

Research Enterprise Transition to Phase 2

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your efforts to enable the continued safe transition for VUMC research enterprise operations during the Phase 1 that commenced May 11. Beginning June 9, 2020, VUMC will progress to Phase 2 for research operations, as described in the **Updated Guidance for VUMC Research Enterprise Functions:**

<https://www.vumc.org/oor/contingency-and-continuity-planning-vumc-research-labs-and-cores#3WLD633jcUK90rO7BFHh>

The Guidance is aligned to the Metro Roadmap for Reopening Nashville <https://www.asafenashville.org/roadmap-for-reopening-nashville/>, and calls for gradual expansion of research on site that can be conducted safely with physical distancing, wearing of masks in public and shared workspaces, and adherence to universal COVID-19 precautions, while enabling next-step Phase 2 expansion as follows:

- Prioritizing extramurally-funded wet-bench and human participant research activities on and off campus can occur, **which can be conducted safely with physical distancing and universal COVID-19 precautions.** This can be up to 75% capacity for many VUMC labs. Note: for PIs who are mentoring VU graduate students, follow VU guidance for capacity maximums.
- Continued implementation of training and programs that allow participants to meet remotely to the extent possible; creation of new programs as needed to foster remote learning
- Gatherings of up to 25 people are permitted **if physical distancing can be achieved.** Note: for PIs who are mentoring VU graduate students, follow VU guidance for capacity maximums.
- Avoid use of shared break areas and supplies and if utilized, disinfect supplies and all surfaces before and after use

As a reminder, most “dry lab” research focused on computational and related activities, and research administrative support staff, should continue to follow “work from home” as much as possible.

Resources that can facilitate your lab’s ongoing transition are updated regularly on the Office of Research’s Contingency and Continuity Planning site:

<https://www.vumc.org/oor/contingency-and-continuity-planning-vumc-research-labs-and-cores>

As we transition to Phase 2, we ask you to spend significant time with your research groups reviewing your team’s plan for this next-step transition and determining best approaches to strict physical distancing, associated staggering of work schedules, disinfection protocols and maintaining a safe environment.

We are planning a Research Town Hall via Zoom (date and time forthcoming) to provide a further opportunity to share further information and our learnings from Phase 1 experiences. In the interim, we will continue to send communication and resources – watch for updates in MyVUMC, the OSP listserv, the Office of Research Weekly Update, and other communication channels.

Be vigilant and stay well,

Jennifer Pietenpol