

March 11, 2020

Dear UofL Research Community,

The University of Louisville leadership continues to monitor the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus and the disease it causes, COVID-19. With the ongoing concern about the outbreak and a confirmed local case of COVID-19 here in Jefferson County, UofL researchers and research staff should begin to plan for possible impacts to research activities. Planning now will help to ensure the continuity of critical research functions and to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on your research programs and on the research mission of the University of Louisville. While each research program, laboratory, and facility is unique, there are some general steps that can be taken now to limit the impact that a disruption to operations may have on the research enterprise.

**Communications:** It is important to ensure that you have access to contact information for all of your research staff, including cell phone numbers. Remind research personnel of your communication plan (or create one if not already in place), including the designation of key points of contact that can ensure the distribution of timely information. Please review contingency plans and emergency procedures with research personnel to ensure they know what to do in the event of limited or suspended operations.

**Assess and prioritize critical research activities:** Researchers and research programs should assess their upcoming experiments and activities and consider how these plans might be impacted if some personnel are out sick, unable to come to work, or unable to travel to off-site locations. Cross training of staff on essential research (e.g., cell line maintenance) and administrative functions can help to ensure the continuity of research programs during staff absences. Research programs may also consider prioritizing activities that require equipment and other resources that are only available in university facilities and delaying activities that can be carried out remotely.

**Review and assess research resources, including research animals:** As the impact of COVID-19 on research supply chains is unknown at this time, researchers should review inventories for critical supplies and reagents and orders for upcoming experiments and activities. Researchers should strongly consider only placing orders for essential animal experiments and limiting breeding to what is absolutely necessary at this time. Research programs should also consider how research materials, resources, and orders/shipments could be impacted by staff absences and limited university operations.

**Review remote access to research data and information:** All researchers and research staff should confirm that they have access to data and information that is needed to continue research activities remotely should access to university facilities become limited. UofL [GlobalProtect Virtual Private Network \(VPN\)](#) will allow for UofL research faculty and staff to securely connect to university resources from a remote, off-campus location. Examples of research activities that can be conducted when away from campus include data analysis, proposal and manuscript preparation, and the development of surveys, protocols, and standard operating procedures.

**Sponsored Programs and other research administration considerations:** Offices under the Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation are actively reviewing and updating business continuity plans to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on UofL research activities. At

this time, we anticipate that these offices will be able to continue to deliver critical support for high priority activities (e.g., proposal submissions, IRB reviews, etc.), even if staff must work remotely. However, please note that some research administration activities may be impacted by the approach and decisions that are made by external parties (e.g., federal funding agencies) in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. We are actively monitoring communications from key federal agencies in order to understand the impact of COVID-19 on UofL proposals and awards. As examples, the National Science Foundation (NSF) recently released an [FAQ document on COVID-19 for NSF awardees](#) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has issued [guidance on application delays related to COVID-19 closures](#).

In the face of this unprecedented situation, UofL's leadership team is committed to keeping the research community informed, to helping you prepare, and to mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on your research programs and scholarly efforts. We will continue to provide periodic updates to the research community via email and are here to address any questions or concerns that you may have. Please feel free to submit any questions, concerns, or thoughts on COVID-19 as they relate to UofL research activities to [evpri@louisville.edu](mailto:evpri@louisville.edu).

For additional information and updates on COVID-19 please visit [UofL's dedicated COVID-19 webpage](#).

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin H. Gardner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

Kevin H. Gardner, Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation  
University of Louisville