University of Pittsburgh Laboratory Startup Checklist

Completed by: _____ Building: _____

Date: _____ Labs (room #): _____

COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

Task	Notes
☐ Document a lab-specific COVID-19 Mitigation Plan. A template for creating a mitigation plan is available at https://www.ehs.pitt.edu/lab-safety/pandemic-preparedness-researchers. ☐ Describe social distancing measures for all assigned areas. Guidance on social distancing and reduced occupancy in laboratories is available at https://www.ehs.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/docs/LaboratoryOccupancyGuidelines.pdf. ☐ Describe any scheduling alterations to ensure staggered arrival and minimize the number of personnel in space. ☐ Include protocol for staff to follow in the event they feel ill while in lab. ☐ Emphasize that lab personnel should continue to follow previously established lab-specific requirements for PPE while in the lab. ☐ Provide guidance for appropriate use of cloth face coverings and barrier masks. ▪ Highlight that cloth face coverings and barrier masks are not PPE and do not negate the need to practice social distancing and other mitigation measures. ▪ Explain that face coverings are worn as a courtesy to mitigate asymptomatic individuals from unknowingly transmitting the virus. ▪ Inform staff that face coverings may be self-supplied or University-provided. ▪ Emphasize that cloth face coverings or barrier masks should be worn to and from work and in areas outside the lab while at work (*e.g.*, break rooms, offices, halls). ▪ Should require the use of face coverings for research personnel while in the lab if determined safe by a lab-specific risk assessment and, with the understanding that face coverings are not a substitute for, and should not be worn in conjunction with, any required PPE. ☐ Document when to use hand wash station and who is required to maintain. ☐ Establish enhanced cleaning and disinfecting procedures for high contact surfaces in the lab and all shared equipment. Information on choosing an appropriate disinfectant is available at https://www.ehs.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/docs/Disinfectant-InfoAndRecommendations.pdf.	

Preparing to Return to Campus

Task	Notes
☐ Things to consider before returning to campus: ☐ Obtain approval to restart research. ☐ Plan to restart your research slowly as there may be limited access to core and shared facilities, and disruptions in the availability of supplies and PPE. ☐ Have staff review lab-specific COVID-19 mitigation plan, Safety Guidelines for Essential Research Personnel, and PA safe workplace guidance available at https://www.emergency.pitt.edu/covid-19. ☐ Review and update lab-specific protocols impacted by COVID-19 Mitigation Plan. Inform staff of changes. ☐ Assure safety training of staff is up to date.	

Post-Approval Scheduling

Task	Notes
☐ Following approval to resume research you should ☐ Coordinate with staff to determine available return date based on any medical clearances due to COVID-19, or 14 days after COVID-19 illness in their household. ☐ Consider bringing back staff in a staggered fashion; having self-identified higher risk individuals or individuals living with higher risk persons returning last. ☐ Stagger start times, days worked and breaks to maintain social distancing requirements. ☐ Request building access for all relevant lab staff. ☐ Reach consensus with other PI groups on COVID-19 mitigation measures for open labs with multiple users, shared spaces and equipment	

Returning to the Laboratory – Day 1

Task	Notes
☐ On the first day back to the lab you should ☐ Limit those on-site to manager, investigator and key personnel. ☐ Review COVID-19 Mitigation Plan on-site. ☐ Display all appropriate COVID-19-related mitigation signage. ☐ Designate a person to manage the controlled distribution of University-provided barrier masks. ☐ Assess supply inventory (especially required PPE) and ensure a sufficient supply of disinfectants for enhanced disinfection protocol. Information regarding the availability of PPE & supplies to support COVID-19 mitigation is available at https://cfo.pitt.edu/pexpress/PPECOVID19Supplies.php. ☐ Assure integrity of containers, disinfectants, safety controls, and equipment. ☐ Coordinate with other labs to create a sign-up sheet and/or online shared calendar schedule for staggered use of shared equipment and spaces (*e.g.*, culture rooms, *etc*.).	

Laboratory Self-Inspection - Equipment

Task	Notes
☐ If there is a chemical fume hood (CFH) in the laboratory, verify it is current for annual certification and operating between 80-100 CFM (digital display panel on the CFH monitor or flow sensing device). ☐ If the monitor is not available, lower the sash to 18 inches and place a Kimwipe against the edge of the sash and verify that the Kimwipe is drawn inward verifying that air is being drawn into the CFH. ☐ If the CFH is not operating correctly, contact Facilities Management (412-624-9500). ☐ If the CFH needs annual certification, contact EH&S ☐ Do NOT use CFH if it needs recertified or if it is non-functioning.	
☐ If there is a biological safety cabinet (BSC) in the laboratory, verify it is operating correctly: ☐ Check the airflow gauges on the outside of the BSC to confirm air flow. ☐ Allow BSC to operate for 3 to 5 minutes to "purge" particulates ☐ Contact certification vendor to address operational concerns or delinquent certification (contact information is on the BSC certification sticker).	
☐ Review manuals for laboratory equipment for start-up instructions. Follow the manufacturer recommended steps to start-up equipment that has been idle.	
☐ Conduct an operational check of each eyewash/drench hose unit(s). If the eyewash/drench hose is not operating correctly, contact Facilities Management (412-624-9500).	
☐ Verify unobstructed access to the nearest safety shower.	
☐ Ensure that hand washing facilities (with plumbed sink, soap and paper towels) are available in the laboratory.	
☐ Verify that emergency door signage remains posted and has accurate contact information.	

Chemical Safety

Task	Notes
☐ Visually inspect all chemical containers and associated chemical storage areas.	
☐ If any peroxide forming chemicals (ex. diethyl ether, tetrahydrofuran) are in the laboratory, check the expiration date. Contact Pitt EH&S (412-624-9505) to coordinate the removal of any outdated or expired peroxides forming chemicals.	
☐ Visually inspect all chemical waste containers. ☐ Consult www.ehs.pitt.edu for information on future waste collections.	
☐ Ensure that all compressed gas cylinders are properly secured. ☐ Prior to compressed gas use, verify that the correct gas cylinder regulator is installed, and check all fittings and valves for leaks. ☐ Contact gas cylinder vendor for issues with the gas cylinders/gas system.	
☐ Validate accuracy of DEA Controlled Substances inventory. ☐ Consult www.ehs.pitt.edu for information on future reverse distributor collections for expired/unwanted controlled substances.	

Lab Security

Task	Notes
☐ Principle Investigator or Laboratory Director should ensure relevant personnel have permitted access to laboratory. ☐ If laboratory features ID-card access, Pitt ISD should be contacted for any access issues (412-624-5008).	
☐ Visitors should not be permitted in the laboratory, unless necessary to maintain approved functions.	

Workplace Safeguards for COVID-19

Task	Notes
☐ Monitor lab-specific mitigation plan	
☐ Ensure that personnel are maintaining a minimum of six feet between themselves and co-workers. Establish staggering/alternating work schedules, and/or using alternating benches.	
☐ Ensure appropriate cloth face coverings, barrier masks, and PPE requirements are followed. ☐ Consider creating a chart for choosing and donning appropriate face covering or PPE. ☐ Do not alter the required PPE for any essential laboratory activities without EH&S approval. ☐ Do not modify the type or model of PPE determined by your original risk assessment or EH&S guidance without consulting EH&S.	
☐ Ensure that good hygiene practices are observed including washing hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds, avoiding touching your face, and cough/sneezing etiquette.	
☐ Consult with other labs to establish an enhanced disinfection protocol for shared spaces and equipment between users. ☐ Consider the addition of physical barriers on difficult to clean surfaces (*e.g.*, keyboard covers).	
☐ Reiterate established protocols for performing high risk procedures that should not be conducted while working alone. ☐ If working alone is deemed necessary, restrict use of hazardous chemicals, compressed gases, lasers, high voltage equipment, pressurized equipment and cryogens. Information on working alone is available, www.ehs.pitt.edu.	