



Phase One Risk Mitigation Form for STEM Research Groups

Return to laboratory activity will have at least two phases. The objective of Phase 1 is to begin research operations quickly with reduced personnel density and strong efforts to maintain a safe workplace. Phase 2, and any later phases, will be used to increase toward 100% lab activities while maintaining best practices. Mutual cooperation and strict adherence to safety protocols are essential for maintaining our health and safety, and for avoiding another shutdown of on-site research activity. In this regard, each research group participating in the Phase 1 return to laboratory activity is required to submit and receive approval for a Phase 1 laboratory risk mitigation plan using the template below. This plan is aimed at reducing the risks of contracting COVID by researchers during their work activity. Each mitigation plan should be developed so that it provides fair access to laboratory resources. The submitted plan will be reviewed by the department chair or Associate Dean for Research. Access to the laboratory will only be permitted after the plan is approved. Plans can be updated as needed, and revised plans must be reviewed and approved before implementation.

1. Contact information. Please complete the contact information for (a) the leader of your research group, (b) at least one secondary contact person to receive communications (if applicable), and (c) at least one Lab Safety Officer who is responsible for monitoring the adherence to this protocol (see section 10).

School or Responsibility Center	
Department or Program	
Research Group Leader	
Research Group Leader email address	
Secondary contact (if any)	
Secondary contact email address	
Lab Safety Officer	
Lab Safety Officer email address	
Date submitted	
Department Chair approval and date	
Associate Dean approval and date	

2. EH&S Restart checklist. Please verify that you have read the EH&S lab start-up checklist (attached) and that you will complete it within the first week of resuming activity. Some items (e.g., develop a social distancing plan) will be documented below, while others will be completed upon re-entry of your lab space.

- Yes, I have read the EH&S lab start-up checklist (**mandatory**)
- Yes, I will submit a completed checklist to the Department Chair or comparable unit head, or their designee, within one week of my laboratory's on-campus research restart (**mandatory**)

3. Laboratory Personnel. During Phase 1, all personnel who can work remotely should continue to do so. Please list the personnel in your group (including yourself) for whom you will be requesting Phase 1 access to University of Pittsburgh facilities. **Please note that undergraduate employees or visiting researchers are not permitted access during Phase 1.** To maintain low density, yet enable more research activity, you should

consider a shift schedule that will work for your group; plan for at least 30 minutes between shifts to avoid face-to-face contact between personnel in different shifts. Add rows to the table if necessary.

Name	Position ¹	Email address

¹ Indicate faculty, post-doctoral researcher or Research associate, graduate Student, Staff or other personnel class.

4. Laboratory space utilization. Please list all **laboratory and office spaces occupied by your group** as well as shared laboratory spaces used by your group for extended periods of time. Indicate maximum personnel utilizing that space at any given time during Phase 1 (lowest density to begin research) of the research restart. During Phase 1 occupancy, density must not exceed **1 person for every 150 square feet of open lab space**, or one person in a room smaller than 150 ft². Personnel must maintain spacing of **at least 6 feet** at all times. Please be mindful to limit density in common office spaces. Add lines to the table if necessary.

Building	Room	Area (sq ft) ¹	Phase 1 Occupancy	Is the space shared with other groups? (Y/N) ²

1. Estimate area if necessary; if this is a shared space, estimate the area occupied by your personnel.

2. Shared spaces are any lab spaces occupied by more than one research group including open-lab and “ballroom” laboratory spaces.

5. Common space utilization. Please indicate the locations of common scientific spaces to be used by your group members during Phase 1, including (a) unstaffed spaces such as lab kitchens, glassware facilities, freezer spaces, lunch rooms, and equipment rooms and (b) staffed spaces such as green houses, animal facilities, machine shop, Center for Biologic Imaging, etc. Do not include restrooms, which will be addressed at the Departmental or building level. Common, non-scientific spaces such as classrooms or lecture halls should not be used during Phase 1. Add lines to the table if necessary.

Building	Room	Function	Frequency of use

6. Social distancing plan. Please indicate the measures that your group will take to maximize social distancing among members. Add additional measures relevant to your group/lab space(s) to minimize contact among members of your group and with outside personnel. Boxes already marked are for measures required for all groups.

Activities requiring multiple personnel in close contact will be avoided (**mandatory**)

- Signage will be provided throughout the workspace to remind members to use appropriate PPE and to maintain social distancing requirements (**mandatory**)
- Desks and work areas will be arranged to be sufficiently far apart, closed off, or protected by barriers (**mandatory**)
- Work hours will be scheduled to minimize contact between lab members (**mandatory**)
 - Some personnel will work from home
 - Work will proceed in multiple shifts per day
 - Lab members will work on campus on alternate days or alternate weeks
- Unidirectional traffic patterns will be marked with relevant signs on floors and doors
- Common, non-scientific spaces and resources (*e.g.*, whiteboards) will be signed as closed or blocked from use
- User defined.** <Describe any additional social-distancing methods here>

7. Laboratory garb requirements. Please describe lab garb requirements for your lab spaces; these requirements cannot be less restrictive than the campus PPE restrictions.

- Cloth, surgical or higher-grade masks must be worn on campus within public spaces of the building at all times, including research spaces (**mandatory**)
- Gloves are mandatory in shared research spaces
- Gloves, safety glasses and lab coats are used as needed for laboratory safety, but are not needed in the lab for COVID-19 risk mitigation
- N-95 masks, or similarly protective equipment, will be used when **working within 6 feet** of others
- User defined.** <Describe any additional, laboratory-specific garb requirements here>

8. Laboratory disinfection protocol. Please describe how and when the laboratory will be disinfected.

- Regular hand-washing is required, even when wearing gloves (**mandatory**)
- Surfaces and equipment will be wiped down with an effective disinfectant solution before and after use (**mandatory**)
- Personnel will be supplied with individual tool kits or other commonly used laboratory instruments
- Personnel will not use shared computing equipment (*e.g.*, they will use their own tablets or notebooks)
- Personnel will be supplied with individual keyboards and mice to use with shared computing equipment
- Disposable or washable covers for shared keyboards and mice will be used and appropriately maintained
- User defined.** <Describe any additional laboratory disinfection protocols here>

9. COVID-19 response plan. In addition to the prescribed University response protocols, please indicate how your working group will respond if a member shows COVID-19 symptoms.

- Name of symptomatic or potentially infected individual will be reported immediately to your department chair (**mandatory**)
- Working spaces or zones listed in section 5 occupied by the potentially infected individual will be closed for the time period required by the University of Pittsburgh Emergency Operations Center (EOC) (**mandatory**)
- Infected lab members will self-quarantine as required by the EOC (<https://www.emergency.pitt.edu/>) and not return to campus until they have been medically cleared (**mandatory**)
- Individuals who worked directly with the potentially infected person will self-quarantine as required by the EOC (**mandatory**)
- Portable equipment and supplies (*e.g.*, notebook computers, portable drives) will not be removed until disinfected or deemed safe for removal (**mandatory**)
- User defined.** <Describe any additional, laboratory-specific cleaning protocols for suspected COVID cases>

10. Monitoring plan. Please designate a Lab Safety Officer (*e.g.*, senior member of the group), who will be responsible for ensuring that your personnel are following your laboratory's risk mitigation plan. Please indicate essential elements of your group's monitoring plan below.

- The name and email address of the Lab Safety Officer are listed in Section 1 (**mandatory**)
- Personnel will sign-in and sign-out of the lab spaces (name, date, time arrived, time departed) and those records will be retained for contact mapping (**mandatory**)
- Personnel in space will be periodically confirmed against sign-in record and shift schedule (if applicable) (**mandatory**)
- User defined.** <Describe any additional components of Monitoring plan here>

11. Reporting plan. To be most effective, mitigation plans must be adaptable but also ensure safe access to research facilities both within and between groups. If you experience challenges or have concerns with your own plan, or observe behaviors which potentially impact the health and safety of yourself or your group members, you should report them immediately.

- Issues will be reported to <name of department chair or equivalent> (**mandatory**)

- If a satisfactory response is not received within 24 hours, issues will be reported <name of associate Dean or ombudsman> (**mandatory**)
- User defined.** <Describe any additional components of Reporting plan here>

12. Equity plan. Research mitigation plans need to be implemented fairly to provide access to all researchers.

- Participation in research during Phase 1 on-campus is voluntary (**mandatory**)
- Work schedules under Phase 1 will be reviewed by all researchers and approved by the Research Group Leader (**mandatory**)
- If possible, reasonable accommodation will be provided for "at-risk" researchers (*e.g.*, several hours/week access with lower density of lab personnel (**mandatory**))
- User defined.** <Describe any additional components of the Equity plan here>

13. Appendices. Please attach the following appendices if they are relevant to your research.

- Field Research Mitigation Plan
- Shared Lab Space Mitigation Plan (if shared spaces are noted in section 4)