveling to a country with a Level 2 or 3 travel advisory, she will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days at a location that is not the Theta house. In accordance with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), she cannot return to the Theta house until the 14-day self-quarantine has expired.

CAN OUR CHAPTER HOUSE REMAIN OPEN DURING SPRING BREAK?

FHC is working individually with each chapter to determine if the house should remain open. Please work with your property manager for FHC-managed properties if you'd like to keep the house open for spring break. If your house is managed by a facility corporation board (FCB), please work with your advisors and FCB to determine if the house can remain open. In all cases, the facility director will need to remain on site, and the facility rules would still be in effect. Food service will not take place during the spring break week.

IF OUR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY CLOSES, CAN OUR HOUSE REMAIN OPEN?

Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity Housing Corporation (FHC) will follow directives from the University regarding closing the facility. In most cases, if the University is closing, they are allowing students with extenuating circumstances to submit a form to remain in University housing. We recommend our members utilize the University process if they have an extenuating circumstance.

WHAT ABOUT FOOD SERVICE IN OUR CHAPTER HOUSE?

If the facility remains open, we will continue food service as scheduled. We would recommend that members eat in shifts so that not more than 10 members are gathered in the dining room at a time.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT CLEANING AND DISINFECTING OUR CHAPTER FACILITY?

Clean chapter facilities are very important to Theta! We have regularly scheduled cleaning service for each facility throughout the week and will continue these practices. FHC will also have housekeeping staff sanitize and clean common areas of the chapter facility during spring break. We encourage chapters that aren't a part of FHC to ensure their cleaning staff comes in over spring break.

GRAND CONVENTION

WHAT ABOUT GRAND CONVENTION 2020?

We are optimistic that Grand Convention, scheduled for July 8-12, will take place as planned. Should circumstances change, those who are registered for Grand Convention will be notified. Information about Grand Convention will also continue to be available on the [Grand Convention website](#).

EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

ARE THERE RESOURCES I CAN TURN TO WHEN NEWS ABOUT COVID-19 MAKES ME FEEL ANXIOUS AND UPSET?

This feels like an extraordinary time, and your family, your Theta sisters, or yourself may need help coping with ongoing uncertainty as campuses and communities take steps to prevent the further spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). [This blog provides several resources](#) to navigate your emotional wellness during this time. [ActiveMinds](#) is also providing webinars and live chats (registration required).

FUNDRAISING AND PHILANTHROPY

WHAT ABOUT FUNDRAISING EVENTS? WE WANT TO SUPPORT OUR PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS, AND THE NEED MAY BE EVEN GREATER NOW.

If your event must be cancelled altogether, we recommend contacting your donors/supporters asking if they would be willing to allow your chapter to give their donations/ticket sales/apparel purchases/etc. directly to the charity.

If you can postpone your event instead of cancelling it, contact your donors/supporters to let them know that the event is postponed because of COVID-19 concerns. If you cannot establish a definite future date for the event, let your donors/supporters know that you'll be in touch when you have rescheduled.

Consider pivoting the campaign by organizing an online fundraiser for the charitable organization. See the next question for ideas on how to still host an online fundraiser. You may also contact philanthropy@kappaalphatheta.org for more information.

DO YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR ONLINE FUNDRAISERS? WE KNOW THOSE WHO ARE IN NEED AND LESS FORTUNATE MAY BE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE DURING TIMES LIKE THESE.

Here are some options to consider:

- Personal Page Competition. Each member creates a personal fundraising page within the general fundraiser website. Ask every chapter member to create a personal page and share it with at least five family members or friends not from campus. One group increased the amount they raised from \$8,000 to \$40,000 this way!
- Chapter Challenge. Chapters have been incredibly successful running a chapter challenge competition in CrowdChange. A chapter challenge involves asking every chapter on campus to create its own team fundraising page for a specific philanthropy. Team pages are ordered in a leaderboard format to spark friendly competition. Optional: offer a prize to the chapter who raises the most.

COLLEGE CHAPTER FINANCE

SHOULD CHAPTERS STILL INVOICE MEMBERS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THIS SEMESTER OR QUARTER? SHOULD CHAPTERS ISSUE REFUNDS OF AMOUNTS ALREADY PAID OR ISSUE CREDITS?

A message was sent to all chapter chief financial officers (CFOs) on March 18, and is included in the following pages.



KAPPA ALPHA THETA

Message to Chapter CFOs

MEMBER FEES

As your chapter's chief financial officer, you are probably fielding numerous questions right now regarding chapter member fees and possible refunds or credits from your chapter checking account. We imagine this is creating some additional stress for you during an already stressful time!

Some of the questions we're hearing are: Should chapters still invoice members for the remainder of this semester or quarter? Should chapters issue refunds of amounts already paid or issue credits?

We want you to know that we are here to help, and we anticipate many additional communications with you and your finance advisors (FAs) over the next few weeks. For now, Theta's finance staff offers some information and recommendations to help you think about how your chapter would like to approach modifications to the fees your chapters charge each of your members.

NON-HOUSED CHAPTERS

Many chapters budgeted for events that have now been cancelled. This means members have not received some of the benefits they thought they were getting from a portion of the dues they paid to the chapter.

In many cases, these cancellations also result in chapter social and officer expenses coming in below what was budgeted. As a result of the lower expenses, chapters may have excess funds at year-end and can consider refunds to members. We agree that it's completely appropriate, given the unique circumstances, for chapters to consider lowering their fees for this fiscal/academic year (7/01/2019-6/30/2020). Theta's finance staff recommends refunds in lieu of credits or in lieu of not invoicing remaining installments for the semester or quarter. We further recommend that these refunds occur in May or June.

There are a few reasons chapters may want to consider this recommendation.

- All members should have paid their accounts in full by the end of the academic year; therefore, limited administrative work by the CFO will be needed in order to determine who gets the refunds.
- Chapters will have a clearer picture of the total funds available for a refund by the end of the academic year, and this may put the chapter in a position of releasing a larger refund than if it is done now.

In addition to encouraging chapters to issue refunds in May or June, we are also encouraging chapters to continue to invoice members for any remaining amounts due for the academic period. Again, this will ensure chapters have collected the full amount of dues from each member in accordance with your chapter bylaws.

HOUSED CHAPTERS WITH A LOCAL FACILITY CORPORATION OR FHC NON-FMP CHAPTERS

To chapters with a house owned by a local facility corporation or a chapter in FHC that is not currently in the Facility Management Program (FMP), we recommend reviewing reductions to room, board, usage fees and out-of-house board before determining any dues reduction. Some universities indicate they will provide their dorm students a reduction in room and board as a result of campus closures. If your chapter is closed for the remainder of the academic year, the chapter should consider a reduction in room and board fees prior to calculating any reduction in dues. When determining room and board reduction, chapters should consider the fixed housing expenses remaining for the year. This includes wages, facility corporation rent, utilities, etc. Theta's finance staff recommends calculating any potential refund in May or June so that all expenses and income have been accounted for. With a reduction in social and officer expenses, housed chapters should be able to accommodate a partial refund of the housing fees.

FHC CHAPTERS IN FMP

We anticipate reducing the 2019-2020 room, board, usage fee, and out-of-house board for chapters owned by FHC and currently in the Facility Management Program on campuses closed for the remainder of the year. This reduction will be done by cancelling the April installment for semester chapters and the Spring installments for quarter chapters. Members should continue to pay any outstanding invoices through their March 1 payment. For chapter houses on campuses that have not closed, but are operating on a reduced occupancy, those members living in through the end of the semester or quarter will continue to receive their scheduled housing invoices through the end of the academic year.

REFUNDS NOW OR LATER?

We do understand some chapters may not want to wait to process refunds. It may not be feasible for your chapter to expect collection of all invoices prior to determining revised chapter fee amounts. As a chapter, you can make the decision now to lower the current year fees and issue credits or not invoice remaining amounts due. This will obviously take more administrative work on your part as you work through which members should get credits based on amounts paid, outstanding balances, and members on payment plans. Processing refunds now instead of May or June will require careful determination, especially for housed chapters, of what expenses remain for the year.

ESTABLISHING AND VOTING ON MODIFIED CHAPTER FEES

Since chapters establish the fees they charge via their chapter bylaws, your chapter will need to vote to modify them. In consultation with your advisory board and budget district director (BDD), the executive committee should determine an appropriate reduction in chapter fees for a vote by the chapter. This vote can be done electronically. For more information on voting electronically, please see the FAQs at

<https://www.kappaalphatheta.org/members/coronavirus-update>

PROCESSING REFUNDS OR MODIFYING CHAPTER BILLING

Theta finance staff members have had several conversations with Billhighway, which has provided a solution for refunds. This solution requires chapters to complete a template list of the amount of refund per member. The refunds will be made to members who paid by credit card or e-check. We anticipate providing this template and instructions to you within the next few days. Again, Theta staff recommends waiting until May or June to make any decision on refunds; however, chapters making the decision to do refunds in the next couple of weeks will be able to do so. Please note that

if a member mailed a check to Billhighway in lieu of paying by credit card or e-check, any refund will be made by check. More details on this will be given as we continue our discussions with Billhighway.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR SISTERS

This is a challenging time for everyone! On a smaller scale, you are facing the same issues as colleges and universities as their administrators plan how to issue refunds on room and board. We encourage you to let chapter members know that you are working with your advisory board and executive committee on refund plans.

And please know that Theta's finance staff is here to help. We wanted to provide you some immediate information and recommendations to help you think about modifications to chapter fees, and we also anticipate many additional communications with you and your FAs over the next few weeks. As we work together, please do not hesitate to contact staff, thetafinance@kappaalphatheta.org, or your BDD.