

# Continued Guiding Principles of Wet Lab Research Ramp-up, Stage 3: Safe, Gradual, Flexible, Nested

## Safe

**Keeping teams healthy continues to be the top priority.**

- Consistently use the [Daily CHOP Check-in Tool](#), a web-based tool for the CHOP workforce to fill out a brief symptom survey prior to coming to work on-site each day. [The Daily CHOP Check-in Bioresponse Page](#) on @CHOP has the most up-to-date information on this program.
- Masks (disposable) will continue to be provided on entry to Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute (RI). All staff should wear the CHOP-provided masks when on site. If you wear a cloth mask when traveling to work, please change into a CHOP-issued mask upon arrival.
- Nose and mouth must remain properly covered with mask when in all CHOP and RI buildings.
- Easy access to handwashing and disinfectant wipes will be provided throughout labs and CHOP RI.
- Social (physical) distancing is required:
  - Personnel should only be on campus/in lab when necessary. All should work from homewhenever possible.
  - Meetings can be held virtually or in-person. If it is necessary to hold an in-person meeting, allow six foot distance around each person, and maintain universal masking for all individuals. Minimize both the number of people (50% conference room capacity) and time spent together (<1h). Please check QR codes on room signage for occupancy limits and seating configurations.
  - Maximize space between yourself and others in elevators: Limit Colket elevator occupancy to five people. Limit Abramson elevator occupancy to four people.
  - Low density and/or staggered personnel allowed in work areas (maintaining six foot distance)
  - For assistance with determining appropriate social distancing within any given RI space, Research Safety is available for consultation.
- Frequent cleaning of high touch areas by Environmental Services.
- If you are ill or think you are ill, **stay home** and call the CHOP COVID-19 hotline: 1-800-722-7112.

## Gradual

CHOP has been slowly ramping up research activities. We began the ramp-up to 75% on Oct. 1, 2020. Principal Investigators will ensure “in lab” effort is no greater than 75%, including the PI, if they work at the bench. While each stage (first 25%, then 50%, now 75%) has occurred over time, a close adherence of the safety principles outlined above and physical distancing (avoiding physical proximity for more than a few minutes) are essential for opening to continue.

## Flexible

Remain flexible for the possibility of labs to pivot activities to next stage, or pivot back as epidemiological data drive decisions. Principal Investigators will continue to 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.

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## Nested

As described below, plans will be developed at the level of PI, Module, Floor, and Sphere (nearby administrators, neighboring lab personnel who may perform studies in your lab, or package pickup duties, etc.). For example, when planning, consider your collaborators on other floors/in other institutes, your work with core facilities, and your work with DVR.

## CHOP Research Institute

### Best Practices for October Ramp Up to 75% Occupancy

#### 1) At level of Principal Investigator

##### a) PI continues to ensure lab members Work From Home (WFH) when feasible

- i) WFH on data analysis, writing, image analysis, protocol preparation/review
- ii) Microsoft Teams or phone for meetings are preferred. Any lab meetings and one-on-one meetings on campus should follow universal masking, physical distancing, and 50% conference room occupancy recommendations. Check room signage for occupancy limits.
- iii) Flexibility and consideration are key. 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.
- iv) 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.

##### b) PI prepares for 75% personnel performing in-lab work

- i) 75% occupancy limit applies to labs that have six or more members
  - (a) Labs with six or fewer members are exempt from this policy and can remain at 100% with persistent need for social distancing and universal masking
- ii) PI ensures **physical separation of lab members**. Key principles: Universal masking and maintaining physical distance of at least 6 feet apart.
  - (a) Examples (each lab space is different; consult laboratory safety if specific concerns or needs):
    - (i) In general, maximum of two people per bay staying six feet apart; One person/small room ([See additional guidelines for small enclosed spaces](#))
    - (ii) Staggered use of common rooms or kitchen facilities
    - (iii) Transient proximity is OK (keep nose and mouth covered with mask), but no more than 10 minutes.
  - (b) **To facilitate physical separation at 75% lab occupancy**, PI should consider:
    - (i) Staggering work schedules with either shift work (6-8h/shift) or alternating days or weeks
    - (ii) Consider “groups” of lab members who may consistently work together (although still distantly) to avoid physical contact across all lab members, if possible. 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
    - (iii) For vivarium work, consider using 12 full hours of lights (6:15am-6:15pm). Use [DVR calendar sign up](#) and be adaptable with other users when feasible.

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- iii) Note about undergraduates and high school students
  - (a) Undergraduate students are allowed to work on site or remotely and can proceed through the NTP process and/or IACUC/DVR process..
  - (b) Effective May 1, 2021, the onboarding of all Research High School Scholars and Cooperative students will resume at CHOP for on site or remote work. Exceptions for students to be onboarded earlier than May 1, 2021, should be submitted to [Michelle Lewis](#).
  - (i) [See HR announcement](#) for details.
  - (c) Important Note: Both High School Scholars and Undergraduate students count toward a lab's 75% occupancy
    - (i) PIs are responsible for prioritizing which of the lab's personnel can come into the lab.
- c) **The PI will continue to:**
  - i) Determine a best scheduling and communication platform for lab members, collaborators, and anyone else in lab sphere.
    - (a) Use online scheduling (e.g., Google sheets or forms, Doodle, teamup, schedulebuilder)
      - (i) *Please do not use paper scheduling* for lab space, lab rooms, lab benches
    - (b) Continue to use real-time communication system (e.g. iMessage, WhatsApp, Slack) among lab members
      - (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).
  - d) **PI discusses plan — and perhaps lab personnel contact information — with other PIs in Module, Floor, and Sphere (nearby administrators, neighboring lab personnel).**
    - i) May lead to adjustment of lab schedule for certain rooms.
- 2) **Communication and awareness are critical at all levels during the ramp up**
  - a) We are a safety-conscious work environment, and we expect all on-site staff to participate in the Daily CHOP Check-in program as part of our efforts to keep everyone safe and stem the spread of COVID-19. [See the Daily CHOP Check-in User Guide](#).
  - b) If you are ill or think you are ill, stay home and call the CHOP COVID-19 hotline: 1-800-722-7112
  - c) Work with personal physician and CHOP hotline agents to assess your need to get tested
  - d) Inform the PI if working from home or using PPL; keep track of progress.
- 3) **It will be the responsibility of the CHOP RI, Facilities, and Environmental Services to:**
  - a) Ensure each **floor** remains ready for personnel to continue work safely
    - i) Ensure paper towels, soap dispensers, and/or disinfectant dispensers are available:
      - (a) In labs, kitchens, and restrooms
      - (b) In elevator lobbies
    - ii) Arrange lab schedule for cleaning (so as not to disrupt lab work)
    - iii) Spread tables (and remove chairs) in common areas to prevent congregation if possible
    - iv) Provide additional physically separated spaces for breaks, eating, drinking.

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### 4) Physically separate spaces for breaks, eating, drinking.

- a) The Research Ramp-up Task Force worked closely with Facilities groups to identify underutilized spaces for taking breaks and eating meals comfortably.
  - i) At standard mealtimes (e.g. 11am-1pm), conference room usage should be reserved for meals. Avoid having meetings during mealtimes.
  - ii) Outside of standard mealtimes, all individuals in conference rooms should wear masks and refrain from eating and drinking in meeting spaces.
  - iii) For any room in which breaks or meals are taken, pay attention to maximum occupancy signs, wipe surfaces before and after you use the space, and place trash in receptacles.
  - iv) Continue to stagger use of common rooms or kitchen facilities.
- b) Individuals who completed their vaccination series at least 14 days ago may voluntarily disclose vaccination status to colleagues/friends if they want to eat together.
  - i) It is important to recognize that not all staff received the vaccine. Under six feet distances can be tolerated for small groups of vaccinated individuals who choose to disclose vaccination status and eat together.
  - ii) No one can assume their colleagues are fully immunized, nor should individuals ask another person about vaccination.

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, we are constantly flexing to respond to new information. Please attend CHOP's virtual town halls on COVID-19 and read the weekly [Breaking Through reports](#). The [@CHOPBioresponse Team site](#) is the source for current information, guidelines, resources, and FAQs. A new Bioresponse section called the [New Normal at CHOP](#) provides information to enable location-critical staff to carry out workplace activities more easily.