

University of Washington
Department of Physics

Research Recovery Plan at PAB

PAB Safety Team

May 13, 2020

1. Purpose

As of 5/7/2020 the guidance

- [Guidance for Returning to In-Person Research](#)

added two new areas of research, allowable under the Governor's Phase 1 plan, as part of "essential services"

- All areas of research that are **required to meet an upcoming deadline.**
- All facilities that support research, if the support cannot be carried out remotely.

All in-person research is subject to a set of [requirements](#). All personnel carrying out in-person research must adhere to these requirements. A [checklist](#) provides instructions for laboratory PIs to develop the required plan for returning to in-person research work. The basic guidance "Work that can be done remotely, should be carried out remotely" remains in place, thus office work at UW is presently not permitted. Social distancing of at least 6 feet at all times is required. If you believe you have an extraordinary circumstance incompatible with this rule, contact EH&S to ask for special permission.

The Research Recovery Plan for the Physics-Astronomy Building (PAB) requires compliance with all Washington State and UW guidelines. In addition, it specifically defines procedures and standards to be followed by all individual research plans in the Physics Department. It also provides the department-wide distribution plan for cleaning and safety supplies. PIs have to sign off to confirm that their lab will adhere to the rules laid out in this document.

The guidelines are based on input from an ad-hoc group of PAB basement laboratory PIs and users organized by Prof. Kai-Mei Fu, the chair of the physics department Prof. L. Yaffe and the PAB safety team members. The section **UW COVID-19 Health and Safety Resources** provides links and excerpts from UW guidelines and information handouts. Following those links is required to stay up to date, as the official guidelines are expected to evolve with the changing situation.

2. Guidelines

Weekly orientation and safety communication

- On the initial workday of each essential worker and each Monday, PIs have to schedule a virtual meeting, to remind and update lab personnel about safety measures. This orientation/training should discuss the topics below as well as the following specifics.
 - Remind people of 6 ft social distancing rules
 - Encourage good hygiene and social distancing, [Stay Healthy Husky Guide: Stay Healthy](#)
 - Coordinate the weekly work plan. Diligent planning of the team's presence at the lab communicated by an online-scheduling system will maximize social distancing while maintaining work efficiency.
- The initial meeting for each essential worker, its attendees, and the date has to be documented by the PI. This new required training should be treated like any training requirement for their research group, and the documentation should be kept with other required training documentation.
- Post EH&S and UW documents prominently.
 - [UW Social Distancing at Work](#)
 - [Stay Healthy Husky Guide: Stay Healthy](#)
 - EH&S: [COVID-19 Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols](#).
 - EH&S: [COVID-19 Health and Safety Resources](#)
 - EH&S: [COVID-19-Prevention-Plan-for-the-Workplace](#)
 - [Guidance on Facemask use for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19](#)

Self-attestation each workday

On each scheduled workday, employees who are expected to report to work at a UW facility must complete an attestation to confirm that they are not experiencing any of the symptoms outlined in the attestation using [Workday](#). The attestation may be completed before coming to work.

IF YOU ARE SICK, YOU MUST STAY HOME

["What do I do if I am sick"](#), also post this information.

Notification if you feel sick

If you are sick or suspect you may have symptoms of COVID-19

- Inform your PI or supervisor, who has to inform the Department chair.
- If your health-care provider confirmed or suspects that you have COVID-19, contact the EH&S Employee Health Center atemphlth@uw.edu or 206.685.1026.
- In case you are working in the basement and willing to share this private information, inform the PAB basement lab group using this [contact list](#). Please contact this group even on suspected illness, so that early warnings can be communicated.

Cleaning supplies and PPEs

- The department has developed a plan for providing cleaning supplies and PPEs.
 - Each lab will be provided with a clear plastic tote to be used to store PPE supplies (masks, gloves, spray bottle filled with disinfectant and wipes). The tote will be filled with enough supplies for one week of use. At the end of each week, bring the tote to the machine shop to restock your PPE supplies for the upcoming week. Spray bottles can also be refilled in the machine shop as needed. The restocking procedure will be organized without personal contact with instructions issued by the machine shop.
 - Detailed cleaning instructions have been compiled by the Physics machine shop and will be posted on its [website](#). Additional information on [COVID-19 Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols](#). [Guidance on Facemask use for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19](#) is available from UW.
- In order to [conserve PPEs](#), the use of own reusable cloth masks is encouraged.

Face mask policy and social distancing requirements

- Inside a building, all individuals must wear face coverings over their noses and mouths, unless they work alone in a room. This aligns with King County's [directive](#) effective May 18, 2020 and operating procedures at national laboratories. As medical-grade and N95 masks should be preserved for health-care workers, private cloth face masks or the face masks used for lab work are [recommended](#).

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS FOR COVID-19 PREVENTION IN THE WORKPLACE state

- Minimize the number of people in a work area at the same time.
- Small, narrow offices/facilities on the order of 100-150 square feet can likely accommodate only one person at a time.
- Square or rectangle work areas larger than 200 square feet can likely accommodate more people but keep the number to a minimum.
- Every person must be able to enter, work in, and exit the space while maintaining 6 ft of physical distance from other occupants.

Shared spaces

- Groups will limit shared spaces to their immediate work area. As a rule, use restrooms, kitchen facilities, etc. on your work floor. If possible, limit kitchen, machine shop access to authorized people by locking doors.
- Contact tracking
 - Every shared space must have a sign-in mechanism. We suggest a simple sign-sheet mounted at the door and use of your own pen to reduce touching. This is required for tracking if a lab member is tested positive.
 - We require people to restrict themselves to the nearest restroom on their floor, but won't require sign-ins. You should minimize touching door handles with bare hands. Use paper towels for touching, in particular after washing your hands. Waste baskets will be placed outside.
- Establish electronic reservation systems (calendar) for each shared space. Goal is to restrict occupancy to a minimum. Shared space like workshops, where the same staff comes in daily, does not need an additional reservation system, as the presence is recorded by Workday.

Elevators

- Wear face mask in elevator. We recommend only one person in elevator to comply with social distance rule.

Visitors

- Visitors must be tracked by date to facilitate contact tracing. A visitor is defined as anyone who does not normally work in this space, including both UW- and non-UW personnel. Each unit will need to develop a tracking and symptom attestation system for visitors, and identify the person responsible.

Individual lab guidelines

- Designate a COVID-19 Supervisor for all spaces. Each PI should be designated as the COVID-19 Supervisor for their research group in their Return to In-Person Research plan, or the PI may delegate these responsibilities to a senior research group member who will be regularly present in the research facility. The COVID-19 Supervisor responsibilities are to ensure compliance with COVID-19 related requirements and to be available to receive concerns and answer questions. The COVID-19 Supervisor should check in with the research group regularly regarding compliance, and must be available by phone or email.
- Employ reservation calendar or lab scheduler to limit occupancy to smallest possible number. This must provide a record who was in and when. Use remote measurements whenever possible and safe.

- Properly plan tasks involving more than one person, so that time and safe distance can be maintained. Use face masks when more than one person works in same room.
- Use of lab space as an office is not allowed, if not associated with essential lab work.
- Rearrangement of lab spaces to maintain safe distance, and installation of physical barriers with plexiglass are encouraged.
- Cleaning material must be available. Cleaning protocol must be defined. Clean equipment before and after work following [UW guidance](#) and the [machine shop](#) instructions.
- Group meetings and even work team planning with virtual meeting tools.
- Undergrad work only as a special exception.
- Post lab safety protocol at lab entrance.

Machine shops

Main machine shop:

- Use electronic job submission via [work request](#) for the main shop or a [request tracker](#) for CENPA¹ to minimize contact between users and machine shop staff.
- Define designated drop off/ pick up area for providing/receiving hardware from the shop.

Student shop:

- Establish lab schedulers as with other shared spaces. Initially operate only during main shop working hours. In this case, one person working alone is ok, as this can be monitored by main shop staff.
- Gloves are considered safety hazards in the shop. Clean workspace and equipment before and after work, don't touch your face during work and wash your hands afterwards.
- Main machine shop staff will post signs of these rules at the shop and announce when off hour work will be allowed. A SOP and signage will provide instructions on proper cleaning of the machines used.

¹ The user can attach the design to email and the system will create a 'ticket' for the submission.

- Paper towel dispensers were ordered for the student shop. This should be the easiest way for the student shop users to wipe down the machine after spraying contact surfaces with disinfectant.
- Sharing of safety glasses is not allowed, and own safety glasses should be acquired for the student shop.

3. UW COVID-19 Health and Safety Resources

- [Washington State Coronavirus Response](#)
- [Guidance for Returning to In-Person Research](#)
Recent detailed instructions for re-starting in-person research.
- [UW COVID-19 Health and Safety Resources](#)
This page is the switchboard to many relevant reference files, including cleaning, disinfection and PPEs.
- [UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS FOR COVID-19 PREVENTION IN THE WORKPLACE](#)
Requirements and information for practical steps for staying healthy in the lab.
- [Novel coronavirus & COVID-19: facts and resources](#)
- [Some Stay-Healthy posters](#)

Appendix

Excerpts from UW Environmental Health & Safety News: April 2020



COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOURCES

UW employees must **stay home when sick**.

If your health provider **suspects or confirms you have COVID-19**, contact the [Employee Health Center](#). We can facilitate COVID-19 testing for UW employees with symptoms.

Find out what to do [if you had contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19.

Are you at [higher risk](#) for severe illness? Find out how to protect yourself.

Facemasks and other personal protective equipment (PPE)

Guidance for UW personnel working to support critical operations

- [COVID-19 Risk Level and Selection of Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)
- [Guidance on Facemask Use for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Guidance for Conservation of Personal Protective Equipment](#)



COVID-19 safety guidance for researchers

Resources for maintaining health and safety while conducting critical research operations

- [Guide to Business Continuity and Recovery Planning for Laboratories and Research Spaces](#)
- [Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols](#)
- [Research Shutdown Checklist](#)

Symptom monitoring guidance

UW units that choose to implement symptom screening or monitoring protocols are required to follow the [UW Guidance for Symptom Monitoring for COVID-19](#).

Cleaning and disinfection

New resources for UW units to safely use disinfectants to prevent the spread of COVID-19

- [Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols](#)
- [Chemical Disinfectant Safety Information](#)