Guidelines for use of the Molecular Cytology Core

- To promote maximum use of the core’s instrumentation, priority will be given to clients who drop off samples that would be imaged by core staff. **No charge for staff time** when clients have core staff image their samples (standard charges for instrument use will be in effect). Clients will have the option to monitor and guide the acquisition of images via Zoom. Clients wanting to take advantage of this service should discuss with core staff when and where they should drop off their samples, but they will not be allowed to enter the core.

- In the initial phase, we will likely have to limit occupancy of the MCC to 2-3 individuals, including staff, at a time.

- No entry will be permitted except by previously scheduled appointment. All appointments must be scheduled by phone or email. No walk-in appointments. Only one person per lab may use the core at a time, and only one client at a time may use an instrument. The doors to the Life Science Center will be locked so clients will need to call the core staff when they arrive so they can be admitted by core staff while maintaining social distancing. Approved after-hours users will need to sign out a key card to access the building. Video cameras record who accesses the core after-hours.

- Only trained clients who can work mostly independently can schedule appointments. Untrained or novice users should consider taking advantage of the special offer for core staff to do their essential imaging described above.

- All appointments must be at least 60 minutes. We will be open for our standard hours of 8 am to 5 pm but, depending on core staff availability may be able to accommodate some early evening or weekend appointments.

- Depending on demand, there may be limitations on the number of appointments a lab can make more than 48 hours in advance.

- All clients must wear a mask and gloves while entering and exiting the core or when in the same room (even if >6 feet away) with core staff member. It will be impractical to require N95 masks at this time so home-made cloth barriers will be acceptable. If the door to the instrument room is closed, a mask may temporarily be removed. Gloves must be worn during all use of instrumentation. Clients are responsible for supplying their own gloves and mask.

- Priority will be given to appointments requiring the confocal or fluorescence stereoscopes since they fill unique research needs.

- The Leica DM5500 widefield microscope (previously housed in the main core common room next to the stereoscope room door) will be re-located to the backroom (120E) off the prep room. Use of this instrument or the widefield fluorescence microscope in the same room will be restricted to one client per time.
Disinfection protocols:

- We will allow 30 min between appointments to allow core staff to clean the instrument room. 70% ethanol and 1% sodium hypochlorite will be used as our routine disinfectants. (Based on WHO guidance and https://www.journalofhospitalinfection.com/article/S0195-6701(20)30046-3/fulltext)

- Eye cups will be removed from all microscopes. Eyepieces (oculars) will be wiped with disinfectant between clients. We intend to test covering the eyepieces with Saran Wrap held in place with a rubber band as a disposable cover that can be replaced after each client.

- Keyboards will be covered with a sheet of Saran Wrap as a disposable cover that can be replaced after each client.

- We will test the use of Saran Wrap as a cover on computer mice, joysticks, touch screens, and focus knobs but if that proves impractical, we will use disinfectant on them after each client.

- All surfaces and doorknobs in the work area will be wiped with disinfectant after each client use.

- Each of the confocal rooms will be equipped with computer speakers and microphones so clients may “zoom” conference with core staff as the primary trouble-shooting procedure. If resolution of a client problem involves core staff entering the work area, clients will be expected to stay a minimum of 6 feet away from staff.