



TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY™

Reopening Research Laboratories

CHECKLIST FOR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

This checklist is not exhaustive and some items may not be applicable. This list is meant to help provide a starting block to safely reopen labs. Please review prior to restarting research and reach out to EH&S for any assistance needed: (940) 268-3473

Maintain social distancing (keep individuals ≥ 6 feet apart whenever possible)

- Establish social distancing protocols for:
 - Lab spaces for individual research teams
 - Shared office spaces
 - Break areas/food preparation areas
 - Field locations
 - Shared research space such as electron microscopy, autoclaves, -80° freezers
- Stagger shifts to prevent multiple people in spaces at the same time, as necessary
- Conduct tasks (e.g. meetings, data analysis, literature review) remotely when possible

Review laboratory safety protocols

- Review/update Standard Operating Procedures related to Chemical Hygiene Plan
- Survey spill kit inventory and update as needed

Survey laboratory for unsafe conditions

- Mitigate any chemical leaks, spills, or releases
- Mitigate any biological leaks, spills, or releases
- Clean up/put away chemicals, supplies, equipment, glassware, and other items left out during the shutdown
- Manage any expired, outdated, peroxide-forming, self-reactive, or other reagents with a limited lifespan appropriately
- Secure, correctly label, and/or [request a pickup](#) for Hazardous Wastes
- Manage any medical or biological wastes appropriately

Review equipment operation safety

- Review equipment manuals for safe start-up instructions
- Review equipment state and safely release or mitigate any stored up energy sources
- Review start-up procedure for any compressed gas cylinders or gas distribution systems
- Ensure CO₂ is safely back on to incubators
- Review water purification systems for potential purging

Prepare for supply chain disruptions and limited availability

- Recognize that order placement may be slower as the volume of requests increases
- Plan for limited sales of high demand items (e.g. EtOH)
- Plan for limited Personal Protective Equipment availability (including N95s, face shields, and nitrile gloves)
- Plan for some reagents having limited availability

- Plan for some consumables having limited availability

Confirm normal fume hood operation

- Confirm that hood is in working order (*may need assistance from EH&S*)
- Confirm everyone in the laboratory knows how to operate the hood

Review animal research

- Research with animals is prohibited at this time as IACUC protocols are closed. Upon approval from IACUC, guidelines will be provided for safe proceedings. Ongoing feeding, care, and maintenance of animal colonies may continue as already approved.

Human subject research

- Research on human subjects is prohibited at this time. Upon approval from IRB/Provost, guidelines will be provided for safe proceedings

GENERAL LAB MEMBER HYGIENE

All persons entering the lab will:

- Wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds
- Put on a mask/face cover at the door, if needed (*required if maintaining ≥ 6 feet of social distancing is not possible for lab tasks*)
- Put on safety glasses, if needed
- Put on lab coat
- Put on gloves

All persons exiting the lab, at the laboratory exit, will:

- Remove gloves
- Remove lab coat
- Wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds
- Remove safety glasses, if needed
- Exit by touching the door handle with the elbow or hip/side, use a wipe, etc. (i.e. not with hands)

Disinfecting high-touch surfaces

- Three times daily, disinfect surfaces such as:
 - Door handles
 - Faucet handles
 - Refrigerator/freezer handles
 - Cabinet/drawer pulls
 - Fume hood sashes
 - Benchtops
 - Pipettors

Masks or face coverings are required to be worn if social distancing is not possible to complete your task, and recommended anytime where social distancing is difficult. Wash or sanitize hands before and after removing the face covering. Gloves should not be worn outside of the lab; frequent handwashing is encouraged instead.

