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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Polk State College announces phased return to campus

Wednesday, June 3, 2020 — Polk State College has prepared a three-phased *Return to Campus* plan that supports the return of administrators and select personnel to the College's campuses and centers beginning on Monday, July 20, 2020.

Students should note that most courses will remain online through the Fall 2020 Semester. Students enrolled in select workforce education and training programs will receive specialized information from their program directors and instructors. All students are encouraged to monitor their Polk State accounts for important communication and the College's [COVID-19 webpage](#) for updates.

"President's Staff and the COVID-19 Leadership Team have worked diligently on the *Return to Campus* plan with the health and safety of faculty, staff, students, and the greater community remaining at the forefront," President Angela Garcia Falconetti said. "Guiding principles of the plan include protecting our constituents and preserving academic and business continuity."

The College understands that the public health situation continues to evolve and the plan will be modified if needed. The College continues to follow recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Florida Department of Health, and the Florida Department of Education. The full plan will be available next week. A summary of the plan's phases is as follows.

PHASE I: The College is currently in Phase I of the Return to Campus plan, with College operations fully functional remotely and essential personnel on-site.

PHASE II: In Phase II, which will begin on July 20 with an ending date to be determined, the College will remain fully functional with most operations continuing remotely. The Winter Haven Administration (WAD) and Lakeland Technology Building (LTB) will open with limited Student Services including advising, admissions, and financial aid. Administrators and their selected staff will increase on-campus presence based on cohort shifts and departmental needs. Students will be able to receive the aforementioned services in person, but the College will continue to encourage them to utilize calling 863.297.1000 or emailing registrar@polk.edu and financialaid@polk.edu for assistance. Students may experience longer than normal wait times due to limited

staffing. All students, staff, faculty, and visitors on campus during Phase II will be required to wear cloth face coverings or masks.

PHASE III: Dates for Phase III are to be determined and will shift the College's operations to more on-campus with some functions occurring remotely.

Students, faculty, and staff who visit campus should practice guidelines outlined by the CDC:

- If you are sick, stay home.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Carry and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Practice social distancing.
- Monitor your symptoms.

Custodial staff members are cleaning and sanitizing with hospital- and high-grade disinfecting cleaners. Additionally, alcohol-based hand sanitizer is available in dispensers throughout College sites. However, the College highly encourages individuals to also practice consistent handwashing and will require that all individuals wear cloth face coverings or masks while on campus.

"We look forward to welcoming members of the Polk State family back to our campuses slowly but surely and, most importantly, safely," Falconetti said.

About Polk State College

Located in Winter Haven, Florida, and established in 1964, Polk State College is a multi-campus institution serving more than 16,000 students with Bachelor of Applied Science, Bachelor of Science, Associate in Arts, and Associate in Science degrees, as well as a wide range of certificate and workforce training options. The College also operates three charter high schools.

Polk State's advantages include small class sizes; hands-on learning; dedicated faculty; day and night classes; online options; affordable tuition; excellent financial aid; and a diverse community and vibrant student life, including fine arts opportunities, clubs, and intercollegiate athletics.