

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

MASSACHUSETTS HALL
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

T.617.496.5100
F.617.495.8550

June 4, 2015

Dear Members of the Harvard Community,

Following our October 2014 [letter](#) about the [Ebola](#) outbreak in West Africa, we write to update you on the University's response, including the latest protocols for visitors to campus and travelers to affected countries.

Because the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) has downgraded its alert from Level 3 to Level 2 for Liberia, Harvard-sponsored travel to Liberia no longer requires approval of the Provost, and [Harvard University Health Services](#) (HUHS) no longer requires screenings for travelers to campus from Liberia have ended. Anyone considering travel to Liberia, however, should contact [Harvard Global Support Services](#) (GSS) to discuss appropriate precautions.

It is important to keep in mind that travel to Sierra Leone and Guinea still requires approval from the Provost, and travel to all three countries – Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia – still presents substantial risks. Sierra Leone and Guinea have seen a recent spike in the number of new cases. We hope that this spike is temporary, and it occurs in the midst of a favorable overall trend, but the spike demonstrates that the situation on the ground remains fluid. Our partners operating in the region report that not all treatment centers meet minimum infection control standards and medical evacuation remains very difficult. Individuals who show any signs of fever, whether they have been exposed to the disease or not, face significant challenges leaving these countries and risk being quarantined together with Ebola patients in Sierra Leone and Guinea. In addition, security in much of Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia remains impaired, and health risks continue even as schools have reopened in each country.

Under exceptional circumstances, if a School or unit believes Harvard-sponsored travel to Sierra Leone or Guinea (e.g. with Harvard funding or as part of an academic program) is absolutely necessary, approval of the Provost, in consultation with the appropriate School dean, is still required. For information on this review process please contact [Todd Washburn](#), Assistant Provost for International Affairs.

GSS has issued updated [guidance](#) for travel to Ebola-affected regions. All travel to these countries, Harvard-sponsored or personal, must be registered with the [Harvard Travel Registry](#).

We continue to monitor Harvard faculty, staff, students, and visitors who are traveling to campus from Sierra Leone and Guinea. To date we have not identified any member of our community, or any visitor to our campus, who has been deemed to be at elevated risk for Ebola. We will continue to require anyone who has been in Sierra Leone or Guinea in the four weeks before arriving on campus to contact HUHS prior to their return. An HUHS clinician will administer a brief telephone assessment, based on CDC guidelines, to determine next steps before these individuals are permitted to arrive on campus. Travelers should also plan for the possibility that they will be asked to stay away from campus for 21 days, the duration of the incubation period of the virus.

Working with experts from across the University and at our affiliated hospitals, we will continue to monitor this evolving situation and update guidance as appropriate. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact HUHS.

Sincerely,

Alan M. Garber
Provost

Paul Barreira
Director of Harvard University Health Services