

September 14, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

This memo contains important information about the research ramp-up including some new requirements that must be addressed. Please read it carefully.

The Research Ramp-up Oversight Committee met on September 9 and, with the County of Santa Barbara's sign-off, approved the addition of ~250 researchers to the maximum number allowed in laboratory spaces at any time as a first step in Stage 4 of our research ramp-up. We refer to this as Stage 4a. At three months into Stage 3, with roughly 1,500 unique individuals participating, with a peak of about 700-800 on campus at any one time, we continue to have no report of anyone being infected while carrying out research. The support the County has given to our request to expand our program is a reflection of the excellent job you have done. I would like to acknowledge and thank you for the extra effort you have all taken to make this possible.

The majority of new Stage 4a researchers will be working in buildings that were at least partially opened in earlier stages. Researchers entering new laboratory spaces will not be granted access until DFSS (FM and EHS) review/approval has taken place and your dean receives final approval from the Office of Research. We are now working to schedule these reviews. This may take a bit longer than usual because spaces that are needed for instruction will have a higher priority as the campus prepares for fall quarter. Note that this includes new lab rooms in buildings already open as well as newly opened buildings.

Updates to requirements for all personnel

As we add new researchers and personnel to our on-campus research program, adherence to our approved protocols and building plans will become increasingly important. In addition to monitoring access, building committees must continue to organize walkthroughs of buildings to ensure compliance on a regular basis. As part of this process, committees should be able to: monitor and document non-compliance, address non-compliance, and verify that corrections have been made. All research personnel must also review our [COVID safety slides](#). As mentioned in an earlier memo, all research personnel must attest to having reviewed these slides. Building committees should collect and maintain these signed attestations for everyone who has been approved in their building plans. A sample [attestation can be found here](#), which can be modified as needed by building committees. In addition, any undergraduates that have been granted exceptions to conduct research must sign the [Student Researcher Return to Campus Agreement](#). PIs are responsible for ensuring that students in their lab have completed this agreement and are adhering to all safety protocols.

COVID symptom screening self-enrollment

We have now moved to the new version of the COVID Symptom Screening self-assessment. All research personnel approved to be on campus or in the field must [self-enroll in this new survey](#).

Enrollment in version 1 of this survey will not automatically roll over to version 2. **Please ensure that all personnel approved in building plans - including those approved in earlier stages - enroll in the new survey.** An email notification of the release was sent Friday to all those approved for on-campus and field research. The new version will send a copy of the clearance certificate to the employee's supervisor each day the employee is cleared to report to work. Faculty members should list their own contact information in the supervisor field. In the event that the individual taking the survey does not receive clearance to report to work, the supervisor will receive a "not cleared to work" red certificate, but no additional health or other information will be provided.

Human Subjects Research Update

A limited amount of low-risk in-person human subjects research is expected to be permitted in Stage 4b. **A process for assessing risk and submitting participant safety plans is nearly complete.** In general, low risk studies should be limited to short duration one-on-one interactions where physical distancing and mask wearing requirements, in environments with appropriate HVAC and air flow, can be followed throughout the research activity.

Office use update

I would also like to remind you that **office use for research is not currently allowed.** There are several reasons for this restriction. First of all, the County of Santa Barbara has not approved our campus for office space use beyond the absolute minimum required for instruction. Second, all spaces to be occupied on campus must undergo thorough DFSS (FM and EHS) reviews. These ensure that buildings and spaces are safe to occupy after months of vacancy and are used to determine whether any additional steps are needed for covid mitigation. It is important to note that offices do not generally have the same outstanding filtration and full air exchange rates as most of our laboratories. Office areas to be used for research will be reviewed at a later date and may require protocols that are tailored to buildings and possibly even different areas within a building. Finally, we continue to prioritize work that cannot take place remotely (i.e. lab research) when considering buildings and spaces to prioritize for reopening. The one exception is that researchers, with clearance from their building committee, can access their offices briefly to retrieve items needed for remote research. Please remind researchers and staff that face coverings must be worn at all times while inside campus buildings. I know that the restriction on office use is a strain for many who have less than ideal home working arrangements and it is my sincere hope that we can start to address this need in the near future.

I also appreciate your patience and resilience as we all work through this difficult situation while helping to protect our community during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Incandela', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joe Incandela