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Updated guidance for researchers in laboratories

March 17, 2020

Category: **Research**Last modified on **May 7, 2020**

Dear Faculty, Staff, Postdocs and Students who Conduct Laboratory Research,

As you know, Public Health Officials in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties have announced a [Shelter in Place order](#) for all residents beginning at 12:01 a.m., March 17, and lasting until at least April 7. Many of you had already ramped down your on-campus research activities over the past two weeks, and many completed your [shutdown list](#) yesterday on hearing the news. **Thank you!** As our Public Health Officials told us, we have a public health emergency. COVID-19 spreads easily, and many individuals with the virus have no or mild symptoms, but can still transmit the disease. The steps you take to limit interactions among people will help to slow virus transmission, thereby protecting the most vulnerable and preventing the health care system from being overwhelmed.

We hope that your remote research activities flourish during this time and that you stay intellectually and virtually close to your coworkers. **You now need to stay away from your on-campus workspace**, with rare exceptions to perform essential research functions, as described below.

When conducting essential on-campus research functions — including shutdown procedures — practice [self-care and workspace cleaning](#), following the guidance on [Stanford Health Alerts](#). Coordinate with coworkers to minimize time on campus and time spent physically co-working with others, maintaining a distance of at least six feet from others when possible, keeping lab safety in mind. Any potentially hazardous operations still require that at least two trained and qualified persons be present.

Essential on-campus research functions include the following.

- Completing shutdown procedures. If you still need to complete shutdown procedures, please do so today, March 17, or at latest on March 18. You may find this [shutdown checklist](#) helpful.
- Conducting critical maintenance procedures that require regular attention from a person to maintain laboratory viability. For example, providing animal support, maintaining shared computational equipment, and maintaining equipment that requires gas or cryogen monitoring/service, such as deep-storage freezers, electron microscopes, mass spectrometers, and incubators.
- Certain clinical research; please see separate guidance from the School of Medicine.
- COVID-19 research that has the potential to mitigate the spread of the pandemic. Please consult your local building staff about needed support as well as indicate the necessary activities as critical on your Lab Level Continuity Plan (see below).

Veterinary care will continue, as the health and welfare of research animals are essential. Other non-medical service centers have shut down or should shut down now, except for support of essential research functions as described above. As research continues remotely during this work-from-home period, support from the Office of Research Administration, Research Management Group, and other research administrators will also continue remotely.

We will continue to improve our processes for monitoring and supporting essential on-campus research functions during this period. If you need to conduct such functions before April 7, other than executing necessary shutdown activities on March 17 and March 18, please do the following:

- Review the essential activities and associated individuals that you identified as “critical” on your lab’s Lab Level Continuity Plan. Support staff are working hard this week and using your Plans to ensure that Stanford will be able to support your essential activities during this period.
- At this time, the data from the Lab Level Continuity Plans has been moved into Smartsheets to better enable updates to local units. If you are a PI and you need to update your plan, follow this Smartsheets [link](#) and sign in with your Stanford credentials, then click on the line or box you wish to edit. For questions or help with Smartsheets, please contact research_ops@lists.stanford.edu.
- PIs with concerns about availability of personnel to carry out any lab-specific critical procedures should consult with their department chair or building manager. No student or postdoctoral scholar should be required to go into the laboratory. Students with concerns should contact their department chair, student services staff, or the associate dean for student affairs in their School.
- Under no circumstances remove materials (e.g. specimens, animals or sensitive equipment) from laboratories, other than computers, storage devices, or lab notebooks and papers, without the prior approval of your cognizant department chair, your dean, and the Vice Provost and Dean of Research.

Eliminating your on-campus research presence not only helps to prevent spread, it also allows those personnel who are still working on-campus to focus on the most essential activities. Continue to interact virtually and hold meetings online — both to carry out scholarly activity and to promote the well-being of lab members. Please support yourself and others during this time. We are proud to be part of this Stanford research community.

Sincerely,

Kam Moler, Vice Provost and Dean of Research; Professor of Applied Physics and of Physics

Stacey Bent, Vice Provost of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs; Jagdeep and Roshni Singh Professor of Engineering

Tim Stearns, Chair of the Faculty Senate; Frank Lee and Carol Hall Professor and Professor of Genetics

Tags:

Research continuity

Shelter-in-place

PREVIOUS POST

Temporary parking permit policy change

NEXT POST

New information for postdoctoral scholars



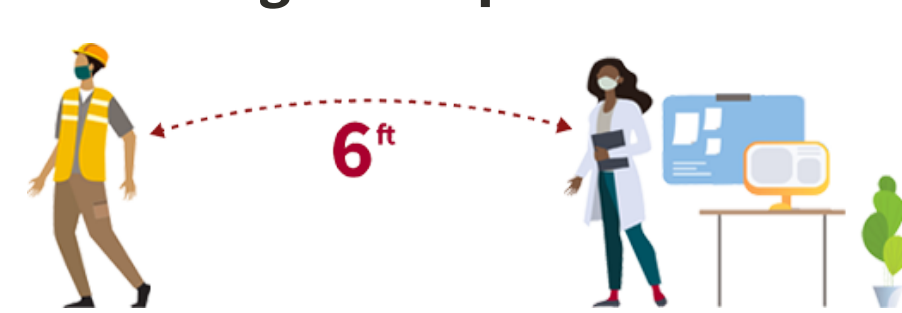
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Returning to campus



Stanford is beginning a phased recovery of university operations. We are currently in [Stage 2](#) of the restart process.

[Learn more about Cardinal Recovery](#)



Research continuity

[Learn about resources for COVID-19 research continuity](#)



Work anywhere

[Learn about resources for telecommuting and remote work](#)



Virtual training for employees

- [Managing teams during uncertainty](#)
- [Navigating self through uncertainty](#)



School-specific COVID-19 links

- [School of Medicine COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [Stanford Law School Student Hub](#)
- [Stanford Law School Staff Hub](#)
- [Info for Stanford Earth students, faculty and staff](#)
- [Resources for faculty and staff in Humanities and Sciences](#)
- [Graduate School of Business Response to COVID-19](#)



Campus health resources

- [Vaden Health Center \(for students\)](#)
- [SU Occupational Health Center \(for employees\)](#)
- [Illness Prevention flyer \(PDF\)](#)
- [Self-isolation explainer \(PDF\)](#)
- [Tips for cleaning & disinfecting personal/shared workspace \(PDF\)](#)



Other COVID-19 resources

- [CDC: Prevention & treatment](#)
- [CDC: FAQs](#)
- [CDC: Travel information](#)
- [WHO: COVID-19 outbreak](#)
- [Santa Clara County Public Health Information](#)



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For questions related to Stanford’s response to COVID-19, please email health-alerts@stanford.edu.

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