

Wet Lab Research Ramp-up Guidelines – Stage 1

Guiding Principles of Wet Lab Research Ramp-up: Safe, Gradual, Flexible, Nested

Safe

Keeping teams healthy is the top priority.

- Masks (non-medical) will be provided on entry to Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute (RI).
- Nose and mouth must remain covered when in all CHOP and RI buildings.
- Easy access to handwashing and disinfectant wipes will be provided throughout labs and CHOP RI.
- Social distancing is required.
 - Personnel only on campus/in lab when necessary. All should work from home whenever possible.
 - Meetings that can be held virtually (including lab meetings) should be held virtually.
 - If it is absolutely necessary to hold an in-person meeting, allow six (6) ft distance around each person and minimize both the number of people (<10) and time spent together (<1h)
 - Maximize space between yourself and others in elevators: Limit Colket elevator occupancy to 5 people. Limit Abramson elevator occupancy to 4 people.
 - Low density and/or staggered personnel allowed in work areas
- Frequent cleaning of high-touch areas will be performed by Environmental Services.
- If you are ill or think you are ill, stay home. Consult your physician, and call the CHOP COVID-19 hotline: **1-800-722-7112**

Gradual

This is not a binary event where CHOP RI was “closed” and now is “open.” We currently are at the “essential worker” stage. On May 26, 2020, we will begin a gradual, staged increase to 25% in effort to keep a low number of total people in a lab at one given time. **Principal Investigators will ensure “in lab” effort is no greater than 25%. For example: Lab members total (including PI) = 12, only 3/12 members (including PI) can be at the CHOP RI at one time.**

Flexible

Remain flexible to pivot labs’ activities to next stage, or pivot back as epidemiological data drive decisions. Principal Investigators will work with staff individually to tailor best practices for returning to the lab, taking into consideration flexible schedules to address challenges at home, such as personal health, child care, elder care, or transportation.

Nested

Each Principal Investigator is responsible for developing plans that affect multiple areas of interaction (module, floor, and sphere), as described below. Consider your collaborators on other floors/in other institutes, your work with Core Facilities, and your work with DVR.

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Best Practices at Level of Principal Investigator

- a) **PI ensures lab members work from home whenever possible**
- (i) Work from home on data analysis, writing, image analysis, protocol preparation/review
 - (ii) Any meetings, such as lab meetings and one-on-one meetings will be virtual
 - (iii) PIs will allow flexible work hours. Staff members who are location critical should make the necessary arrangements to address their family and commuting needs so they can return to campus when needed.
- b) **PI prepares staged plan for in-lab work**
- (i) Plan for gradual, staged increase in effort: 25% => 50% => 75% “in-lab” effort. To keep a low number of total people in a lab at one time, PI needs to ensure both:
 - a. **Physical separation of lab members.** Examples (each lab space is different):
 - i. 1 person/bay, or 2 people/bay staying six feet apart; 1 person/small room
 - ii. Staggered use of common rooms or kitchenette
- **AND****
- b. **A limited percent of lab members are at CHOP RI at any given time.**
 - i. For example, at the 25% stage = If 12 lab members total (including PI), only 3/12 members (including PI) can be at CHOP RI at one time. Examples of how to keep to the allowed percentage:
 - 1. Stagger work schedules with either shift work (6-8h/shift) or alternating days or weeks
 - 2. Consider “groups” of lab members who may consistently work together (although still distantly) to avoid physical contact across all lab members. For example, Team A works M/W/F or Week #1 on one project, Team B T/Th or Week #2 on a second project
 - 3. For vivarium work, consider using 12 full hours of lights (6:15am-6:15pm). Use [DVR calendar signup](#).
- c) **Prior to implementing the staged increase, the PI will:**
- (i) Determine what hours and days lab members can come in to perform physical lab work
 - a. Of those lab members, what hours/days are they available?
 - i. Consider spreading out over 7d/week and using early/late hours
 - b. Of those lab members, what would they need?
 - i. For lab work: supplies, reagents, etc
 - ii. Do they need Core access? Are those Cores open?
 - iii. To get into lab: parking, commuting
 - c. Note: All PIs and staff will take a COVID-19 safety training module in “MyCareer Learning” prior to return to lab. If the PI or staff member is unable to access the training module remotely, please [make arrangements with Research Safety](#) to complete as soon as possible upon return to RI campus.

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- (ii) Remove personnel from CHOP Marketplace/Job Talent pool, if applicable
 - (iii) Determine what items are needed for **future stages** of lab work
 - a. Other reagents, supplies, personnel
 - b. Who else is in lab sphere? Core Facilities? Collaborators? Will collaborators need to work in lab simultaneously?
 - c. If working in DVR, [use CHOP wiki for all scheduling](#); sign up only for time required.
 - (iv) Determine a best scheduling and communication platform for lab members, collaborators, and anyone else in “lab sphere” (nearby administrators, neighboring lab personnel who may share package pickup duties, etc.)
 - a. Use online scheduling (e.g. google sheets or forms, Doodle, teamup, schedulebuilder).
 - i. *Urged to NOT use paper scheduling* for lab space, lab rooms, lab benches
 - b. Create and use real-time communication system (e.g. imessage, whatsapp) among lab member
 - i. Consider different thread for different needs (e.g. package delivery thread shared with personnel in shared module vs. lab personnel thread to alert when folks are going in/coming out of lab)
 - (v) Determine if the lab space is ready to be occupied
 - a. Is sufficient PPE available within the lab?
 - i. Non-medical masks (or masks appropriate for PI’s lab work) available in the lab?
 - ii. Gloves available to the lab per usual research needs?
 - iii. Disinfectant dispensers available?
 - iv. Cleaning supplies available (for example, to clean off fridge handles or sink handles between teams/shifts)?
 - b. Biosafety hoods certified?
- d) PI discusses plan (and perhaps lab personnel contact information) with other PIs in “module”**
- (i) May lead to adjustment of lab schedule for certain rooms
- e) PI should plan financially for future**
- (i) Request grant extensions
 - (ii) Consult with [assigned](#) Sponsored Projects Officer to explore supplemental funding opportunities and Research Business Manager for projections, etc.
- f) Communication and awareness are critical at all levels during the ramp-up**
- (i) If you are ill or think you are ill, **stay home**, and call the CHOP COVID-19 hotline: **1-800-722-7112**
 - (ii) Work with personal physician and CHOP hotline agents to assess your need to get tested
 - (iii) Inform the PI if working from home or using PPL, keep track of progress
- g) It will be the responsibility of the CHOP RI, Facilities, and Environmental Services to:**
- (i) Ensure each **floor** is ready for personnel to ease back in

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- a. Ensure paper towels, soap dispensers, disinfectant dispensers all available
 - i. In labs, kitchens, restrooms
 - ii. Elevator lobbies have disinfectant dispensers
- b. Arrange lab schedule for cleaning (so as not to disrupt lab work)
- c. Spread tables (and remove chairs) in common areas to prevent congregation, if possible.

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, we are constantly flexing to respond to new information. Please get in the habit of attending or listening to recordings of CHOP's weekly [virtual town halls](#) on COVID-19. If you cannot attend town halls, read the daily situational updates. The [@CHOP Bioresponse Team site](#) is the source for current information, guidelines, resources, and FAQs.