UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND BALTIMORE

Research Advisory Task Force (COVID-19)

Committee Topic: Compliance Checklist
Committee Members: S. Deck and others
Policy Effective Date: March 18, 2020

Final UMB policy based upon the committee report and recommendations

Compliance Checklist to Prepare Laboratories for Essential Functions Only

As part of UMB's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, research will be limited to essential functions only. Research personnel should be onsite only to carry out essential duties. Campus guidelines, such as staying home when you are sick and maintaining social distancing (at least 6 feet), must continue to be followed.

The following guidance outlines critical actions to consider when preparing to shift laboratory operations to essential functions only. Not all items will not apply to every laboratory. Check the N/A column, or customize this form, as needed.

LAB OPERATIONS			
ITEM	COMPLETE	N/A	NOTES
Identify non-critical activities that can be ramped down, curtailed, suspended, or delayed.			
For ongoing experiments, identify stopping points and plan to use them (e.g. freezing cell pellets for later processing).			
For animal colony maintenance or long-term animal experiments that require continued attention, coordinate with your own assigned personnel and/or Comparative Medicine.			
Coordinate with colleagues who have similar research activities to identify ways to ensure coverage of critical activities.			
Cross-train research staff to fill in for others who may be sick or unable to come to work.			

Consider documenting critical step-by-step instructions.			

COMMUNICATIONS			
ITEM	COMPLETE	N/A	NOTES
Ensure all personnel are subscribed to receive UMB alerts.			
Compile off-campus contact information for all staff and circulate among members.			
Consider including contact information for others on your floor, in your department, or needed for continuation of critical operations (e.g. Comparative Medicine).			
Identify at least one person, or a rotation of personnel, able to safely perform critical activities if needed. Make duty assignment and expectations clear.			
Communicate expectations and roles to all personnel to avoid potential confusion.			
Ensure personnel have access to materials and resources that may be needed to work from home.			

RESEARCH MATERIALS			
ITEM	COMPLETE	N/A	NOTES
Preserve (e.g., in a -80C freezer, liquid nitrogen) research materials that may not survive a period of absence (e.g., cell lines, bacterial strains) if possible. Consider storing redundant stocks separately.			
Secure all research materials, particularly those that are controlled, high value, and/or high risk.			
Ensure liquid nitrogen levels are at a sufficient level so they do not reach a critical state.			
Back up critical research data.			

SHIPPING AND RECEIVING			
ITEM	COMPLETE	N/A	NOTES
Do not order any new research materials except those needed to support minimal critical functions.			

Cancel orders for non-essential research materials if they have not yet shipped.			
If orders are en route and cannot be stopped and they contain critical, frozen, or perishable items, identify how they will be received.			
Do not place any containers potentially containing dry ice in cold rooms or freezers.			

EQUIPMENT			
ITEM	COMPLETE	N/A	NOTES
Check that refrigerator, freezer, and incubator doors are tightly closed.			
Surface decontaminate biosafety cabinets and turn off. Do NOT leave the UV light on.			
Clear fume hoods of all hazards.			

PHYSICAL HAZARDS			
ITEM	COMPLETE	N/A	NOTES
Ensure all large pieces of equipment (e.g. -80 freezers, incubators, and liquid nitrogen tanks) are labeled with emergency contact information.			
Make sure that critical pieces of equipment are on emergency backup power outlets (red outlets). Do not connect non-essential equipment to emergency power.			
Consider installing remote monitoring devices for critical equipment (e.g., -80C freezers, liquid nitrogen storage dewars, incubators).			
Turn off and/or unplug unnecessary heat-generating equipment, such as hot plates and water baths, which could pose a fire hazard.			
Turn off all non-essential and/or sensitive electric equipment.			
Ensure all gas cylinders are properly secured. Consider unhooking and capping gas cylinders if they are not essential.			

Run water down drains for several minutes to prevent p-traps from drying out. This will ensure sewer gases do not back up into the building.			
Ensure all gas and vacuum lines are turned off.			
Close all interior laboratory doors in case of fire.			

WASTE MANAGEMENT			
ITEM	COMPLETE	N/A	NOTES
Waste that may cause odor if left for an extended amount of time should be appropriately disposed.			
Disinfect and empty aspiration flasks containing biological waste.			
Ensure all hazardous waste containers are tightly closed and properly stored. If full, submit a waste request for pickup.			
Dispose of perishable goods, such as food and drink, that may also cause odor in your office or lunchroom.			

SECURITY			
ITEM	COMPLETE	N/A	NOTES
Ensure personnel know the following contact information: • Emergency – 911 • Know the name and address of the building in which they are working (suggest posting near phone in each lab) • UMB Police Non-Emergency and Safe Walk/Safe Ride – 410-706- 6882			
With fewer people in the workplace, there are fewer people who would be aware of life-threatening emergencies. Consider implementing a "text-in/text-out or similar system.			
Place valuables, such as laptops, out of sight and in locked drawers if possible.			

Lock laboratory doors.			
Take personal belongings that you may need at home with you at the end of each day.			

Questions or concerns? Contact EHS at 410-706-7055 or mailto:ehsaudits@umaryland.edu. In the event of an emergency, call 911.

For non-emergency concerns, call the UMB Police Department at 410-706-6882.

Contact BIORESCO for ordering of research materials and equipment, https://cf.umaryland.edu/freezer/ or 410-706-0322.

Contact Comparative Medicine for general animal concerns at 410-706-3540.