

Recommended Protocols for Safely Operating in Small, Enclosed Laboratory Spaces at the Research Institute

Overview:

The following recommendations are for the safe use of enclosed laboratory spaces by >1 laboratory personnel at a time. These recommendations are applicable to tissue culture rooms, microscope rooms, equipment rooms, freezer rooms, and all other small, enclosed laboratory spaces.

Recommendations:

Room considerations:

- Dimensions of the room should allow comfortable distancing of 6 feet or more. Practically, this is minimally a 9'x9' room with tables or desks against the wall.
- The room should be well ventilated. Ensure that there are two vents in the room, which represent a supply and exhaust. If there are no vents in a room, this space should be occupied by no more than one person at any given time. In the case of an unventilated room, wiping down surfaces upon completion of work (see below) is particularly important, and occupants should consider wiping down surfaces prior to commencing work.
- ARC and CTRB main lab spaces receive fresh air (not recirculated air), while ARC and CTRB office, break, and conference spaces receive recirculated air. Of note, smaller lab rooms (procedure rooms, hood rooms) in ARC may also have recirculated air. For more details, see "[General Ventilation Guidelines](#)" document that provides an overview of air changes per hour in ARC and CTRB.
- If you have any questions or concerns about the dimensions or ventilation of your laboratory space, please contact Facilities prior to proceeding.

Safely working in small, enclosed laboratory space:

- Individuals in the room should wear surgical masks tightly fitting and covering the mouth and nose. Masks should be worn at all times and never be lowered or removed.
- Gloves, lab coats, and other non-mask PPE should be worn based on the procedures being performed in the room.
- Ensure separation from other individuals in the room by 6 feet or more.
- The maximum number of personnel permitted in any of the smaller laboratory rooms is three.
- Moving within 6 feet of another individual is permitted for brief procedures, such as using a centrifuge or microscope. However, any actions that result in distances < 6 feet should be limited to 10 minutes or less.
- All movement within the room should be coordinated with others. Alert others ahead of time when you will be moving through the room, and alert others prior to entering the room.

Safely exiting and cleaning enclosed laboratory spaces:

- Wipe down surfaces you have been in contact with using 1% freshly made bleach followed by 70% ethanol. If a lab has access to disinfectant wipes, this is sufficient.

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- Wash hands thoroughly immediately upon leaving the room.
- Non-soiled masks should be kept in place. If soiled, masks can be replaced. This should be done quickly and immediately after soiling is detected. The only time non-soiled masks should be switched out is when required by certain lab procedures or upon entering certain DVR areas.

