

Plan for In-person Research - TEMPLATE

Consult Office of Research Checklist for Developing a Return to In-person Research Plan for help with filling the template

Locations covered (list building and room numbers):

COVID-19 Supervisor

Name: Champak Chatterjee

Contact Info: 217-220-1196

A member of the group that can assume the COVID-19 Supervisor role in the PI's absence:

Name: Sumeet Singh

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Names of people conducting in-person research:

Sumeet Singh, Calvin Leonen, Marissa Parker, Yvonne Zhu, Andres Reyna, Jianming Kang.

Social and Physical Distancing

1. Attach lab floor plan. Label all the room(s)/work area(s) and for each room/work area indicate the maximum occupancy:
4 people in all spaces combined (Main Lab- BAG 152C, BAG 152, and BAG 162B. Office Space- BAG 152A, BAG 152D, Tissue Culture Room- BAG 467, Cold Room- BAG)
2. Describe a lab usage scheduling plan that will minimize the number of people in the lab at any given time and how it will be implemented:
 - Each single-hood bay is designated as a single occupancy workspace. To implement this policy, a shift system is introduced. Two main shifts are available: from 5:00am to 1:00 pm and from 1:15pm to 12:00am. The time between shifts is left to ensure sufficient time for cleanup and disinfection. A shared excel sheet and google calendar for equipment use is setup for group members. Before coming to work, every person must log in and sign up for a specific shift by Saturday evening of the preceding week. Only people whose workspaces are in the specific bay can sign up for time in that bay.
 - Google calendars will be used to sign-up for various instruments such as FPLC, HPLC, PCR and shakers. To ensure proper social and physical distancing, cold-rooms and each equipment can be used only by one person at the time.
 - To facilitate the communication within a group a slack channel dedicated exclusively to coordinating work in the lab has been set up for group members. This will allow effective communication about the changes in scheduling and lab policies.
3. Describe specific rules and policies that will be implemented in your group to ensure social and physical distancing measures:
 - As specified in 2, every bay (space with one hood and one bench) is designated as a single occupancy space.
 - To ensure that required 6 ft distance is maintained at all time, the use of common shared equipment located near workplaces (balances, freezers, gel-bench, rotary evaporators, centrifuges, pH meter, HPLC, FPLC) has to be verbally announced to the person working near the equipment and used only once that person verbally acknowledged and approved the request.
 - Gel-benches for running SDS-PAGE and western blots can be used by only one person at the time.
 - Moving through the passageways next to the freezers and centrifuges must be coordinated with the people working near them.
 - Do not wear headphones/earbuds in both ears while in the lab. You must be able to hear anyone trying to get your attention.
4. Describe the tasks and activities that can be safely performed in the lab:
 - All standard experiments and procedures can be performed in the lab, if required social and physical distancing requirements (6 ft apart) can be met.
 - Tasks that can be performed at home must be performed at home. Whenever possible, planning experiments, analyzing data, writing lab notebook notes, and similar activities should be done at home.
5. Describe the changes to the workspace(s) that have been made to ensure social and physical distancing and hygiene requirements:
 - To minimize the interaction with spaces and people outside of the lab, all items from the stockroom will be picked up by designated people at predetermined times twice a week. The pickup times on Tuesday and Thursday will be indicated on the group's google calendar.
 - Virtual signup procedures, using Google calendars, have replaced all physical procedures for equipment signup.

- The use of a keyboard and a mouse with the shared computers used to operate nanodrop, HPLC and FPLC will be handled with covering these with plastic wrap, using fresh gloves placed by the keyboards, and sanitizing sprays (70% ethanol), prior to and after use.
 - Cold-room use will be limited to one person with a 30 min gap between users.
 - Fabric covered chairs cannot be disinfected and should not be shared.
6. Describe how policies and measures have been communicated to group members (signage posted, e-mails, group meetings, etc):
This document has been shared with all group members. All group member doing research in person have signed a copy of this document, which is a part of the group safety manual. Signs reminding group members to wash hands regularly are posted at the entrance.
7. Describe how new members of your group will be trained. Please specify any training that can and should be done remotely, such as training for specific instruments, equipment, or software.
- Whenever possible, the training in common experimental techniques will be performed through video recordings and live video conferences.
 - A library of training videos available online (on sites like Youtube) for general laboratory techniques (vacuum traps, lyophilizers, Schlenk line techniques, dry ice and liquid nitrogen, etc) will be made available to incoming students.
 - If videos are not available online, senior students will record an instructional video. These will be recorded by the senior student alone, through desk-mounted video recording tools (like smartphones) or a computer camera that will be treated as a group resource/instrument, available to everybody in the group through cloud storage (google drive). Alternatively, the incoming student will observe the demonstration in real time through a virtual meeting.
 - Training for lab instruments (FPLC, HPLC, pH-meter, Autoclave) will be done offline through pre-recorded training videos and/or live virtual meetings.
 - Even after online training sessions, a more specific in-person training will be necessary at times. These training sessions will be performed observing Covid guidelines provided by the university: the two persons will always be required to keep a 6 ft distance, and will wear standard safety PPE, including protective face masks.
 - Before performing new experiments independently, the new group members will discuss a detailed plan and a risk assessment with a senior student in a virtual meeting.
 - When doing experiments, there will always be a senior researcher present in the nearby lab or office space.
 - In case of emergency, the second researcher will approach wearing standard PPE equipment, including face mask (personal or provided by the department).
 - Incoming students will not perform highly hazardous experiments that would normally necessitate the presence of a second researcher in the immediate vicinity. The hazardous part of such experiments will be performed by a senior researcher instead.
 - Interpretation of the experimental results and troubleshooting will be performed online with help of senior students and/or the PI whenever possible.

Responding to Illness

1. Describe how the University of Washington requirements for symptom assessment and attestation will be fulfilled:
- Before starting coming to the lab every member of the group must login to Workday <https://isc.uw.edu/> and **sign-off that they are healthy.**
 - Here is the list of symptoms that UW instructs us to look for:
 - [COVID-19 Symptom Attestation for Working On-Site](#)
 - **Since your last day of work, or since your last visit to a University facility, have you experienced any of the following symptoms:**
 - A new **fever** (100.4 F or higher) or a sense of having a fever?
 - A new **cough** that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
 - New **shortness of breath** that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
 - A new **sore throat** that you cannot attribute to another health condition?

- New **muscle aches** that you cannot attribute to another health condition or that may have been caused by a specific activity, such as physical exercise?
- New **respiratory symptoms**, such as sore throat, runny nose/nasal congestion or sneezing, that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- New **chills or repeated shaking with chills** that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- New **loss of taste or smell** that you cannot attribute to another health condition?

2. Describe the plan in case someone in the group develops COVID-19 symptoms:

- If at work, they must immediately go home. If at home, they are instructed to contact their health provider.
- In case a group member tests positive for COVID-19, they are instructed to immediately contact their PI, Paul Miller (paulmil@uw.edu (206) 543-1612), and **EH&S Employee Health Center at 206-685-1026 or emphlth@uw.edu**.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Workplace

1. Describe cleaning and disinfection protocols for high-touch surfaces, shared equipment, and common areas in the lab, including who is responsible:

- At the beginning and the end of every workday in the lab, each person must wipe off their bench, hood sash, and desk using 70% ethanol or isopropanol (IPA) solution.
- Before touching the handle from the inside, make sure you disinfect it using 70% ethanol or IPA solution.
- Before and after every use of a shared equipment, the user will clean the equipment surface with 70% ethanol or IPA solution.
- After every use, HPLC and FPLC columns will be sprayed down with 70% aqueous ethanol or isopropanol solution.
- Student office-space disinfection:
 - Any common item or surface used in the office space, including fridge handle, microwave surface, and the light switches must be wiped off with 70% ethanol or IPA solution before and after each use.
 - To minimize repeat exposure, the light in the breakroom should be left on during the day. First person in should turn it on and the last person out for the day should turn it off.
 - Food items stored in the breakroom fridge must be in a secondary container (such as a zip-lock bag or tupperware), that can be wiped down with ethanol before inserting into the fridge. (No Aluminum-foil as it has too many creases.) Bottles and cans should also be wiped down. 70% EtOH or IPA spray bottle will be available in the breakroom.
 - A spray bottle with 70% EtOH or IPA solution and paper towels are provided for each bay, the office space, and near shared equipment such as HPLC and FPLC.

Encouraging Good Hygiene

1. Describe measures in your group that will promote and enable uniformly good hygiene practices:

- Every time a person enters the lab, they should wash their hands with soap and water. Signs reminding people to wash their hands are placed at the lab entrance
- Every time a person takes their gloves off they should wash their hands.
- Every group member has been provided with hand sanitizer and they are strongly encouraged to carry it while at work.

2. Describe the lab policy for wearing a mask and other protective equipment:

- Wearing of a mask is discouraged while working with pyrophoric and flammable materials in the hood. In other situations, while in the lab, the group members are strongly encouraged to wear a mask. PPE required for the work in group's lab space (lab coat and glasses) is mandatory.
- Wearing a mask is required while working in the cold-room
- Before putting a mask on, taking it off, or adjusting it, take the gloves off and wash your hands with soap and water.
- When taking a mask off, do not touch the front of the mask.
- If using a reusable cloth mask, the mask must not be reused until after it has been laundered. Treat it as contaminated until then.
- Policy on wearing gloves in the lab:
 - While working in the lab everyone must wear gloves.
 - Do not touch your face, hair, phones, headphones, computers, or other private items while wearing gloves.
 - Gloves should be changed anytime they become contaminated or at the end of a specific operation (for example setting up an experiment). Gloves should be disposed in your personal trash box.
 - All shared equipment- HPLC/FPLC, PCR machine, balances, centrifuges, freezers, ovens, pH meters, peptide synthesizer, Schlenk line, rotary evaporators, and nitrogen tanks should be used only while wearing gloves.
 - All shared chemicals and reagents should be handled with gloves.
 - Every time a person takes their gloves off, they should wash their hands.

- Used gloves should only be placed in your own trash box.
- The use of gloves is not allowed in the office space or elsewhere outside of the lab unless specified by the departmental policies.

General

1. Provide a plan for training group members in COVID-19-related policies and procedures described in this document, including how the training will be documented:
All group members participated in determining the group policies related to COVID-19. Group policies have been discussed and reviewed at the zoom group meeting on (5/19/20). All group members have been provided with a digital copy of the policy and a digitally signed copy of the policy is available online.
2. Describe the plan for visitors. The plan should address symptom monitoring, attestation, and visitor log maintenance for all the visitors. (Visitors are defined as those who do not normally use these spaces, including both UW and non-UW personnel):
All visitors must contact a member of a Chatterjee group and organize a handoff of chemicals, solvents, or small instruments. All visitors must contact a lab member to schedule a visit in case they need to use an instrument located in our lab. Prior to the visit visitor will receive and acknowledge the receipt of this policy. Time for all visit and visitor's contact information will be stored in an online log (part of the group calendar). Signs informing visitors of social distancing requirements and lab hygiene will be posted on the front door of the lab.
3. Describe how group members will be informed of COVID-19-related policies for shared facilities and common spaces in the department:
All group members will be provided with a digital copy of any guidelines developed by the department. The group members must acknowledge the receipt of the copy by e-mail.
4. Describe any other COVID-19 related policies implemented in your group:
Please see the PDF document attached.