



# Office of Research and Economic Development

University of Missouri

Colleagues:

The rapidly evolving nature of COVID-19 has required a swift response to this extraordinary challenge, and the Office of Research and Economic Development has developed a [research resource page](#) for the research community. Please monitor the page often as we will update these resources frequently. As always, the university continues to communicate its responses through its official channels at [MU Alert](#).

We are taking measures to protect the health and well-being of our campus community. **Therefore, all on-campus research laboratories will be restricted to only essential activities by close of business March 20 at the latest.**

Many peer institutions already have begun ramping down all on-campus research laboratory activities. Similarly, the University of Missouri will implement minimal access to laboratories so that essential and critical activities, such as maintaining unique reagents and equipment, can continue.

MU deans and directors have been apprised of this notification about ramping down research activities where possible. All research faculty should work with their laboratory personnel including students, postdocs and staff to scale down operations as soon as possible. **Ramp down must be completed by March 20 at the latest.**

The Office of Animal Resources (OAR) staff are considered essential employees and daily animal care will continue uninterrupted during suspended operations. Operations will be restricted to husbandry and veterinary care and OAR staff will not perform research tasks nor will they transport animals. However, research tasks and transportation that have been deemed essential may be arranged and performed by laboratory staff. Additionally, no new animal studies are to be initiated during this period.

Those of you requiring more time must inform your department chair and your dean by providing a clear justification and receive written approval. Any questions should be addressed to your department chair or dean. Additionally, please plan to work remotely and ensure that your personnel are equipped to do so.

We understand the disruption these actions will cause and we are here to support you. Please take some time to establish what activities can be completed remotely, including writing papers, grant proposals and data analysis. You may consult MU's Division of Information Technology's remote work resources for further information on setting up a remote plan.

Research faculty will be responsible for assigning and overseeing the work of their students, postdocs and staff. The [Office of Sponsored Programs Administration](#) will be available to enable faculty to submit grants and grant reports. Please continue to charge grants as you would normally, our Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) departments are prepared to work remotely and to support you. We have established an ORED [research resource page](#) that we will update as information is available, please check back often.

Please complete contingency plans for your research efforts immediately keeping these details in mind:

- Beginning **March 20**, access to labs will only be available to essential personnel who are expected to perform critical procedures or equipment management. For example, liquid nitrogen tank filling, maintaining shared computational equipment, etc. You will need to share the names of these essential personnel with your department chair and dean immediately. **Please remind personnel they must have their employee ID at all times.**
- Research faculty should identify essential research experiments that are at a critical phase, meaning that abandoning them would cause a major or irreversible loss in project momentum. This high-priority work should be a limited set of the current laboratory bench-based experimentation.
- Conduct all lab meetings, including one-on-one meetings, online or by phone.
- If you are conducting human subjects research, please refer to the continuously updated guidelines on the [research resource page](#).
- All essential work in labs should be staggered minimizing contact between laboratory personnel.
- Please continue charging to grants as normal.
- No undergraduates or external visitors are allowed in labs.
- Maintain a list of contact information for your students, postdocs and staff.
- Review contingency plans and emergency procedures with your group.

Those carrying out critical research activities who demonstrate minor symptoms of illness, including but not limited to cough or fever, must stay home. Please consult the [CDC's coronavirus resource site](#) for more information on the symptoms of coronavirus and how to protect yourself.

Protecting critical laboratories and those who are using them is paramount. Essential personnel should disinfect common laboratory areas, including bench tops and shared keyboards/mice, as well as high-traffic touch points, such as doorknobs, sink handles, freezer doors, and telephones with 70 percent ethanol or disinfectant at least twice daily.

MU is taking these substantial steps to limit the spread of the virus and to protect our students, faculty and staff. Please remember to practice social distancing and to wash your hands frequently.

Thank you for your patience and assistance in this critical time and check the [research resource page](#) frequently for research updates. If you have any questions, please contact your department chair or dean.

Sincerely,



Mark A. McIntosh

Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development