



Provost's Center

To: All Penn Faculty
From: Wendell Pritchett, Provost
J. Larry Jameson, Executive Vice President for the Health System
Dawn Bonnell, Vice Provost for Research
Date: March 16, 2020
Re: **New Measures for Research at Penn in Response to COVID-19**

In the face of the urgent public health crisis caused by COVID-19, the University of Pennsylvania is instituting new measures to protect the health and safety of our community, as well as to maintain the capability of our health system. All researchers should immediately prepare to discontinue all non-essential on-campus research activities on or before March 17. Our research efforts to combat COVID-19 will continue, and they represent an example of the very limited essential research that should continue.

The deans of the Schools have been consulted in the development of these decisions. They understand the diversity of activities that constitute our research enterprise and are aware of the impact of these decisions on those activities. Our peer institutions are taking similar measures, as we all recognize the importance of minimizing the spread of COVID-19.

Beginning March 18, access to labs will be limited to essential personnel who perform critical procedures or processes that require regular attention to maintain the long-term viability of the laboratory, reagents, animals, and equipment. Please provide your divisional/departmental business offices with an updated list of essential personnel and contact information by March 17.

Access should be coordinated so that these functions are maintained using the fewest number of essential personnel. The most stringent social distancing should be practiced. Frequent handwashing and disinfectant cleaning protocols should be implemented in the labs. Anyone who is ill should remain at home.

Be assured that our staff in Environmental Health and Radiation Safety and University Laboratory Animal Resources, who are defined as essential personnel, have robust continuity programs to support the campus during this time. Additionally, the units of the Office of Vice Provost for Research, including the Institutional Review Board and the Office of Research Services, will be fully functional using remote protocols.

We understand how disruptive these events are for your scholarly work and training activities. We encourage you to use this time creatively to network remotely, analyze data, write research papers and reviews, and prepare grants. We also recognize the stress caused by this disruption, and we are prepared to work with the academic affairs and human resources groups in your schools to minimize the impact on professional advancement. Funding and institutional support for staff, students, and postdocs should continue as usual, even though personnel are off campus. We will update guidance on these and

other issues on a regular basis: <https://research.upenn.edu/resources/coronavirus/>

We are grateful for your cooperation in helping to keep our community safe, as we work together to do our part to confront this global crisis.

Wendell Pritchett, Provost

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