

Nelson Lab COVID-19 Reopening Protocol

(Modified from R. Klevit and C. Chatterjee Laboratory Guidelines)

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Laboratory Personnel

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Nelson Lab COVID Safety Training Documentation

All Nelson Lab members are required to read the Nelson Lab COVID-19 Reopening Protocol, as well as the UW Department of Chemistry reopening policy. Once you have fully read the reopening protocols, sign your name below.

I have read and understand the Nelson Lab COVID-19 Reopening Protocol, and the UW Department of Chemistry reopening policies. I understand that I am to follow the safety guidelines provided in order to resume research activity in the Nelson lab. I will comply with lab policy, as well as departmental policy to maintain a safe and healthy research environment.

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	

Laboratory Personnel in attendance at presentation of new protocols (5/26/2020): [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Introduction

1. Our goal is to slowly resume research activities while maintaining physical distancing and the health of our research group and the UW community. As a group, we will establish best practices that are (1) comfortable to follow during research, (2) easily adherable so that they become second nature when working in the lab.
2. Restarting research is **completely voluntary**. There is a lot of home-based research that can be conducted including writing papers/reviews and reading the literature. However, keep in mind that there is **no certainty as to when research will return to the old normal** and how long the wait will be. Therefore, learning how to practice good personal and social protection, while continuing to drive your projects and to advance science is going to be important for the road to recovery and for your contribution to human health.
3. If you feel sick or exhibit any combination of the current list of COVID19 symptoms, stay home. **If your health care provider suspects or confirms you have COVID-19, contact the EH&S Employee Health Center at 206-685-1026 or emphlth@uw.edu.**
4. We will have a phased re-opening. For the first week of re-opening, only 1 person will be allowed in each lab (427/421) at a time, 2 people total. After the first week of re-opening, 2 people will be allowed in each lab (427/421), 4 total. 1 person per lab bay.
5. The **Nelson Lab Google Calendar** will be used to document who is in the lab on any day, at any time. Sign up deadlines are **Friday night (8pm)** for the following Saturday/Sunday/Monday/Tuesday, and **Tuesday night (8pm)** for the following Wednesday/Thursday/Friday. Give yourself enough time to complete your experiments plus some time for cleaning and sanitation of used areas.
6. These lab-specific requirements are in addition to the current University guidance policies that can be found at the following websites:
 - a. Office of Research
 - i. (<https://www.washington.edu/research/or/guidance-for-returning-to-in-person-research/>)
 - b. EH&S General COVID Info
 - i. (<https://www.ehs.washington.edu/covid-19-health-and-safety-resources>)
 - c. University Requirements for COVID Prevention
 - i. (<https://www.ehs.washington.edu/system/files/resources/university-requirements-COVID-19-prevention-workplace.pdf>)

Section 1

1. **General Social Distancing Guidelines:** Current mandates require at least 6-feet between individuals to minimize risk of transmitting the virus. In order to maintain this spatial distance, **2 people will be allowed in each lab (427/421), 4 total. 1 person per lab bay.** Each person should work exclusively at their own bench unless using a designated shared bench space (i.e. Rheometers/Polymerization Hoods/3D Printers/Centrifuges etc.).
 - a. At least 6-feet must be maintained at all times. This may require you to wait until someone finishes and leaves a workspace before you can enter that area.
 - b. Lab mates that work in the same bay will require coordination so that their lab times do not overlap in order to ensure their ability to work at their bench safely.
 - c. If there is a person in the bay across from you, stand in a staggered arrangement in order to maximize the distance between you. A facemask is strongly recommended at all times.

The areas near (1) the centrifuge, (2) weigh station and (3) printers are points of constriction. Please plan such that congestion does not occur. Be flexible and communicate. You may have to wait until social distancing can be maintained before proceeding. Using these items while directly adjacent to a bay that is currently occupied by its user is only permissible if a 6-feet distance can be maintained. This also includes grabbing reagents or supplies that may be stored in various bays while occupied. Coordinate with each other to maintain physical distancing. Communicate loudly and clearly so there is no misunderstanding.

2. Scheduling:

- a. The Nelson Lab Google Calendar will be used to document who is in the lab on any day, at any time. You must sign-up and register ahead of time. **Sign up deadlines are Friday night (8pm) for the following Saturday-Tuesday, and Tuesday night (8pm) for the following Wednesday-Friday.** Be aware of who is signed-up in your office space and lab bay and do not sign up for times that will overlap with people in your lab bay.
- b. **For the first week of re-opening**, only 1 person will be allowed in each lab at a time, 2 people total.
- c. **After the first week of re-opening**, 2 people will be allowed in each lab (427/421), 4 total. 1 person per lab bay.
- d. **3 shifts per day.**
 - i. (4 hour blocks) 7-11am, 11:30am-3:30pm, 4-8pm.

- e. The rheometer and 3D printers will have their own, combined calendar for CHB 423A.
- f. You must **cross-schedule** for both your own hood in 427/421 and the shared instrument calendar. This ensures only 4 people are present in the lab at a time.
- g. The use of other shared instrumentation (centrifuges/weigh stations/solvent systems) does **not need to be specifically documented**.
- h. **For the first week**, priority will be given for those with immediate need for results (writing a paper/giving your defense/etc.)
- i. **If you previously signed up for time on the calendar**, but no longer need your scheduled time, communicate with the other people in your lab bay so they may utilize the lab space.
- j. **If there is unscheduled time past the deadlines** (Friday/Tuesday at 8pm), that time can be filled on a first come-first serve basis. Just make sure to document your lab usage on the appropriate google calendar.

Section 2

1. **Daily Attestations:** Before starting your work, UW requires you to **attest that you are not sick**. Please go to Workday <https://isc.uw.edu/> and sign-off that you are healthy before coming to campus. 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. A new fever (100.4 °F or higher) or a sense of having a fever?
- b. A new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- c. New shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- d. A new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- e. 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?
- f. New respiratory symptoms, such as sore throat, runny nose/nasal congestion or sneezing, that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- g. New chills or repeated shaking with chills that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- h. New loss of taste or smell that you cannot attribute to another health condition?

2. COVID Symptom Reporting:

- a. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms listed above, **stay home**. Do not come to work
- b. Contact your primary care physician and report symptoms to the Employee Health Center ((206) 685-1026, emphlth@uw.edu)
- c. Get tested.
- d. **Report testing results to the EHC**. If the results are positive, the EHC will conduct contact tracing.
- e. Quarantine will be prescribed on a **case by case basis** in accordance to results of contact tracing.

3. On Day 1:

- a. **AI must authorize reaccess to the lab on your first day back.**
- b. It is advisable not to conduct lengthy experiments on your first day.
- c. Identify travel accommodations (bike/walk/drive if possible), procure facemasks and other appropriate materials, and familiarize yourself with **all proper sanitation and disinfecting techniques**.
- d. Organize your workspace and prepare for your first set of experiments.

4. Entering the Lab:

- a. Before entering a lab or office space, **you must visually inspect the office space through the window and/or verbally announce your entry**. Wait for any occupants to respond to you.
- b. There may be no more than 2 people will be allowed in each lab (427/421), 4 total. 1 person per lab bay. If the room is already at capacity (2), you must wait until someone else leaves before you enter the room. Coordinate with the people inside.
- c. Upon entering the lab, **immediately wash your hands**.
- d. Spray door handles and light switches with 70% ethanol.

Section 3

1. Personal Hygiene:

- a. Hand-washing should be done **each time you enter the Nelson lab** (just as you would at home). An alcohol based hand sanitizer (60% or greater ethanol; 70% or greater isopropanol) is an adequate alternative for quick disinfecting.
- b. **Wearing a mask is strongly recommended.** A cloth mask or any barrier that is convenient for you is fine. This is to protect others around you even if you are healthy. **The Department is providing two cloth face masks for all users as well as hand sanitizer stations,** use these as much as you would like to in addition to our lab stocks. Remove and dispose of any PPE using sanitary technique.
- c. Masks are recommended at all times while working.

***General mask guidelines**

- a. Wash your hands before putting on your mask and after you take it off.
- b. The mask should fully cover your nose and mouth. Adjust the wire to fit over your nose if present.
- c. Refrain from touching the front of the mask while in use. Use the ear loops to adjust the mask if necessary.
- d. Use the ear loops to remove the mask and throw away if disposable; otherwise, carefully put away to be laundered before using again.
- e. EH&S also discourages the use of cloth masks for work with flammables and in biosafety level 2 or higher spaces.

2. Personal Workspace:

- a. Before and after lab activities, you must spray down your bench area with 70% EtOH.
- b. All shared glassware (e.g. beakers, graduated cylinders, shaker flasks, etc.), plasticware (e.g. centrifuge bottles/tubes, gel boxes and electrodes, etc.), and stir bars must be washed and appropriately put away. **Do not accumulate these items at your own drying racks.** This will help prevent entering into each other's bays looking for items.

3. Shared Lab Workspace:

- a. Wipe down shared equipment you used and spaces you worked in with 70% ethanol (centrifuge/3D printers/polymerization hoods/lyophilizer/vacuum oven/etc).

- b. Sign-up for certain shared equipment (Rheometer/3D printers) on the lab Google Calendar. Please sign up on these calendars the Friday/Tuesday beforehand of using the equipment. This will give everyone the opportunity to plan which equipment they will use. As always, wipe down the handles/surfaces you touch. ***Even if no one is signed up and you need to use it quickly, still add your name so we can keep track of who is using it**
- c. Shared computers (GPC/Rheometer) will require special care with respect to keyboard usage. **Saran wrap will be used to cover the keyboards and replaced before each use.** Throw away used saran wrap after you are done.
- d. You must maintain 6-feet distancing at all times. There may be no more than 2 people will be allowed in each lab (427/421), 4 total. 1 person per lab bay. Only 1 person is allowed in the chemical storage room (CHB 423) at a time. **No exceptions.** This is a compact space that does not allow for proper social distancing. Disinfect handles with 70% ethanol before/after use.

4. Shared Office Workspace:

- a. The Nelson Lab office space may not allow for adequate 6-feet distancing depending on who is in the office at the time (e.g. users of adjacent desks). Because proper social distancing must be adhered to at all times, **there may only be 2 people in each lab office space (427/421A) and each person must be seated at opposite sides of the office.** Be flexible and communicate. If two people with adjacent desks want to work at the same time, one will have to move into the lab space.
- b. **Only 1 person is allowed in the annex at a time.** There is limited space and airflow in this room and more than one person significantly increases chance of transmission,
- c. Make sure to use your own desk and disinfect before and after use with 70% ethanol. You must also use your own desk chair since cloth fabric chairs are not easily cleanable.
- d. **For shared office items (such as coffee pot/microwave/refrigerator),** you must make sure to disinfect before/after use as effectively as possible. Also, if there is a person's desk adjacent to this shared item, make sure they have vacated the area before accessing it. Again, be flexible and communicate.
- e. **Food and drinks in the office space is not recommended.** Plan accordingly and try to eat before/after coming into the lab.
- f. Generally try to avoid doing computer work in the office - stay for as long as you need to set up your experiments, then finish computer work at home.

5. Visitors and External Collaborators in Our Workspace

All visitors must read the Nelson Lab Covid-19 Re-Opening Protocol and add their names to the list below prior to entering the lab. Visitors must sign in and sign out using the visitors log located outside of CHB 427. A printed copy of the Nelson Lab Covid-19 Re-Opening Protocol will be available next to the sign-in sheet. Gelb lab members may access the -80 C freezer in CHB 421 by first clearly announcing themselves BEFORE entering the laboratory. Visitors must also sign a symptom attestation to ensure they have not experienced symptoms of COVID-19 on the day they plan to share the Nelson Lab workspace. This form can be found in the Nelson group COVID safety guidelines folder on the shared google drive, and printed copies will be available outside of CHB 427.

6. External Shared Workspace:

*** These facilities should have their own guidelines/protocols for re-opening and ensuring a safe work environment. Please contact them ahead of time, and familiarize yourself with each specific protocol before conducting research in these facilities.**

- a. Stockroom (BAG 36) ([Department protocol](#))
- b. NMR Facility (Bag 37/46B) ([Department protocol](#))
- c. Shared Instrument Room (BAG 83) ([Department protocol](#))
- d. Cold rooms ([Department protocol](#))
- e. Bulk Solvent Room (CHB G055) ([Department protocol](#))
- f. Molecular Analysis Facility (MAF in MoLES)
- g. Research Training Testbeds (RTT in NanoES)
- h. Washington Clean Energy Testbeds ([WCET](#))
- i. Instron testing room (Mechanical engineering)
- j. Other shared lab spaces (Zalatan/Vaughn/etc.)

7. External Shared Common Spaces

- a. CHB and Bagley have **designated sanitation stations**. Please utilize them whenever coming in or leaving work.
- b. Elevators should be avoided unless there's no alternative (for example, transporting heavy solvent bottles from the stockroom). **1 person in the elevator at a time.**
- c. **Except in emergencies**, stairwells are designated for one direction only (up or down).
- d. All stairwells in Bagley Hall and Chemistry Building are unidirectional.
- e. Signs are posted on every floor and on every stairwell door labeling directionality.

- f. All bathrooms are **single occupancy only**.
- g. **Conference rooms are closed and are not available for routine use.** In extraordinary circumstances, you may petition the department for permission to use these rooms.

8. Exiting the Lab:

- a. Clean your benchtop and any shared equipment with 70% EtOH.
- b. All shared glassware, plasticware and stir bars must be cleaned appropriately and put away in a timely fashion; do not let them accumulate. This will help prevent entering each other's workspaces to look for items.
- c. Wipe down office space with 70% EtOH.
- d. Thoroughly wash hands before leaving, and spray light switches and door handles as you leave.

Section 4: Map of 4th floor CHB

The Nelson laboratory occupies 421, 421A, 423, 423A, 427, and 427A.

