

CoANR COVID Laboratory Research Protocol

Effective June 22, 2020

Right of refusal: No employee will be required to work in a laboratory if there are alternatives for them to complete their job tasks. Work will be done on a strictly voluntary basis for individuals who have risk factors for COVID or who are living with or are in close contact with at risk individuals. If an employee does not feel comfortable being in a laboratory due to concerns about COVID exposure, they should work with their supervisor to design a work schedule that allows them to accomplish work while decreasing risk. It is recognized that each person has their own level of concern with regard to COVID.

Illness: If anyone feels that they may have been exposed to COVID, or has any illness symptoms whatsoever, they are to self-quarantine for minimum of 14 days or as per the most recent Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations. It is also recommended that they are tested to determine if they carry the virus.

Safe practices: All researchers must maintain safe work practices as outlined below:

- Maintain *at least* six feet of distance between yourself and others at all times. 10 feet is preferred.
- Face masks must be worn at all times in enclosed spaces.
- Upon entering or leaving a lab, wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap/detergent and water or use a hand sanitizer station. If disposable gloves were worn upon entering or leaving, wash and exchange gloves.
- Individuals must have their own designated lab bench space with a minimum 6 preferably 10-foot spacing between themselves and other individuals who are working at the same time.
- The use of gloves and eye protection is strongly recommended at all times.
- Wash hands or change gloves frequently and do not touch your face. Do not bring drinks or food into the laboratory. Store personal items outside the lab if at all possible.
- All supervisors will discuss safety policies with lab personnel and safety policies will be posted on all lab doors. Anyone working in the lab or visiting the lab must sign an agreement that they will comply with the lab's safety policies.
- Coordinate the use of shared spaces with a location manager (if available) or by using a shared calendar.
- Thoughtful distribution and placement of shared equipment should be carried out to minimize the density of workers and workflow around shared equipment. Appropriate disinfecting supplies should be placed in close proximity to all shared equipment to ensure compliance with disinfection procedures.
- Consider running fume hoods to increase air exchange, taking into account airflow and the locations of workers relative to the air intake for the hood.
- Any university policy that is more restrictive shall supersede policies outlined in this document.
- All other state or federal policies regarding laboratory safety shall be followed.

Shared equipment: Individuals should wear disposable gloves when using shared common equipment. Hand contact surfaces on equipment must be disinfected before *and* after use. Likewise, other potential points of contact, such as eye-pieces on microscopes, should be disinfected before and after use. Similarly, door knobs, cabinet handles, and other common use items should be regularly disinfected with CDC approved chemicals.

Small spaces (<200 sq feet): A strict limit of one person at a time. Masks must be worn at all times. Following termination of work, a minimum of 15 minutes should be provided prior to reoccupation of the room by a different individual.

Medium spaces (200–400 sq ft): A limit of one person at a time working in a sustained manner. Masks must be worn at all times. In situations where a single additional individual needs to perform a short task when the medium room is at maximum capacity (e.g., one worker in a 300 sq ft space), brief entry into the room is permissible provided that: (1) both individuals are wearing masks, (2) a 6-foot minimum distance is maintained, and (3) the additional individual does not remain in the room for more than 2 minutes. Thoughtful measures must be taken to minimize the need for exceeding room occupancy maximums.

Large spaces (>400 sq ft): There must be at least 200 square foot per person when 2+ people are working in a sustained manner. Masks must be worn at all times. In situations where a single additional individual needs to perform a short task when the large room is at maximum capacity (e.g., two workers in a 450 square-foot space), brief entry into a room is permissible provided that: (1) all individuals are wearing masks, (2) a 6-foot minimum distance is maintained, and (3) the individual does not remain in the room for more than 2 minutes. Thoughtful measures must be taken to minimize the need for exceeding room occupancy maximums.

Staggered work shifts: To minimize exposure, lab supervisors should schedule personnel to work in staggered, non-overlapping shifts to the greatest extent possible. Sensitivity should be exercised to accommodate personnel who may have external constraints on their available working hours, including but not limited to the care of family members. To facilitate scheduling, and in case of emergencies, lab personnel will stay in contact by text messaging, phone, and/or email. Personnel should strive to work efficiently to keep their laboratory time to a minimum. Work that does not strictly require a presence in the lab should be conducted outside the lab.

Meetings: Meetings with lab members should be done remotely where possible (e.g. by Zoom). If in-person meetings are required, appropriate practices for distancing and the use of protective wear must be followed.

Violations: If a lab supervisor or other personnel observe anyone in the workplace to be in violation of safe procedures, they must report them immediately to their supervisor, departmental Chair/Head, or AES Director (AES@uwyo.edu).

Exemptions: Should a faculty member need to conduct research that does not fall under this umbrella policy, they must submit an Exemption Request Form to the Department Chair/Head and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (aes@uwyo.edu) for approval.