



## **Plan for Resumption of Research, Phase I School of Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania**

The University of Pennsylvania has issued a [Research Resumption Plan](#) that will allow researchers to return to campus for essential research activities in three phases. The plan sets forth the following principles to guide the return to campus research:

- Minimize risks, to protect the physical and mental health and safety of the research community, clinical patients, human research subjects, and the community at large.
- Minimize adverse impact on early stage researchers.
- Sustain the highest levels of excellence in research.
- Prioritize COVID-19-related research across all fields.

The three phases for research resumption as described in the University plan are:

- **Phase I:** Increase of prioritized research, with enforced population density restrictions and telework continued.
- **Phase II:** Expanded scope of research operations, increasing the population with social distancing enforced, telework continued.
- **Phase III:** Return to full research operations, with new awareness and hygiene practices as the norm and telework utilized where possible.

The resumption of research in SAS will take place in alignment with University policy and guidance, recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and mandates from other relevant Federal agencies, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the City of Philadelphia. Regardless of the phase of research resumption, the School must anticipate potential short-notice quarantines that would require rapid ramp-downs of campus research activity. University restrictions, if any, on travel, meeting size, and use of general spaces will be superimposed on the gradual escalation of research activities on campus.

In developing and carrying out its plans, SAS is mindful of the breadth of research activity that takes place in a large school of arts and sciences, and has consulted with the seven-member SAS Research Resumption Committee consisting of standing faculty from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

### **Phase I Overview**

The School of Arts and Sciences will commence Phase I no sooner than June 8, 2020. Its goal is to enable research that requires access to Penn campus facilities. Faculty are expected to

continue to work remotely wherever possible. As Phase I begins, it does not permit research and fieldwork involving domestic or international travel, which remain prohibited by the University at this time, or research involving domestic or international travel to the Penn campus by research colleagues or participants in studies involving human subjects, as the University continues to prohibit all non-Penn visitors to the campus.

Returning to campus in Phase I is voluntary. No person should be pressured to return, including any individual who is part of a research group that has requested and been granted campus access. Undergraduates may not return to campus during Phase I.

The School has developed the following processes for Phase I research. They include a process for requesting access; for monitoring safety and health on campus; and for ensuring that graduate students and post-doctoral students actively opt-in to any on-campus research activities. These SAS processes do not apply to research involving the Penn Libraries or Penn Museum, which will issue their own procedures for re-opening.

### **Evaluating, Approving, and Providing Ongoing Oversight of Researchers' Resumption Plans**

Each faculty researcher in the School requesting on-campus access for Phase I of research resumption will fill out an online form. The form requests information regarding

- Locations and type of access (ongoing, one-time, etc.) required
- Lab personnel for whom access is requested
- Nature of the research to be carried out, why it requires on-campus research, and additional information to facilitate prioritization of requests during Phase I
- Need for access to core and other shared facilities
- Whether the research involves vertebrate animals or human subjects. In these cases, plans to coordinate with University Laboratory Animal Resources (ULAR, for vertebrate animals) and protect the health and safety of subjects are requested.
- A COVID-19 social distancing/safety plan that includes a description of the maximum number of people in each space at any one time, plans for shifts, description of how social distancing will be maintained, and plans for sanitizing equipment and surfaces. The plan also prompts for any extra measures that the lab plans to take in cases where the research requires more than one person to work in proximity.
- A ramp-down plan if ramp-down of research becomes necessary.

The form also requires each lab-based faculty researcher to confirm the following for his or her research group:

- Return to campus for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and staff is voluntary.
- All lab-based research participants will complete Penn's Environmental Health and Radiation Safety (EHRS) Penn COVID-19 training for lab researchers prior to returning for campus.

- The ERHS notification form will be filled out prior to resumption of lab-based research.
- Personnel will enter buildings through a designated location and agree to follow designated routes through buildings as well as to complete the health checklist/symptom screening procedure each day (described below) before entry to campus buildings.
- Personnel will obtain a Penn-provided mask that covers the face and nose when on campus, and follow EHRS procedures for wearing and storing the mask. In SAS, masks will be initially distributed at designated building entries.
- Personnel may be asked to follow additional requirements for PPE prescribed by EHRS as part of the approval of your specific research protocols.
- Personnel will wash their hands at least once per hour using soap/water or hand sanitizer and after being in a public place or blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- In case of a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case, personnel will notify their supervisor, consult a healthcare provider, and report to EHRS for contact tracing (215-898-4453).
- Research groups will keep their time on campus to the minimum needed to carry out designated research during Phase I, and maximize research activities carried out remotely.
- The group has a communication plan.
- That the group will follow all COVID-19 related and other safety requirements, and that failure to do so may result in the revocation of on-campus research access.

A subset of these items relevant to non-laboratory research is also asked in the online form.

The School will review each plan for safety, and approve, disapprove, or request modification of each plan. The safety review will confirm adherence of the plan to [VPR research resumption guidelines](#) with respect to social distancing and other requirements, and will be carried out by the divisional deans in consultation with department chairs, center and program directors, SAS Facilities, and the appropriate University oversight offices.

As part of approval notification, the faculty member will be provided with the SAS checklist of return to work requirements that all personnel must adhere to as part of the approval process (Appendix), and will distribute this checklist to all approved personnel in the research group.

Each lab will have a designated COVID-19 coordinator who is responsible for reviewing the lab's social distancing and safety plan, keeping the plan up to date as conditions change, and ensuring that all lab personnel are kept informed about the plan. This person can be the PI or a designated staff member. For ongoing oversight, the lab COVID-19 coordinator will be asked to notify their department chair and divisional dean if they would like to make any changes to their plan as Phase I continues and/or Phase II commences. Such requests will be reviewed by the same process as described above. In addition, the COVID-19 coordinator will be asked to report to the department chair and divisional dean any concerns or suggestions about operating procedures as experience is gained with managing lab operations under COVID-19

conditions. The COVID-19 coordinator will also be notified as any changes in University guidance occur.

Core directors will be asked to provide the same type of information for their core facilities, and these will be reviewed using the same procedures.

### **Approval of Research Activities and Managing Population Density Across Floors, Buildings, Departments, and Core Facilities**

The School will commence Phase 1 no sooner than June 8, 2020.

Approval of research will be done by the SAS deans in consultation with department chairs, and organized at the building level. This prioritization is closely coupled with managing population density within buildings and floors.

For the most part, SAS expects that since each group has separate lab space, ensuring appropriate density within each group's space will be consistent with the overall density target of 20% during Phase I, as the requirements of the individual social distancing plans are expected to yield within-group densities at this level.

Building level coordination will be required, however, to ensure that density requirements are met in cases where multiple groups require access to shared instrumentation or other shared spaces. SAS will estimate 20% density in each space based on its records of the number of people who normally occupy each building/floor/wing. These estimates will be compared to a second estimate of one person per 500 sq. ft. of research space, and an overall acceptable Phase I head count determined by comparing these two numbers and considering the physical layout of rooms within each space. For example, two people in a 500 sq. ft. space may be acceptable if each person is in a separate 250 sq. ft. room, but not if both will be in a single 500 sq. ft. room. In all cases, the number of people will be constrained by the need to maintain a minimum 6 foot separation between people at regular working distance, and also in light of the need in some cases for there to be two people in a space to provide "safety buddies" for certain types of laboratory work. The number of building staff (housekeeping, facilities) required in each space will be included in total headcounts.

In cases where a research group's proposed density cannot be accommodated because of building/floor/wing level considerations, the SAS deans will determine what proposed activities cannot be approved, in consultation with department chairs. Considerations used in such prioritization will include whether the research is related directly to ameliorating the COVID-19 pandemic; to ensuring that junior faculty can continue to make progress towards promotion; to allowing senior graduate students to complete their degrees in a timely fashion; and to allowing faculty to meet milestones established by their funded grants.

In some cases, SAS faculty may use research space in buildings managed by other schools, and vice versa. In these cases, the home school will approve the social distancing/safety plan, and

will then coordinate with the school managing the building to ensure building-level density and safety.

Requests for one-time access to campus to retrieve materials will be approved via a streamlined process coordinated at the building level by the relevant department chairs, so as to ensure that only a small number of people are accessing any given building for this reason at any given time.

This plan does not address field work and work in the community, nor procedures for approval of non-clinical in person human subjects research, as travel to and from campus is currently not allowed. The School will submit an addendum to this plan to address these types of research at the time when enabling them comes.

### **Building Issues: Pedestrian Flow and Sanitation**

SAS Facilities will work with EHRS and Penn's Facilities and Real Estate Services (FRES) to designate entry points for each building it manages and to designate the flow of people through buildings, determine maximum occupancy for elevators, mark floors so that minimum distance between people can be gauged, and place appropriate signage in the building. Hand sanitizer will be made available at multiple points within each building, and sanitizer for surfaces and equipment will be provided to labs in SAS-managed buildings.

The following is a summary of the high touch points that will be disinfected multiple times per day by housekeeping, in addition to the one-time daily cleaning:

- Entranceways: Interior/exterior door knobs and push bars
- Elevators: Buttons and doors
- Stairwells: Handrails, door knobs and push bars
- Classrooms/Study Rooms/Conference Rooms: Door knobs and handles
- Common Spaces and Hallways: Bottle fill stations, light switches, door handles
- Labs: Door knobs, push bars and light switches
- Lounges/Kitchenettes: Door knobs and handles, light switches, horizontal surfaces (if clear of objects)
- Restrooms: Door handles, light switches, sinks, faucets, and restroom fixtures

SAS has procured EHRS-approved masks and storage bags, and these will be distributed to researchers at the designated entrance points along with instructions about their use.

SAS will be utilizing the University-established processes and protocols related to symptom screening when they become available. These protocols are anticipated to include a mobile device app that both requires attestation of being symptom-free and also facilitates contact tracing in case of an outbreak on campus. Until that time, personnel will be instructed to self-monitor for symptoms and not to come to campus if they are showing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 (see EHRS list of symptoms [here](#), as well as Appendix).

## **Establishment of Policies on Meetings and Use of General Space that Aligns with University Requirements**

No in-person meetings will be allowed in Phase I. Use of common space will be coordinated at the building level (see above) to ensure that only an acceptable number of people will occupy common spaces at any one time (e.g. lunch spaces, restrooms). Users will be instructed to clean surfaces in common spaces they use both before and after use, and disinfectant will be made available for such cleaning.

## **Plan to Report Reporting COVID-19 Positive Cases to EHRS/Student Health for Contact Tracing**

See above. In the event of a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case, personnel will notify their supervisor, consult a healthcare provider, and report to EHRS for contact tracing (215-898-4453). Graduate students will be informed that as part of this process, they must notify student health.

## **Opt-In Plan for Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows**

Each graduate student and post-doctoral fellow in the School will fill out a form if they wish to opt-in to on-campus research activity during Phase I. These forms will be submitted directly to the SAS Dean's office and reviewed by the relevant divisional dean in coordination with Dean's office staff; direct supervisors will not be involved with the review for any graduate student or post-doc. The preamble to the form stresses the voluntary nature of the opt-in process, and provides Provost-level contact information for students/post-docs with any concerns. The form also asks for a short description of the research the student/post-doc is opting in to resume, as well as requiring confirmation that all COVID-19 related and other safety requirements will be followed.

The School will verify that each graduate student/post-doc listed in individual faculty plans has independently opted-in to resume research.

As part of approval notification, graduate students and post-docs will be provided with the SAS checklist of return to work requirements that they must adhere to as part of the approval process (Appendix).

## **Confirming that Return to Work Training has been Completed**

See above. As confirmed by each faculty member as part of the research resumption form, each group will confirm that the EHRS COVID-19 training has been completed by each group member returning to campus for ongoing laboratory research.

## **Mechanism for Labs to Notify EHRS of Research Activity Resumption**

See above. Each laboratory research group will fill out the appropriate ERHS notification form

at prior to resumption of lab-based research.

### **Consideration of Ramping Down Research if Another Surge Occurs**

See above. Each laboratory research group will provide a ramp-down plan, in case ramp-down is necessary.

### **Plan for Staff to Report Concerns or Non-Compliance**

All personnel approved for return to campus for Phase I will be informed (see Checklist, Appendix) that they may contact their divisional dean within the School with any concerns or to report non-compliance with COVID-19 and other safety procedures, and also that they may contact the Research Compliance Officer in the Office of the Vice Provost for Research. Reports to divisional deans will be discussed and addressed by the Administrative Committee of the School of Arts and Sciences, which consists of the School's deans, in consultation with department chairs, EHRS, and the Office of the Vice Provost for Research as necessary. Communication to all approved groups will indicate this as well as the option of reporting to [Penn's Confidential Reporting Line](#).

*06/08/20*

## ***Appendix***

### **SAS Research Resumption Checklist**

Your proposal to return to research during Phase I of research resumption has been approved. As part of this approval, you agree to the following.

- You understand that return to campus for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and staff is voluntary.
- You will enter buildings through a designated location and follow designated traffic routes.
- You agree not to come to campus if you are experiencing any of the COVID-19 symptoms listed below.
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - New rash on your fingers or toes
  - New shortness of breath or trouble breathing
  - New cough, sore throat, congestion, or runny nose
  - Muscle or body aches, fatigue
  - Headache
  - Feeling extremely tired
  - Having a fever greater than 100°F or experiencing chills
  - Diarrhea and/or nausea and vomiting
- If you have any of the symptoms above, have been in close contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, or have a confirmed case of COVID-19, you will notify your supervisor, consult a healthcare provider, and report to Environmental Health and Radiation Safety (EHRS) for contact tracing (215-898-4453). For those in the research group, the supervisor is the faculty leader of the group. For faculty, the supervisors are the department chair and divisional dean. Faculty should also notify the department chair and divisional dean if any member of their group report a COVID-19 case (either confirmed or suspected). Graduate students should notify [campus student health](#), in addition to any other health care providers they consult with. You will then follow any self-isolation directions provided.
- The University expects to deploy phone apps to facilitate symptom monitoring and reporting, and to facilitate contact tracing. You agree to use these apps when they become available.
- You will obtain a Penn provided mask that covers your face and nose when on campus, and follow EHRS procedures for wearing and storing the mask. In SAS, masks will be distributed at designated building entries. EHRS procedures are described [here](#).
- You will follow any additional requirements for PPE prescribed as part of the approval of your specific research protocols.
- You know your research group's communication plan, and how to get in touch with each member of the group who is returning to campus.
- You will wash your hands at least once per hour using soap/water or hand sanitizer and after being in a public place or blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.



- You will keep your time on campus to the minimum needed to carry out the approved research during Phase I, and maximize research activities you carry out remotely.
- You will respect building operating hours established by the School.
- You will follow all COVID-19 related and other safety requirements, and you acknowledge that failure to do so may result in the revocation of your on-campus research access.
- You are aware that students and postdocs with concerns about the School-based procedures can contact [provost-ed@upenn.edu](mailto:provost-ed@upenn.edu) for students or [vpr@upenn.edu](mailto:vpr@upenn.edu) for postdocs.
- You are aware that any concerns about compliance with appropriate COVID-19 and other safety procedures may be reported to your divisional dean (Natural Sciences, David Brainard, [brainard@psych.upenn.edu](mailto:brainard@psych.upenn.edu); Social Sciences, Emily Hannum, [hannumem@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:hannumem@sas.upenn.edu); Humanities, Jeffrey Kallberg, [kallberg@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:kallberg@sas.upenn.edu)) or the Office of the Vice Provost for Research ([vpr@upenn.edu](mailto:vpr@upenn.edu)). Principal Investigators should also communicate to collaborators, students, postdocs, and staff that non-compliance with social distancing may be reported confidentially at <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/22868/index.html>

In addition, for lab-based research, you agree that

- You will complete Penn's Environmental Health and Radiation Safety (EHRS) Penn [COVID-19 training](#) for lab researchers prior to returning to the lab.
- If you are the faculty leader of the research group, you will ensure that the ERHS notification form at <https://ehrs.upenn.edu/covid-19/resumption-research-notification> has been filled out prior to resumption of lab-based research.
- If you are the faculty leader of the research group, you will ensure that the ERHS notification form at <https://ehrs.upenn.edu/covid-19/resumption-research-notification> has been filled out prior to resumption of lab-based research.