



RUTGERS

Office of Research and
Economic Development

To: Rutgers University Research Community

From: S. David Kimball, Senior Vice President for Research & Economic Development

Date: March 12, 2020

Re: [COVID-19 Guidance on Continuity of Research](#)

As the university's emergency task force continues to evaluate and plan for all eventualities related to a possible epidemic of infection from coronavirus, updates from the President and other important information can be found on the [COVID-19](#) website. Faculty, students and staff can find guidance on some of the pressing questions about classes, personnel matters, travel, and more during this evolving public health concern.

As a research university, we are giving special consideration to evaluate and plan for possible scenarios that may affect our critical research efforts. Our initial assessment indicates that the Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) will be able to manage many functions remotely, including most research administration activities. However, others such as Animal Care will require staff onsite at all times. Each of our functional units has a detailed plan to maintain critical functioning in the face of escalating challenges.

For future reference, this memo will be posted to the [COVID-19](#) website and will be linked to other relevant websites. Please also share the information with other members of the Rutgers community who may be affected.

Laboratory Research

Research Directors should plan to ensure the continuity and integrity of research efforts. Please meet with your specific research teams to develop or revisit contingency plans that take into account the current challenges. Track carefully and document any purchases or time allocated solely and specifically to managing effects of the coronavirus on research. Use your best judgement and, in particular, consider the following in your discussions:

- Establish a robust communication network for your group; minimize face-to-face group meetings.
- Encourage health practices that minimize the transmission of coronavirus and support the well-being of all researchers.
- Consider the vulnerability of supply chains specific to your laboratory. While the Research Working Group is tied in with University Procurement Services to ensure the availability of cryogenics, gases and gloves, individual laboratory researchers should consider and order supplies necessary for their research projects.

- Consider organizing research activities to manage essential functions with fewer researchers in the lab at a given time; encourage writing of papers, dissertations, grant applications to be completed remotely.
- Prioritize research plans and identify those that can be delayed if necessary. Where possible, avoid initiating studies that could not be completed in the event more stringent controls are mandated.
- Research computing (both Amarel and Caliburn) will not be affected. The Office of Advanced Research Computing can manage all activities remotely, and researchers should not notice any change in capability.

[FAQs for Laboratory Research](#)

Clinical Research and Research with Human Subjects

Guidance for managing clinical research in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak is being developed and will be communicated in the near future.

Research Administration

The Office of Research and Economic Development will continue to work on campus as long as possible. However, research administration has prepared for the eventuality that much of its operations may have to work remotely. In such an event, the following functions will be managed *via* telecommuting: Pre-award (ORSP), Post-award (GCA), Corporate Contracts, IRB and IACUC meetings with staff and faculty, Corporate Engagement Center, and Research Commercialization.

The following require in-person contact and may be temporarily delayed: IRB and IACUC training, S.P.A.C.E. training, and research integrity investigations. Please direct any questions about research administration issues to your current ORED contacts.

We have not yet received guidance from federal agencies, such as NSF and NIH, regarding a number of issues. Critical questions remain as to the specific management of grants from these agencies, and we will update information on the Research Administration [website](#) as it becomes available. In the meantime, please forward all questions to the emergency task force [mailbox](#).

[FAQs for Research Administration](#)

Animal Care

Animal Care is vital to the continuation and integrity of research at Rutgers University, and the staff are considered essential employees. In light of the current uncertainties, we have banned all imports of animals and all handled surfaces in the vivaria are being disinfected 3x daily. The following Frequently Asked Questions outline the strategy for maintaining the animal care and the facilities, and detail essential versus non-essential activities:

[FAQs for Animal Care COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness](#)