

From the EVPRI: Remote Work Guidelines for the University of Louisville Research Community

March 15, 2020

Colleagues,

Dr. Bendapudi communicated today that the University should begin to work remotely where possible by Wednesday, March 18, 2020. Note that this is not a closure of the university, but is intended for us to be able to continue critical functions while minimizing the spread of the coronavirus. This communication is a follow-up to the planning we requested of the research community on [March 11, 2020](#), and is provided as a supplement to the [President's message from March 14, 2020](#).

At this time, all researchers should implement plans to move to remote work where possible by Wednesday, March 18. In keeping with the guidance and FAQs provided earlier by my office (available here <https://louisville.edu/research/covid19resources> and here <https://louisville.edu/research/covid19resources/faq>), research labs should begin implementation. Here is guidance and expectations for this.

All research laboratories and facilities should ramp down non-essential research activities whether on- or off-campus, involving human subjects, or any other qualifiers. Research with SARS-COV-2, COVID-19 and related activities necessarily should continue. Essential research activities that will continue on campus or with human subjects need to be communicated to and approved by the Dean or Vice President/Provost in charge of your unit. Examples of essential activity include maintaining unique cell lines, maintaining instruments that can't be easily shut down, maintaining animal populations, and maintaining research for which shutting down would be excessively costly or would result in significant loss of data. Deans and VPs are required to develop a list of the essential research that will continue on campus and the steps that will be taken to minimize coronavirus exposure and spread by Wednesday, March 18, and provide that to the EVPRI. The EVPRI will make the final determination of essential research activities.

Research laboratories and all investigators should immediately implement plans to:

1. Communicate with their Deans to receive approval for critical research components that, if not continued, would result in significant cost or loss of data. This should include plans for ensuring the safety of the workers required for those activities to continue
2. Implement approaches to maintain critical research functions while protecting the health of workers and human subjects, which include strategies for de-densifying personnel (i.e., social distancing), scheduling shift work when possible and putting in place operating procedures to ensure a working environment that will mitigate spread of the virus, including routine cleaning of all work surfaces.
3. Continue to plan for the laboratory to continue research under a potentially long-term (6-8 week) remote work requirement. Currently, we are working with an April 5 timeline for remote work, but planning for a longer-term shutdown should be part of your preparations.

4. Laboratories should, where possible, shift to conducting remote work, which may include drafting proposals, manuscripts and data analysis.
5. Clinical trials should halt all new enrollments (inpatient and outpatient) and convert all outpatient follow-up visits to phone or remote modality whenever possible.

Researchers are directed to existing resources and guidance from federal agencies and the UofL Research and Innovation Office. These resources are compiled and updated at this address: <https://louisville.edu/research/covid19resources>.

Questions should be addressed to Kevin Gardner, Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation (kevin.gardner@louisville.edu), and Kevyn Merten, Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation (kevyn.merten@louisville.edu).