

COVID-19 Guidance for CoM Research Core Facilities (updated 3/16/20)

As communicated to core directors/managers last week, each core facility was asked to consider a plan that focuses on how to maintain some level of research continuity in an environment that may require a reduced/remote workforce while also implementing the concept of social distancing of personnel to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. This also included a recommendation to communicate with customer/collaborators related to their ongoing projects and future projects to reduce the negative impact on research if the cores needed to further limit their activities. As the situation continues to evolve and consistent with the recommendations today from the [President Pinto](#) and Dean Filak to ramp down the onsite personnel footprint for the university, core directors/managers are now asked to transition their thinking further to consider contingencies in which they may have limited or no access to their laboratories in the near future for an extended period of time. While this is not currently the situation, proactive planning for the current and further situations should include the following:

1. Prepare and share the designated point of contact for each core laboratory and at least one backup with the Dean's office via the Associate Dean for Research Core Facilities (ken.greis@uc.edu). Please indicate who needs critical access to the laboratory. This will initially be to maintain a minimal level of research continuity and secondly if a further escalation requires certain cores to be shuttered. This latter category might include maintaining critical equipment that cannot be readily shut down (e.g. system that require cryogen fills). This would also be a good time verify that your emergency contact placard posted for your lab space is current.
2. Be prepared with a process to shut down or "park" core equipment in a state that can be safely maintained for a period up to 6-8 weeks, if needed.
3. Delay the initiation of any longitudinal study (particularly for live animal) that will require core activities over the next 6-8 weeks.
4. For existing longitudinal studies, communicate with the customer/collaborator to determine if the project can be truncated to a useful point earlier in the study or if it needs to go to completion. Every attempt will be made to complete the study if the conditions allow.
5. Securing any chemical or hazardous materials in the appropriate longer-term storage areas rather than the active use areas (e.g. flammables in flame cabinets instead of out in the fume hoods).
6. While continuing activities, even at a scaled down level, maintain social distancing and laboratory disinfection standards such as wiping down common workspaces before and after use of the space with an appropriate disinfectant (e.g. 70% ethanol).
7. Verify your offsite connectivity to IT resources that may be needed for remote working opportunities.
8. Consider adjusting workflows to maximize those activities that need to be done on site (e.g. data collection) for the short term, with those activities that can be done remotely (e.g. data processing, report generation), being reserved for when remote activities may be the only option.

Finally, the [UC Office of Research](#) and the [CoM](#) have set up webpages to share the latest information about COVID-19, research contingency planning, relevant announcements from funding agencies (e.g. NSF, NIH), the steps that we can all take to mitigate the spread of the infection, and to minimize the impact on our research programs. Please continue to monitor these sites for the latest information.