

Rules for Laboratory Access During Outbreak Period

Wednesday, February 5, 2020 1:50 PM

Dear Heads and DSOs,

We understand some research staff and students may wish to resume their laboratory works during the Novel Coronavirus outbreak and work-at-home period. To allow for this, each department or research unit should establish and enforce its own laboratory access rules for this special period. The following are general rules that should be incorporated.

1. **The need to access the laboratory.** Department and PI may authorize research staff and PGs to resume their laboratory work ONLY when there is a good reason. PIs are responsible for assessing and mitigating the risks in allowing lab operations during this time. Approval records should be available for verification when necessary.
2. **High risk operations and working-alone.** PI should restrict or set conditions for high risk operations during this time. Staff and students should consult their supervisors if unsure whether certain hazardous work can be carried out. Solo-work in laboratories during this period should be prohibited unless it is low-risk and specifically approved by the PI. Periodic communication among students and/ or PI during the stay in laboratories should be arranged.
3. **Staff and students under Self-quarantine.** It is the University's policy that if someone has traveled to Mainland China in the past 14 days, that person must self-quarantine at home/quarters. Departments and research units should prohibit any person under self-quarantine from accessing the laboratories.
4. **Limited support from technical staff.** Due to the University's work-at-home arrangement during this period, normal technical staff support may not be available. Staff and students who plan to work during this period should be reminded about this, and any other restrictions, such as availability of shared equipment.

Departments/units and PIs may include additional requirements specific to their laboratories on top of these general rules.

During this special period, HSEO staff living on campus continues to monitor laboratory activities, and will provide emergency support when necessary. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Best regards,
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