

University of Dayton

Guide for Research and Teaching Continuity in Laboratories, Studios  
and Workshops under COVID-19



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**WORKING DRAFT**

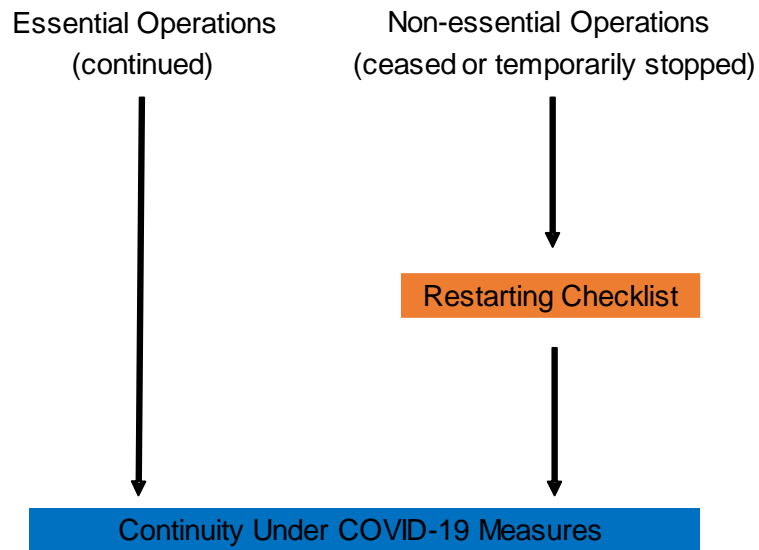
## Overview

Laboratories, studios, workshops and other technical areas are unique in the sense that participants perform research or learn through activities involving direct hands-on engagement in spaces that allow for freedom of movement. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these spaces at the University of Dayton partially or totally suspended operations due to safety concerns. The following guide provides considerations for departments, principal investigators, researchers, instructors, managers, coordinators and artists in University laboratories, studios, workshops and other technical areas for continuing research or teaching while ensuring the health and safety of employees, students and visitors. Areas under this guide consist of but are not limited to research and teaching laboratories<sup>1</sup>, art and photography studios, machine and other workshops, teaching kitchens or food laboratories and exercise or physical therapy spaces.

The information provided in this guide is meant to supplement, not replace, the University's expectations and protocols outlined in the University's [Return to Campus](#) document. Since protocols may change and evolve over time based on the status and understanding of the pandemic, all campus community members are expected to monitor for and comply with changes in University guidance.

## Expectations

To reduce risks while maintaining continuity under a COVID-19 environment, new protective measures will be required for all laboratories, studios and workshops (both those that operated as essential during the State of Ohio's stay at home order as well as those that were temporary shut down and which will need to re-start operations - see *figure below*).



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<sup>1</sup> Computer teaching laboratories where individuals primarily work at individual computer stations is not included.

If operations ceased or were temporarily halted, it is advisable to conduct a check of the facility, supplies and procedures before restarting operations. [Appendix A](#) contains items to consider in relation to the facility, equipment and chemical management as well as information on transforming the space to COVID-19 requirements.

Moving forward, the following protective measures, actions and behaviors will be required to reduce the risks of individuals being exposed or exposing others to COVID-19 in University laboratories, studios and workshop (includes all University owned or leased facilities at remote locations):

- Measures to keep population density as low as possible at any given time by performing activities remotely and incorporating temporal distancing strategies.
- Measures to keep individuals physically distanced through spatial distancing strategies. Individuals must maintain at least 6 feet of clearance from others unless special approval has been given for activities requiring close contact between participants.
- A face covering is required at all times when working in spaces with others ([UD Face Covering Guidelines and Procedures](#)). Wearing a face covering helps reduce the spread of the virus between individuals. Please note that face coverings do not replace the need for physical distancing.
- Installation of barriers in areas where physical distancing protocols are difficult to maintain. Please note that barriers are only to be used as a last resort and do not replace the need for physical distancing.
- Regular hand washing protocols. Hands should be washed upon entering and exiting a space and should be performed regularly while in the space.
- Enhanced disinfection of surfaces, equipment and high touch points using CDC approved products ([add link to Cleaning Procedures document when complete](#)).
- Means for communicating and posting of safety guidelines and requirements.
- Procedures for reporting individuals who show symptoms and methods for maintaining occupancy logs to aid in contact tracing.

### **Considerations for Continuity Under a COVID Environment**

[Appendix B](#) contains items to consider when putting together a site-specific COVID-19 related safety plan. Since no two laboratories, studios or workshops are alike, the considerations listed in this guide describe general approaches and best

practices based on information from health experts and regulatory agencies<sup>2,3</sup> and is intended to aid employees and departments in developing a site-specific COVID-19 operating plan.

Keep in mind any of the following special requirement activities that may be applicable to your operations. These activities may require additional protocols and permissions:

- Activities that involve field research, a field component or takes place at remote or off-site locations (consider things such as transportation to the site, COVID related supplies that would be needed and any site specific requirements).
- Activities that require travel (see [Path Forward Travel Plan](#)).
- Activities that require collaboration with other UD Departments or Groups, University's or entities or that involve visitors or client meetings.
- Activities that require close interaction or direct contact between individuals or participants or which involve human subjects<sup>4</sup> ([see UD Guide for Activities Involving Close Interaction with Human Participants under COVID-19](#)).
- Activities that require the use of shared spaces and/or equipment.

## Section 1 – General Considerations, Operations and Resource Planning

New rules and regulations will change the way that research and teaching activities operate. Prior to returning-to-work, all employees and students will need to review University return-to-campus procedures and take training. Each laboratory, studio and workshop will be responsible for communicating and documenting specific departmental and site-specific COVID-19 safety plans to employees, students and visitors who work or take classes in the space.

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<sup>2</sup> CDC Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>

<sup>3</sup> ODH COVID-19 Checklist for Colleges and Universities – [https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/803362ea-fc0a-4b74-a2dc-764a39446a8d/COVID-19+Checklist+Colleges+and+Universities+04.03.20.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT\\_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18\\_M1HGGIK0N0JO00QO9DDDDM3000-803362ea-fc0a-4b74-a2dc-764a39446a8d-n88wTb9](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/803362ea-fc0a-4b74-a2dc-764a39446a8d/COVID-19+Checklist+Colleges+and+Universities+04.03.20.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18_M1HGGIK0N0JO00QO9DDDDM3000-803362ea-fc0a-4b74-a2dc-764a39446a8d-n88wTb9)

<sup>4</sup> Research requiring direct interaction with human subjects must take into consideration how these protocols will be conducted in a manner that meets all pandemic related safety requirements for maintaining the safety of the human subjects as well as anyone engaged in the research project. Alternatives that eliminate or minimize direct human interaction should be considered. Questions should be sent to the University of Dayton Institutional Review Board at [irb@udayton.edu](mailto:irb@udayton.edu).

Stay conscious of the fact that circumstances may change rapidly and operations may need to be suspended on short notice. Be aware of what equipment, processes and activities may need to be taken offline. Anticipate delays in ordering and receiving supplies and service requests. If possible, delay high risk and long-term projects. If these projects are unable to be delayed, determine best and worst case scenarios and how to secure and monitor these projects. Stay flexible, have contingency plans and be prepared to reverse processes if the situation dictates.

Note that special protocols and permissions will be required when performing activities at remote locations or sites outside of the main campus (off site studios, field research locations, etc.), that require collaboration or travel and that require close interaction or direct contact between individuals.

## Section 2 – Personnel Planning

Early detection of illness can prevent the spread of the virus to others. All individuals reporting to campus for work or class must perform a daily self-assessment of symptoms and must stay home and notify their principal investigator, manager, supervisor or instructor if they have COVID-19 related symptoms or have come in close contact with infected individuals. Have backup plans for members who are unable to come into work and have makeup plans for students who may not be able to attend class due to COVID. Develop alternative plans for members who may be considered at risk.

Keep in mind that access to the laboratory, studio or workshop may be restricted or temporarily shut-down if someone within the group tests positive for COVID-19. The space will need to be deep cleaned and all persons who came in close contact with the infected person will be required to self-quarantine.

Ensure that members who are essential for the operation of specialized equipment or techniques share documentation with others in case the person becomes unavailable.

## Section 3 – Physical or Social Distancing

Individuals are required to maintain at least 6 feet of clearance on all sides from others at all times while in the space. In order to maintain social distancing requirements, laboratories, studios and workshops will need to develop measures to keep population densities as low as possible at any given time.

Determine which activities or which portion of activities (design, calculations, write ups, etc.) can be performed remotely. A mix of temporal and spatial distancing measures will need to be incorporated to minimize contact time and increase separation. Methods consist of controlling access to spaces, rotating

days, adjusting or staggering schedules, creating shifts, assigning individual areas, rearranging or removing furniture and mapping out areas and incorporating markings ([see Appendix C](#)). Keep in mind that it may not be possible for all members to be present at the same time.

Since space sizes and configurations vary, it is a good idea to determine a maximum occupancy level for the space for maintaining physical distancing requirements. If 6 feet distancing is difficult to visualize, other calculations such as 100 square feet per person or having one person per bay, workstation or table can aid in determining a maximum occupancy level (note that this is only to be used as an aid and does not replace the 6 feet distance requirement).

As a last resort, barriers may be installed in situations where physical distancing is not possible. Based on the definition of contact time by the Public Health Department, a barrier should only be used in situations where physical distancing cannot be achieved and contact time between individuals is short in duration<sup>5</sup>. Note that barriers cannot be used as a way to increase occupancy or replace physical distancing requirements.

#### Section 4 – Personal Hygiene and Disinfecting

Anyone working or attending class in a University research laboratory, studio or workshop is required to wear a face covering. Face coverings prevent the spread of infection to others and are to be worn along with other required personal protective equipment (PPE) based on the task being performed. Face coverings can be substituted if the work being performed requires more stringent PPE (such as an N95 mask, respirator, welding helmet) or if wearing the face covering puts the person at additional risk (for instance, during welding operations) based on the situation. In most cases, a face covering does not require special consideration when working around biological substances or chemicals, however, face shields or other measures can be employed in situations where a face covering represents a safety concern (note that flame resistant, or FR, face coverings are available upon request). Wearing a face covering is one tool for reducing the spread of the virus but does not substitute for physical distancing.

Always follow good hygiene practices such as regular handwashing. Hands should be washed when entering and exiting a space and regularly while in the space. In spaces where a sink is available, hands should be washed with soap and water. In spaces where a sink is not available, appropriate hand sanitizer can be used. Please note that hand sanitizer should not be used in spaces

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<sup>5</sup> For COVID-19, the [Public Health Department](#) defines close contact as any individual who is within 6 feet of an infected person for more than 15 minutes and is calculated as a cumulative amount of time over a 24 hour period. Although face coverings and barriers help reduce the risk of transmission between individuals, these measures do not change the close contact definition. Physical distancing is the only way to prevent close contact as it deals with contact tracing.

where hazardous chemicals are present as the sanitizer can cause hazardous contaminants to be absorbed into the skin.

Spaces should be regularly disinfected to protect transmitting the virus from contaminated surfaces. The University's custodial service is performing enhanced cleaning of high touch surfaces and areas outside of laboratories, studios and workshops but does not typically enter these spaces. As such, each laboratory, studio or workshop will need to develop established protocols for disinfecting their areas. Plans should include procedures for routinely disinfecting surfaces, high touch areas (handles, switches, phones, fume hoods, railings, etc.) and commonly used or shared equipment, electronics, tools and instruments. Remember to disinfect personal PPE (glasses, goggles, face shields, etc.) and develop procedures for disinfecting any PPE that is shared between individuals. All individuals (students, faculty and staff) should share cleaning responsibilities.

Only disinfectants recommended by the CDC or approved by the EPA to be effective against SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) should be used. Disinfectants have different active ingredients and required contact times, so make sure to follow all safety guidelines and product recommendations. Keep in mind that some disinfectants can damage materials or equipment. If in doubt about the compatibility of a specific piece of equipment, please refer to the manufacturer's recommendations ([add link to UD Cleaning Guide](#)).

## Section 5 – Communicating and Posting

Health and safety guidelines and procedures must be sufficiently communicated and posted in visible areas throughout the laboratory, studio or workshop. Make sure that entry requirements are posted on all entrance doors (see [Appendix D](#)) and physical distancing requirements, schedules and cleaning practices are posted within the space as needed. Ensure that everyone has the necessary contact information in case there are questions, issues with materials or equipment or emergencies.

## **Request for COVID Related Supplies**

The University will supply laboratories, studios and workshops with COVID-19 related supplies (reusable and disposable face coverings) and cleaning products (EPA approved disinfectant wipes and sprays and hand sanitizer). Please reach out to EHS with anticipated types and quantities of supplies and/or other necessary items.

## **COVID-19 Safety Plan**

The COVID-19 safety plan is in addition to all previous safety procedures and is intended to limit infection of COVID-19 and ensure physical safety is being maintained within lower population buildings and spaces.

Using this guide as a starting point, each person or department in charge of a laboratory, studio, workshop or technical area must develop a written continuity plan specific for their space that describes protective measures for meeting University and departmental COVID-19 policies in relation to contingency plans, distancing, hygiene, disinfecting and posting requirements. The plans do not need to be exhaustive in nature but should describe the specific measures required to meet the needs of the individual space and activities within the space.

The template in [Appendix E](#) is provided to facilitate the development of a plan, however, individuals and departments can edit this template or develop their own template to meet their specific needs.

Finished plans should be submitted to the Department Chair, Group Leader or equivalent and submitted to Environmental Health and Safety using this [google form](#) or emailed to Mark Fuchs at [mfuchs1@udayton.edu](mailto:mfuchs1@udayton.edu). Plans will be processed through the Dean, Division or equivalent for vetting and approval. All individuals will be required to acknowledge and agree to the plan. For teaching spaces, students must be instructed on the plan at the beginning of the first class session. Departments will be responsible for distributing, documenting and allowing/restricting access as needed. All approved plans must be available upon request.

Please reach out to EHS if you need to discuss a specific situation or require additional supplies or resources in order to maintain a safe environment.