

Dear Group,

Claudia, Sean, and I met to talk about the new regulations for beginning lab work in the upcoming weeks. Along with the [departmental guidelines](#), we decided it would be best to outline our lab-specific procedure. A [group summary](#) was submitted to the college that outlines our groups workspaces, coordinators, staff, and graduate students.

To summarize the Departmental guidelines as they pertain to coming into work and building safety:

(1) you don't need to report to work if you are feeling sick –if you are unsure what the illness is the default is to assume COVID and you must self-isolate and tell Claudia. You also do not need to report to work if you feel unsafe and please do reach out to Claudia. **Note:** one guideline says that you must attest that you do not have a fever – you do not need to do this though it is important that if you feel unwell to stay home. If you are in lab, it will be assumed you attest to being in good health

(2) You can report unsafe building conditions directly to Claudia OR Walter Williams.

(3) Restroom, hallway, and stairwell occupancy is significantly diminished.

The groups own procedures are outlined below. If you have questions about the procedures please contact myself, Sean, or Claudia.

Regulations regarding social distancing and sanitation are complicated in closely knit communities like our lab and especially in our research. There is a lot of nuance so please be patient during this time.

Social distancing means that the number of people in lab will be limited, and it will be **mandatory** that members fill out the group calendar to indicate where they will spend the majority of their time in lab in order to maximize productivity and minimize contact. **Please sign up for lab space on the calendar at LEAST 48 hours in advance so people can plan ahead and ensure another researcher will be in the lab.**

There are four sections that will be discussed in detail:

(1) PPE & Sanitation:

Lab coordinators are in charge of ensuring upkeep of PPE and relevant sanitation items. On the lab work (form) discussed later, **there are boxes that allow people who work to indicate if they need PPE replaced, such as gloves or sanitizing solution, or if the lab at large needs PPE replacements.** Please use this document to request PPE as requests are centralized.

The lab will provide everyone with a personal box of lab-safe gloves, soap solutions, sanitizing solutions, and reusable plastic baggies. Do not take gloves from coworkers boxes and ensure your gloves are labeled with your name. For more specific items, please reach out to Sean or Eric.

Face masks are required inside the office spaces and laboratories. It is recommended to have a mask specifically for lab work that is separate from what you would use in your daily lives.

Additionally, each member should work toward grouping items they commonly use (that are not shared) into a box or drawer that is labeled clearly with their name. This is similar to normal lab practice except that it is now more critical to avoid cross contamination.

Shared research items will need to be sanitized. Such items include solvent squirt bottles, computer/instrument interfaces, and doors. To this end, we will designate a lab "Common Space" to put squirt bottles and spatulas in. There will be a disinfectant wipe or spray near that should be applied when taking them. When you are finished, please place them back in the common space and sanitize again. **When**

you use an instrument, please sanitize the keyboard and immediate area before and after use with handwipes and not ethanol solution (as keyboards may dissolve).

Additionally, sample preparation is prone to cross contamination and contact because of the wide range of items utilized. While it is critical make good samples, please try earnestly to be as self-contained as possible.

When going between labs, use the reusable plastic baggies to open doors. If a gloveless hand is used, you should sanitize the handle after use. The reusable bags will decrease the rate of glove exchanging and consumption.

(2) Lab work:

Lab members should check the [group signup sheet](#) before going to work that day and be sure to fill out the “Time In”, “Time Out”, and “Total Time” blocks. This has an advantage of ensuring that we are aware of at least 2 members are in lab simultaneously. **One constraint is that once your experiment is finished, you should try to leave lab/campus as soon as possible so others can arrive.**

On the sign-up sheet there are columns for “Rooms Used”. These should be filled out with any room your use during your shift. This is separate from the Group Calendar which should be used to identify what room you will predominantly be using. Someone can reserve NW 3102 yet need to get supplies from EL 4103 and NW 4128. All three rooms should be in the “Rooms Used” column.

Due to social distancing, **training on new instruments and techniques by lab super-users is suspended.** If you don't know how to do a particular technique, you may consider asking the super-user to run the experiment. Additionally, lab members with adjacent fume hoods should not work simultaneously in them (i.e. Austin and Eric).

Two ‘shifts’ per day are recommended with exceptions for additional time based on experiment length, for example 8 AM to 2 PM and 2 PM to 8 PM, though they can be flexible based on experiment time demand for an instrument. In the event an experiment takes, for example, 8 hours **you should communicate with lab members to ensure someone is around during the entire course of the experiment. In this situation, it is permitted to write in the office.**

(3) Office work:

With respect to using the office only one person is allowed in at a time. **It is not permitted to just come in to write** (with the exception outlined above). You may store items at your desk and should avoid touching other co-workers spaces (chairs, desk, computers). **At this time, storing and eating meals in the office common spaces is not allowed so plan your shifts around meals accordingly** and eating outside is preferred.

When exiting the office, use the hand sanitizing wipes on your desk and door handles.

Thanks in advance for your patience as Claudia, Sean, and I work to prepare the lab to return to research. If you have any questions, please contact us!