



April 10, 2020

To: County Commissioners and Supervisors, State of Nebraska
Extension Board members

Greetings,

We are now completing week three of a 'working remotely' scenario for our Nebraska Extension employees deployed to county Extension offices across Nebraska. Although the initial transition was challenging, we are now seeing full engagement of our Extension professionals with Nebraskans using a variety of digital means. This is what we expected.

All University of Nebraska employees received a letter from University of Nebraska President Carter with this language on Tuesday, April 7.

We know that social distancing, staying home as much as possible, and practicing good hygiene are the keys to flattening the curve. **Therefore, out of an abundance of caution and with the health and safety of our community in mind, we are closing the University of Nebraska to all employees except those whose physical presence is officially designated as necessary, effective tomorrow, April 8.** We understand you may need to return to campus in the next few days to complete your transition away from the office; we will be flexible but expect that all employees will be in full compliance with our new guidance by close of business on Friday, April 10.

The closure applies to employees across the entire University of Nebraska system, including student workers. It will continue for at least two weeks. During that time we will re-assess and decide what level of remote work is appropriate going forward based on advice from our medical experts and data on COVID-19 in our state and beyond.

As a result, the Extension professionals assigned to your county will continue to work remotely but face the additional restriction of not going to their office. We recognize that this distancing may create hardship relative to reviewing claims and other documents related to county support for our local Extension program. We ask that our Unit Leaders work with you or your County Clerk as well as your Extension Board to devise approval processes that allow business transactions to continue with minimal interruption.

The following arrangements still apply under this expanded order:

1. Communicate office closure status to clientele and emphasize that Nebraska Extension is still open for information, consultations and problem-solving.
2. Ask office staff to communicate clientele requests to Extension professionals who will respond in a variety of modes (phone, e-mail, text, social media, videoconference, etc).
3. Remind Nebraskans that the entire Nebraska Extension network of professionals and a wide array of research-based information can be accessed at extension.unl.edu.
4. Encourage Nebraskans to access our Extension programs provided on-line (as an example, please check out <https://4h.unl.edu/living-room-learning>).

Please contact me if you have questions or concerns or would just like to chat (402-540-5932). And, thank you for your continuing support!

Sincerely,

Charles A. Hibberd, Dean and Director
Nebraska Extension