

Research Phase 3 Standard Operating Procedures for HDB

May 28, 2020 9:00pm

This document describes mitigation and prevention protocols designed to provide a safe work environment for faculty, postdocs, graduate students, and technicians approved to work in the HDB. Please thoroughly familiarize yourself with these guidelines. Additional information can be found on the OVPR "[Resuming Research Operations on Campus](#)" website.

Personnel:

1. Undergraduate students and volunteers will not be permitted in the building at this time.
2. Only personnel on approved exemption requests will be allowed in the buildings.
3. Buildings will be open from 6 am until 10 pm. They will be closed at other times to allow custodial staff to clean the buildings.
4. Behave as if you are an asymptomatic carrier of SARS-CoV-2 at all times, using proper PPE, distancing and disinfection procedures described below.
5. If you find that someone is not following the rules outlined in this document, please report the circumstance to your PI by email, text or phone call as soon as possible.

Building entry:

1. Before coming to work:
 - Check yourself for COVID-19 symptoms. The CDC has recently updated its [symptom watch list](#). Also see the "self-check" list here: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/coronavirus/covid-19-self-checker.html>
 - Take your temperature at home before reporting to work. Stay home if it is >99.6°F (37.6°C).
 - Answer the online COVID-19 Smartsheet [questionnaire](#); if approved for work that day you will receive an email that you should show upon entering the building.
2. Upon arrival put on a mask. The University requires that all employees working on a University site use a face covering while they are inside buildings, except when in a single-occupancy room or office. Masks must cover both mouth and nose; they cannot be worn "pulled down" below the nose or loose on the face.
3. Researchers will need to supply their own face covering for general movement around buildings, e.g., in hallways, stairwells, elevators.
4. If you drive and park in the HCG you will first enter HTB. Upon entry into HTB your temperature will be taken and you will be asked to show the results of the online survey. If approved for work you will receive a sticker to wear that day.
5. You will be able to then travel to the first floor of HTB and enter HDB through the main entrance. Other HDB entrances will be locked.
6. If you enter HDB from the street rather than via the HCG garage, attendants will direct you to HTB for temperature screening before permitting entry into HDB.
7. There will be hand sanitizer inside the entrance to HDB that you are expected to use.
8. Upon entry into HDB, you will sign in and enter log-in time and destination on the time sheets located in the main lobby. When you leave, you will enter a log-out time on the time sheet. PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN PEN TO USE. Please do not use markers to sign in.

9. There will also be log in / log out sheets on clipboards placed at the entrances to lab floors in the HDB tower. Please use pens, not markers, to sign in. In the future the card key system may be used to track floor entry in HDB.
10. Only two people will be permitted to use an elevator at a time while wearing masks.
11. When using the stairways, ensure that you maintain proper physical distancing of at least 6 feet (2 meters).
12. Wash or sanitize hands as soon as possible after leaving an elevator or stairwell and try not to use the rail if possible.

Workspace guidelines:

1. Traffic flow: Please follow signs for ingress and egress. Enter the lab floors by one of the two corridor doors along the outer sides of the building. When you leave the building, exit through the central doors on each floor.
2. Paper towel dispensers have been placed by interior doors for single use on handles for opening and closing all doors.
3. Density guidelines have been set by the VPR at 200 sq ft per person. This means only one person will be allowed in each 100 or 200 sq. ft. procedure room at a time. The histology room 5.222K (600 sq. ft.) can accommodate 3 researchers, as long as physical distancing is maintained. We will divide 5.222K into three zones and set up a calendaring system for users to schedule use of the zones in that room.
4. Approved researchers can all work in one shift, or in split shifts across the day to maximize distancing. Investigators can also plan for rotating biweekly shifts by splitting workers into two cohorts. However, shifts and cohorts cannot be used to increase the total number of workers allowed for each lab.
5. At end of each day or shift, one researcher in each lab should be designated as the person responsible for organizing end-of-shift disinfection to make sure it is done properly.
6. Time in the lab should be kept to a minimum. Experiments must be planned ahead of time off campus, in-order to minimize time in the lab areas.
7. If work of any kind can be done at home or elsewhere off campus, then please do it there and not in the lab buildings. Limiting building density is an important goal.
8. All lab or other group meetings will take place by phone or Zoom. Two or three people may briefly converse in common areas as long as they wear masks and maintain physical distance. Do not congregate in groups
9. In the event a researcher develops COVID-19 symptoms (see above), they must stop working immediately, notify their PI, and return home. The PI will contact UT Austin Occupation Health Program for further advice.

Disinfection:

1. Disinfect with bleach- or alcohol-containing cleaning wipes or solutions. These supplies will be available in various sites in the lab, near the offices, and in common areas.
2. Frequently wash hands and forearms with soap and water (20s minimum). See CDC video [here](#).

3. Use gloves as you normally would to handle chemicals and biological substances per EHS guidelines. Wash hands after removing gloves. All typical lab safety protocols will continue to be followed, in addition to those related to COVID19.
4. Do not use gloves while walking in common hallways or to open doors. Gloves give a false sense of security and can spread virus particles if used to touch multiple surfaces without being disinfected. It is better to use a disposable paper towel or tissue for touching common surfaces. **Definitely wash hands after touching common surfaces like doorknobs or faucet handles.**
5. Sanitize safety goggles with 70% ethanol solutions before and after using them.
6. At the end of the work period, clean your bench and desk spaces and clean all the balances and instruments that are communal in the lab.
7. Avoid frequent use of sanitizers on door handles after each use because of corrosion. These can be sanitized at the end of a shift or day and will be cleaned in common areas by custodial staff each evening. Please use single-use paper towels to open and close doors whenever possible

Equipment:

1. People may bring their portable computers to the lab, but they need to disinfect the outside of them upon arrival and disinfect the surface upon which they were used before leaving.
2. People using desktop computers should clean their hands with sanitizing wipes or by washing after leaving their computer to perform another activity.
3. Wipe-down and sanitize common lab computer keyboards and mouse devices after use.
4. Common equipment will have plastic coverings over keyboards or touch pads wherever possible. Touch equipment only as needed. If you use gloves, sanitize them with 70% ethanol after touching common equipment. Before and after using a shared piece of equipment, wash your hands and wipe-down and sanitize the equipment.
5. Use a calendar to sign up for equipment in shared procedure rooms. Use a Google calendar or Bookkit for this purpose. The Messing lab is currently investigating use of Bookkit.

Masks:

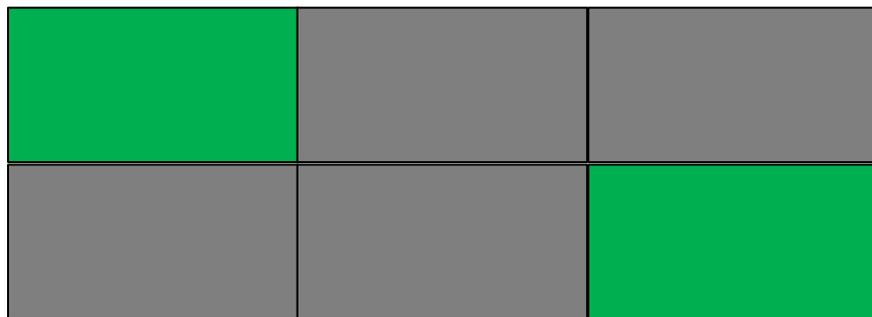
1. Pls will provide masks for use inside the wet lab. Please preserve these masks and try to use only one per day. We will likely need to reuse them for longer periods until we have adequate supplies.
2. When removing a mask, do so by the ear straps, not by pulling from the front, and fold with the inside in. This hopefully will lessen contamination of fingers. If reusing, store the mask in an individually assigned cubby or in an unused drawer and label the drawer as personal.
3. Talking generates aerosols. Minimize talking and always wear a mask when speaking to someone.

Lab coats:

1. As required by EHS, personnel must wear lab coats while working in the wet lab areas.
2. At the end of the day coats should be hung on a person's usual lab chair inside the wet lab.
3. Coats should be laundered once per week or more often.
4. Do NOT share lab coats.

Physical distancing:

1. The VPR has mandated that there should be no more than one person per 200 square feet.
2. There can only be one person per procedure room at any time, with the exception of HDB222K (which is 600 sq. ft.).
3. For working in a wet lab ballroom, use (in green) the following configuration if more than one person is at the bench at the same time. Use the same kind of configuration when occupying workstation areas while another person is present.



4. The minimal physical distancing is 2 meters (~6 feet). Working less than that distance increases the risk of becoming infected. Brief violations of this rule for a few seconds are unavoidable but potentially hazardous and hazard increases with time.
5. Use common sense when working with someone else in the same room.

Reckless behavior will not be tolerated and will lead to loss of approval for work. It is on us to act responsibly and help avoid a second shutdown of activities.

Vivarium:

1. Only plan studies that can be finished within 4 weeks.
2. Do not plan experiments that require complicated surgical procedures.
3. Only plan to increase your census of animals and cages by ~25%. Larger increases need to be discussed with Glenn Otto beforehand.

Breaks and Meals:

1. People are not permitted to congregate in rooms to eat.
2. People can eat outside if they can maintain physical distance > 2 meters (6 feet).
3. People can also eat individually in private offices or unoccupied conference rooms.
4. People can also eat in the central break area in the HDB knuckles on HDB 3,5, and 6 by sitting one person in each of the four seating areas and maintaining good physical distance. Below is the knuckle area in HDB5 as an example with four individual eating areas in color:

