

**FALL 2020
REOPENING PLAN**



**ON-CAMPUS
RESEARCH**

TABLE OF CONTENTS**1. INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. Guiding Principles

2. OPERATING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1. Staged Approach
- 2.2. Departmental Responsibilities
- 2.3. PI-Driven Approach, With Supervision

3. LEVELS OF ON-CAMPUS RESEARCH**4. SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS AND NO COERCION**

- 4.1. Remote Research
- 4.2. Faculty or Staff Performing Research in Labs and/or Human Subjects, Animal Research and/or Field Research
- 4.3. Students Performing Research In Labs, And/Or Human Subjects, Animal Research and/or Field Research

5. GUIDELINES FOR SAFE RESEARCH DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- 5.1. General Guidelines
 - 5.1.1. Personal Responsibilities for Preparing to Resume Research
- 5.2. Social Distancing
 - 5.2.1. Planning
 - 5.2.2. Research Spaces, Laboratory, and Work Configuration
 - 5.2.3. Work That Cannot Be Conducted While Social Distancing
- 5.3. Face Coverings
 - 5.3.1. General Guidance
 - 5.3.2. Choosing the Right Face Covering
 - 5.3.3. Face Coverings in All Research Laboratories and Research Spaces
 - 5.3.4. Entering the Vivarium
 - 5.3.5. Care of Masks
- 5.4. Laboratory Coats
- 5.5. Cleaning, Decontamination, and Disinfection
 - 5.5.1. Maintaining Laboratory and Research Space Hygiene
 - 5.5.2. Best Practices for Disinfection
 - 5.5.3. Additional Chemical-Specific Considerations for Using Disinfectants
- 5.6. Handling Laboratory Hazardous Waste
 - 5.6.1. Regulated Medical Waste Disposal (Biohazardous Waste)
 - 5.6.2. Chemical Waste Disposal
- 5.7. Required Training
- 5.8. Preparing the Laboratory
 - 5.8.1. Obtaining Supplies
- 5.9. Managing Shared Facilities and Equipment
- 5.10. General Work Rules



- 5.10.1. Meetings and Gatherings
- 5.10.2. Meals and Breaks
- 5.10.3. Unsafe Behaviors or Conditions
- 5.10.4. Use of Office
- 5.11. Requests for Reasonable Accommodations
- 5.12. Emergency Contacts
- 5.13. Related Resources

6. BUILDING GUIDANCE

- 6.1. Exterior Doors
 - 6.2. Conference Rooms
 - 6.3. Open Work Stations
 - 6.4. Meetings
-

1. INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1.1. Introduction

- **Purpose:** The principles outlined below are intended to guide the planning and implementation of the phased resumption of on-campus research.
- **Timing:** The proper time for implementing the phased resumption of on-campus research will be determined by Monmouth University's leadership, taking into account the relevant local, state, and national public health directives regarding stay-at-home and social distancing.
- **Uncoupling:** The phased resumption of on-campus research is not coupled to the resumption of on-campus undergraduate teaching or senior thesis work.

1.2. Guiding Principles

- **Health and Safety:** Protect the health and safety of the campus community.
- **Safe Working Conditions:** Provide researchers with appropriately safe working conditions, including lab space, in accordance with Monmouth University policies and prevailing public health guidance and directives issued by national, state, and local authorities.
- **Hygiene:** Implement, adhere to, and enforce best practices for social distancing, cleaning, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and case reporting as essential to the safe and successful phased resumption of on-campus research.
- **No Coercion:** Treat with the utmost seriousness any supervisor's or Principal Investigator's failure to implement the health and safety measures required by the University, or coercion of an employee or student to work under conditions inconsistent with those measures.



- **Transparency:** Put in place transparent policies and processes that allow a phased resumption of on-campus research, and communicate with the research community prior to and during implementation.
- **Flexibility and Agility:** Design plans that can be easily adapted to multiple scenarios, including different endpoints for phased resumption, and the response to a widespread resurgence in infection requiring shutdown.
- **Complexity:** Acknowledge the complexity of the research enterprise by consulting broadly in the formulation of resumption policies and procedures.

2. OPERATING PRINCIPLES

2.1. Staged Approach

The plan envisions four levels of on-campus research (see Section 3 for details).

- **Level 1 – Operations Suspended:** All experiments are stopped, except for COVID-19 research specifically approved by the Provost/Institutional Official. Only designated critical staff are granted entrance to buildings.
- **Level 2 – Essential Operations (Current Level):** Only a limited number of essential research and COVID-19 projects is allowed. Authorized researchers can also access laboratories for maintenance operations. Access to laboratories requires authorization by the Provost/Institutional Official following submission of a Research Lab Operations Plan. PIs must submit a Research Lab Operations Plan detailing how each lab will enact strict social distancing and comply with Monmouth University’s Health and Safety Plan and the prescribed density and hygiene metrics and practices. For Human Subject or Animal Research, PIs must submit a Specialized Research Operations Plan to the Office of Research Compliance. Animal Research is inclusive of field research.
- **Level 3 – Phased Resumption:** School Deans must submit a department-level Research Infrastructure Plan, which must be approved by the Provost/Institutional Official. PIs must submit a Research Lab Operations Plan detailing how each lab will enact strict social distancing and comply with Monmouth University’s Health and Safety Plan prescribed density and hygiene metrics and practices. For Human Subject or Animal Research, PIs must submit a Specialized Research Operations Plan to the Office of Research Compliance. Animal Research is inclusive of field research. Use of PPE and cleaning protocols are strictly enforced. All work that can be done remotely continues to be done remotely. Changes in University-wide requirements (e.g., area per researcher) can result in adjustments to department-level or laboratory-level plans.
- **Level 4 – Normal Operations:** Normal research operations resume with prescribed hygiene, health, and safety protocols.



2.2. Departmental Responsibilities

School Deans, working closely with Facilities Management (if applicable) must submit to the Provost/Institutional Official a plan for the resumption of research activities (Research Standard Operating Procedures during COVID-19). The plan must include identification of critical deficiencies (e.g., utilities, loading docks), a plan for reopening core facilities, a plan for enforcing social distancing, and best practices for cleaning common areas, PPE use, and circulation patterns in common areas. Standard Operating Procedures must be approved by Cabinet, Faculty Council, and FAMCO.

2.3. PI-Driven Approach, With Supervision

The University will issue campus-wide metrics that must be strictly adhered to (e.g., minimum area per researcher), initiating the transition from Level 2 to Level 3. PIs must submit a research Lab Operations Plan and/or Specialized Research Operations Plan for Human Subject or Animal Research indicating how compliance with these metrics will be implemented, social distancing will be strictly enacted, and hygiene practices (PPE, cleaning) will be followed and enforced. (Animal research is inclusive of field research.) School Deans review and must approve PI Lab Operations Plans prior to submitting to Cabinet, Faculty Council, and FAMCO for final review and approval. Specialized Research Operations Plans for Human Subject or Animal Research must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Research Compliance.

3. LEVELS OF ON-CAMPUS RESEARCH

- **Level 1 – Operations Suspended:**
 - Human Subject Research Plans and Animal Specialized Research Operations Plans, including critical monitoring and maintenance of the labs, are reviewed and approved by the Office of Research Compliance. Animal research is inclusive of field research.
 - All experiments are stopped, except for COVID-19 research specifically approved by the Institutional Official.
 - Key resource maintenance is allowed only for irreplaceable animals (e.g., transgenic mice, zebrafish, *Drosophila*), cell lines that cannot be cryopreserved, and equipment that cannot be shut down. Activities must be approved by the Office of Research Compliance.
 - Vertebrate animal management shall be maintained by individuals designated as essential positions in order to maintain animal facility operations at normal capacity (e.g., cage wash, autoclave, inventory and materials ordering, animal husbandry, veterinary treatment, surgical support, animal record keeping) as set forth in the Vivarium Emergency Contact List. Access to animal facilities by research personnel as required shall be allowed only by the Vivarium Animal Care Technician, in consultation with the Attending Veterinarian and the institutional animal care and use committee (IACUC) chair.



- At most, one person per lab is allowed on campus at any given time for critical maintenance functions only, and these functions must include activities that fall under “hazardous operations.”
 - All personnel must adhere to hygiene, health, and safety protocols as prescribed by the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan.
 - Undergraduate students are not allowed in the lab.
 - All research buildings are set to card access “weekend” schedule.
 - Remote work is required for non-laboratory activities.
 - In-person human subjects’ research is suspended. Any human subject research that can be done remotely cannot be continued until research modifications are reviewed and approved by the IRB.
 - All animal research in the Vivarium is suspended. Animal care and husbandry shall continue with the oversight of the Vivarium Technician, the Attending Veterinarian, and the IACUC Chair.
- **Level 2 – Essential Operations:**
 - PIs must submit Research Lab Operations Plans, Human Subject Research plans and Animal Specialized Research Operations Plans detailing shutdown plans and/or requesting maintenance and/or essential research activities. Animal research is inclusive of field research. Plans must be reviewed by the Office of Research Compliance.
 - Essential and COVID-19-related research must be approved by the Provost/Institutional Official.
 - Maintenance and key resources – such as animals, cell lines, liquid N₂, sensitive equipment, etc. – must be approved by the Provost/Institutional Official.
 - In labs approved for critical maintenance, essential research, or COVID-19 work, one to three lab members (including the PI) must be identified in the plan and approved for building access. Any additional personnel needed for hazardous operations or critical maintenance requires approval by the Office of Research Compliance.
 - Approved on-campus research commences only with the acknowledgment from relevant department(s) confirming any required services/facilities are in operation or can be brought online.
 - All personnel must adhere to hygiene, health, and safety protocols as prescribed by the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan.
 - Students are not allowed in the lab.
 - All research buildings are set to card access “weekend” schedule.
 - Remote work is required for non-laboratory activities.
 - In-person human subjects’ research is suspended. Any human subject research that can be done remotely cannot be continued until research addendums are reviewed and approved by the IRB.
 - All animal research in the Vivarium is suspended. Animal care and husbandry shall continue with the oversight of the Vivarium Technician, the Attending Veterinarian, and the IACUC Chair.



- **Level 3 – Phased Resumption:**
 - School Deans must submit a department-level or school-level Research Infrastructure Plan, which must be approved by the Provost/Institutional Official. PIs must submit a Research Lab Operations Plan detailing how each lab will enact strict social distancing and comply with Monmouth University’s Health and Safety Plan prescribed density and hygiene metrics and practices.
 - For Human Subject or Animal Research, PIs must submit a Specialized Research Operations Plan to the Office of Research Compliance. Animal research is inclusive of field research. Use of PPE and cleaning protocols are strictly enforced. All work that can be done remotely continues to be done remotely. Changes in University-wide requirements (e.g., area per researcher) can result in adjustments to department-level or laboratory-level plans.
 - Plans shall detail how research methods will comply with Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan campus metrics, enact social distancing, and enforce hygiene practices (PPE cleaning). Plan must be reviewed by Cabinet, Faculty Council, and FAMCO.
 - All personnel must adhere to hygiene, health, and safety protocols, including protective equipment, established by the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan to ensure safety of all personnel.
 - Students are allowed in laboratories.
 - All research buildings are set to card access “weekend” schedule.
 - Remote work may be required for non-laboratory activities.
 - Human Subjects Research resumes. Prior approved IRB modifications to remote research may resume in person after application and approval to the IRB. PIs shall submit a Research Plan detailing how they will adhere to the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan, including, but not limited to, PPE, social distancing, and sanitization.
 - Animal Research in the Vivarium resumes after modifications to protocols are approved by IACUC. PIs shall submit a Specialized Research Operations Plan detailing how they will adhere to the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan, including, but not limited to, PPE, social distancing, and sanitization.

- **Level 4 – Normal Operation:**
 - Normal research operations.
 - All personnel adhere to hygiene and health and safety protocols prescribed by the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan.
 - Students are allowed in laboratories.



4. SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS AND NO COERCION

Complies with OHRP and OLAW guidance on COVID-19

4.1. Remote Research

Research that can safely be accomplished remotely should be accomplished remotely.

4.2. Faculty or Staff Performing Research in Labs and/or Human Subjects, Animal Research, and/or Field Research

Upon providing appropriately safe working conditions in accordance with University policies and prevailing guidance issued by the public health authorities, faculty who wish to return to their labs for research need to report to their chair/dean and abide by the health and safety protocols as outlined in this plan and the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan. Faculty members who have any concerns, including, but not limited to, a medical condition or other COVID-19-related risk factor, who believe a return to campus would be unsafe, are not required to return. Staff members with a medical condition or other risk factor that they believe would make their return to campus unsafe are encouraged to request an accommodation through the Office of Human Resources.

4.3. Students Performing Research in Labs and/or Human Subjects, Animal Research, and/or Field Research

It is anticipated that the vast majority of students will be eager to resume “hands-on” research. Students with a medical condition or other risk factor that they believe would make their return to campus unsafe are encouraged to request an accommodation through the Department of Disability Services (see Section 5.11).

In addition, any student who has a request for an accommodation related to on-campus research that does not fall under Monmouth University’s American with Disabilities Act (ADA) documented process as outlined in the Requests for Reasonable Accommodations section of Monmouth’s Reopening Plan, should submit the information to their dean. The University will seek to honor students’ requests to the extent that they are reasonable and appropriate, though such decisions will need to take into account relevant collateral implications, including impact on progress toward degree and funding.

5. GUIDELINES FOR SAFE RESEARCH DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

5.1. General Guidelines

Routinely disinfect high-touch points, facilities, work areas, personal electronics, and shared equipment and spaces using a disinfecting solution or wipes. Refer to the Environmental Protection Agency’s [Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-19](#).

5.1.1. Personal Responsibilities for Preparing to Resume Research



- Check with the Office of Research Compliance to determine whether you are permitted to conduct research (including but not limited to research in the field or in the laboratory) which experiments or activities you may conduct, when to report, and what your responsibilities are.
- Review the adequate Research Operations Plan.
- You may have to complete training(s) before returning to on-campus research as determined by the Office of Research Compliance.
- Obtain a face covering.

5.2. Social Distancing

5.2.1. Planning

- School Deans must submit a department-level or school-level Research Infrastructure Plan, which must be approved by the Provost/Institutional Official. PIs must submit a Research Lab Operations Plan detailing how each lab will enact strict social distancing and comply with Monmouth University's Health and Safety Plan prescribed density and hygiene metrics and practices.
- For Human Subject or Animal Research, PIs must submit a Research Management Operations Plan to the Office of Research Compliance. Use of PPE and cleaning protocols are strictly enforced. All work that can be done remotely continues to be done remotely. Changes in University-wide requirements (e.g., area per researcher) can result in adjustments to department-level or laboratory-level plans.
- PIs must develop a Research Operations Plan that adheres to the guidance provided in the Phased Resumption Plan. Plans must address how the group will conduct research activities in a manner that allows social distancing, and strictly maintains 150 squarefeet per researcher at all times.
- Office use must adhere to strict social distancing and density requirements at all times.
- Plans shall detail how research methods will comply with Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan campus metrics, enact social distancing, and enforce hygiene practices (PPE cleaning). Plan must be reviewed by Cabinet, Faculty Council, and FAMCO.
- Research shall not begin until approval has been granted.
- Coordinate with all personnel accessing the lab to minimize time spent physically working together.
- Stagger or alternate research shifts to manage the number of researchers in a space.
- Coordinate use of core facilities and shared lab spaces.
- The Office of Research Compliance can assist with developing your research plans.

5.2.2. Research Spaces, Laboratory, and Work Configuration

- For labs and research spaces with more than one entrance: consider designating one entrance for ingress and one entrance for egress and establishing traffic flow patterns to minimize close proximity to others during entry and exit from the laboratory.



- Maintain a distance of at least six feet from others. Plan lab and research space occupancy levels to satisfy the requirement of at least 150 squarefeet per researcher and research subjects at all times.
- DO NOT install curtains or physical barriers. If you believe such measures are needed for social distancing, consult the Office of Research Compliance. Installing curtains and barriers might impair ventilation flow or create a fire hazard.
- Remove chairs or label them to prevent use and to ensure separation between researchers and research subjects when they are at the workbench.
- If researchers work on back-to-back benches (backs facing each other), their physical distancing can be less than the required six feet. In such cases, closing down an alternate workspace on each bench to create a staggered workspace across all the lab benches in an alternating pattern may be necessary.
- Post at the entrances to research areas the maximum number of researchers permitted in the area based on the social distancing and density assessment.

5.2.3. Work That Cannot Be Conducted While Social Distancing

In general, maintaining social distancing at all times is required for allowed work. If specific research activities cannot be conducted while maintaining a distance of six feet from one another, consult the Office of Research Compliance. In some cases, the University may be able to develop alternate plans to determine the appropriate personal protective equipment necessary for the operation.

5.3. Face Coverings

5.3.1. General Guidance

Monmouth University requires all students, faculty, and staff to wear face coverings at all times when on campus, except when alone in a room or vehicle. **Wearing a face covering does not replace the need for social distancing or other measures to prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.** Reusable and disposable face coverings are intended to decrease the potential for the wearer to spread the virus that causes COVID-19. **Face coverings do not necessarily provide protection to the wearer.** Face coverings may not be used in place of face shields or other face protection needed for protection from chemical or physical hazards.

5.3.2. Choosing the Right Face Covering *(in compliance with with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the State of New Jersey, the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, and the Office for Human Research Protections guidance)*

- N95 respirators must be reserved for health care workers, first responders, and those performing higher-risk tasks that require close contact.
- Students, faculty, and staff should wear disposable face coverings when working with hazardous chemicals, biohazards, or radioactive materials. Disposable face coverings that have been used in the lab should be discarded – they should not be worn in



public areas on campus or at home.

- Students, faculty, and staff may not wear reusable (e.g., cloth) face coverings when working with hazardous chemicals, biohazards, or reactive materials.
- Reusable coverings made or provided by staff and students may be worn when on campus and outside of the laboratory. They should be machine-washed with warm or hot water and laundry detergent by the user on a daily basis; the coverings can be washed with other laundry items.
- Laboratories that have specific operations where disposable face coverings may be inappropriate (such as work with high risk of fire or contamination) are encouraged to contact the Office of Research Compliance to identify viable alternatives to disposable face coverings and develop appropriate management strategies.
- In instances where viable alternatives cannot be found or procured, laboratories will need to develop strategies for enhanced distancing to allow workers to conduct limited, specific operations without use of a face covering.

5.3.3. Face Coverings in All Research Laboratories and Research Spaces

- Wear your reusable face covering until you enter the laboratory and/or research space. Upon entering the laboratory and/or research space, remove your reusable face covering and change into a disposable face covering.
- Prior to conducting work in laboratory and research areas where hazardous materials are handled, remove your reusable face covering and put on the required minimum laboratory PPE attire: lab coat, gloves, and eye protection (safety glasses, goggles, or a face shield) as well as a disposable face covering.
- Upon returning to work areas where hazardous materials are not handled or exiting the laboratory, remove the required laboratory attire, and once again put on the cloth or personal face covering.
- Prior to conducting work, change into a dedicated mask if recommended by the conditions of your IBC/IACUC approval. Wear required minimum laboratory PPE: lab coat, gloves, and eye protection.

5.3.4. Entering the Vivarium

- Keep your face covering on when traveling to the Vivarium. Change into masks provided by the Vivarium. Store your face covering as described in Section 5.4.6.
- Wear required Vivarium attire, which must include a disposable face covering.

5.3.5. Care of Masks

- Disposable Face Coverings:
 - Use disposable face coverings until they become damaged, contaminated, or wet. Disposable coverings used in a lab setting should be disposed of in regular trash receptacles at the end of each day.
- Reusable Face Coverings:
 - Reusable face coverings worn in public areas of campus can be worn until they become damaged, soiled, or wet.



- Reusable face coverings should be taken home and laundered each night. If they cannot be taken home, they should be hand-washed in accordance with the CDC Guidelines. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>).
- Reusable coverings should be machine-washed with warm or hot water and laundry detergent by the user. The coverings can be washed with other laundry items.
- Putting On and Taking Off Your Face Covering:
 - Always clean hands with soap and water prior to putting on, adjusting, or removing your face covering. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol may be used as a substitute where handwashing facilities are not readily accessible.
 - When removing the face covering, follow the taking off procedure specific to your face covering. This will include using ear loops, straps, or equivalent to take off face covering beginning from the back of your head moving toward and away from your face. Do not touch the front of the covering.

5.4. Laboratory Coats

- If working with human specimens, animal specimens, or other biological materials, wear the covering specified by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)/IACUC approval, which may include using disposable lab coats or isolation gowns.
- Do not share lab coats.
- Cloth laboratory coats must be regularly laundered to minimize the risk of an exposure from contamination on the coat and to help mitigate the risk of the coat becoming a viral reservoir.
 - Due to risk of the coat becoming contaminated with hazardous materials, the laboratory coat must be cleaned by a professional or dedicated laundering service at least weekly.
 - Laboratory coats may not be taken home for laundering or cleaned with a public laundering service or facility.
- If cloth lab coats are worn by a researcher who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, the coat should be turned inside out, placed in a sealed bag, and held for seven days prior to laundering. The bag containing the potentially contaminated lab coat should be labeled “COVID-19 quarantined laboratory coat” and the date when the coat can be removed for laundering.



5.5. Cleaning, Decontamination, and Disinfection

5.5.1. Maintaining Laboratory and Research Space Hygiene

Laboratory members are responsible for developing plans to promote good lab hygiene by regularly disinfecting common laboratory areas and touch points (e.g., doorknobs, faucets, freezer doors, telephones) within the laboratory space and for common spaces utilized by lab members. SARS-CoV-2 can be inactivated with the most common household disinfectants registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), including solutions that contain:

- 63%-90% ethanol or isopropanol (70% recommended)
- 1%-5% bleach in water solution (made fresh daily)
- >0.5% hydrogen peroxide

If you wish to use other disinfectants, please select from the [EPA's Disinfectants For Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#) list. Care must be taken to follow the manufacturer's disinfection directions, which may include pathogen-specific inactivation instructions. **Never** use solutions containing formaldehyde or glutaraldehyde to disinfect laboratory surfaces. Both of these chemicals can cause severe and acute chronic health effects. For non-laboratory research spaces on campus, the University will be responsible for maintaining regular cleaning and disinfecting within the research space.

5.5.2. Best Practices for Disinfection

- Ensure that the area is cleaned prior to initiating the disinfection process where applicable. Excess gross contamination significantly decreases the activity of the disinfectant.
- The concentration of disinfectant is critical to the efficacy of the disinfectant for inactivating the pathogen. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for dilution if purchasing commercial disinfectant.
- No disinfectant works immediately. Disinfectants must be left on the surfaces or items to be decontaminated for a specified contact time, which may vary depending on the pathogen to be inactivated. Contact times of 1, 3, 5, or 10 minutes or even longer may be needed to ensure that any pathogen present has been inactivated. Apply disinfectant until surfaces are glistening wet and allow surface to air dry. If your disinfectant has a higher evaporation rate (e.g., alcohols), and a longer contact time is needed, you may need more than one application; however, the surface being disinfected should remain wet for the duration of the required contact time.
- Ensure that all surfaces are completely covered with the disinfectant. Merely spraying the disinfectant on a surface, especially if only applied quickly or lightly, can leave spaces between the disinfectant drops.
- Laboratory researchers, should utilize these best practices for disinfection. For other research spaces, Facilities Management will utilize these best practices.



5.5.3. Additional Chemical-Specific Considerations for Using Disinfectants

- Most (if not all) chemical disinfectants designed for surface decontamination contain components that can be harmful if ingested, if inhaled, or if eye/skin exposure occurs.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment, including eye and hand protection, must be used when applying chemical disinfectants.

Note: Be aware of any dermal or respiratory irritation that occurs after using disinfectants or after working on surfaces that have been disinfected. If dermal or respiratory irritation is encountered:

- Exit the area and get to fresh air.
- Try to flush the irritated area (for dermal irritation).
- Seek additional medical assistance if needed.
- Suspend the use of the suspected disinfectant and contact Facilities Management for additional assistance.

5.6. Handling Laboratory Hazardous Waste

5.6.1. Regulated Medical Waste Disposal (Biohazardous Waste)

- Follow the University's regulated medical waste procedures.
- Responsible individuals will remove properly packed and labeled boxes of regulated medical waste on a scheduled basis.

5.6.2. Chemical Waste Disposal

- Follow the University's guidelines on collecting and labeling laboratory chemical waste.
- Laboratory chemical wastes will be picked up directly from the laboratory. During the suspension of regular laboratory operations, the frequency of waste pickups may have been reduced. Please be aware of these possible changes.

5.7. Required Training

Before being allowed back in the laboratory and research spaces, all researchers (PIs, students, etc.) must complete training as set forth in the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan. PIs or their designees should also ensure that all researchers are up to date on their safety training requirements as required by the Office of Research Compliance.

5.8. Preparing the Laboratory

Before restarting work, check the physical condition and supply levels.

- Ensure that equipment, such as biosafety cabinets, autoclaves, etc., are up to date on inspections and maintenance. Make arrangements for services as needed.
- Inspect equipment and facilities for damage, leaks, etc.
- Check expiration dates on chemicals and supplies.
- Confirm availability of support services, such as gas delivery, dry ice, etc.



5.8.1. Obtaining Supplies

The University will provide the following COVID-19-related supplies:

- Disposable face coverings.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- N95 respirators.
- Disposable surgical or isolation gowns.
- Hand-washing soap.
- Disposable paper towels.
- Laboratory coats.
- Gloves.
- Disposable face shields.
- Disinfectant for all lab services.
- All other personal protective equipment needed to safely perform your research.

Plan carefully when ordering supplies. Supply chains for a number of vendors have been strained during COVID-19 outbreaks. Certain research materials may have significant delays due to high demand or shuttered production facilities. During the suspension of normal laboratory and research operations, a number of buildings and their loading docks may have shifted to limited schedules.

- Contact Facilities Management for additional information regarding any restrictions or limited hours staff may be available to receive incoming shipments.
- Inbound research materials may not be shipped to private/personal addresses and then brought to campus.

5.9. Managing Shared Facilities and Equipment

Many researchers share equipment with others in their group and, in some cases, with individuals outside of their group.

- Carefully schedule use of shared facilities or equipment to maintain social distancing.
- Wear gloves when touching or manipulating equipment.
- When work is complete, wipe down high-touch surfaces with disinfectant wipes or solution if it will not damage the equipment or surfaces.
- Plan and communicate roles and responsibilities for cleaning/disinfecting.

5.10. General Work Rules

5.10.1. Meetings and Gatherings

- Continue conducting virtual meetings and phone calls rather than in-person meetings.

5.10.2. Meals and Breaks

- Eating and drinking in the laboratory and research areas is still prohibited.



- Determine how and when researchers will take breaks for meals, beverages, etc. Consider using common spaces, meeting rooms, and outdoor seating while maintaining social distancing.

5.10.3. Unsafe Behaviors or Conditions

If you find that people are not practicing social distancing, hygiene, or safety practices, or if you recognize unsafe conditions:

- In a congenial and caring manner, advise the individual(s) how they can improve behavior or condition.
- If you are comfortable alerting the person or group, or if behaviors or conditions do not improve, speak with a PI, advisor, School Dean, or the Provost.

5.10.4. Use of Office

- Office use is allowed for faculty. Faculty must follow social distancing requirements of six feet and comply with the Monmouth University Health and Safety Plan. For students, see Section 5.3.1.

5.11. Requests for Reasonable Accommodations

If a student requests an accommodation due to a disability, the individual should contact the Department of Disability Services at (732) 571-3460. If an employee requests a reasonable accommodation due to a disability, the employee should contact Human Resources at (732) 571-3470. Given the current situation, the University will consider reasonable accommodations for individuals whose disabilities put them at greater risk from COVID-19 (or severe symptoms from COVID-19) and who request an accommodation to eliminate or reduce possible exposure to the virus. As always, reasonable accommodation decisions are fact-specific and vary based on the relevant circumstances.

5.12. Emergency Contacts

In case of emergency, call the Monmouth University Police Department at (732) 571-4444.

5.13. Related Resources

- OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf> (PDF)
- OSHA COVID-19 Website
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html>



- CDC Interim Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines for Handling and Processing Specimens Associated with Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/lab-biosafety-guidelines.html>
- ABSA SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 TOOLBOX
<https://absa.org/covid19toolbox/>
- WHO Laboratory biosafety guidance related to coronavirus disease (COVID-19)
[https://www.who.int/publications-detail/laboratory-biosafety-guidance-related-to-coronavirus-disease-2019-\(covid-19\)](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/laboratory-biosafety-guidance-related-to-coronavirus-disease-2019-(covid-19))
- CDC Guidance for Schools, Workplaces & Community Locations
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>
- CDC Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories
<https://www.cdc.gov/labs/pdf/CDC-BiosafetyMicrobiologicalBiomedicalLaboratories-2009-P.PDF> (PDF)
- Back-to-work criteria for health care workers
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html#practices-restrictions>

6. BUILDING GUIDANCE

6.1. Exterior Doors

All exterior doors may remain locked at certain times. You may need to contact the Monmouth University Police Department at (732) 571-4444 for access.

6.2. Conference Rooms

Do not use conference rooms for meetings. Consider using conference rooms to expand work/desk space.

- Maintain at least 150 squarefeet per person. No more than 10 persons in a space.
- Remove, tape off, or mark chairs that should not be used, in order to maintain at least six feet between people.

6.3. Open Work Stations

Take advantage of all unused space to spread out work stations. Employees must recognize that they may be asked to work at stations other than their traditional workspace in order to spread out.



6.4. Meetings

Meetings should be held remotely using collaboration tools such as Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, telephone, etc.

- In-person meetings should only occur if strictly necessary, and only if occupants of the room can maintain at least six feet of separation. Any strictly necessary in-person meetings must be as brief as possible.
- Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in meeting rooms to support social distancing practices between attendees for strictly necessary in-person meetings.
- Even while working on campus, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, instant message, telephone, or other available technology rather than face-to-face.

