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To: Principal Investigators/Project Directors  
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Subj: Research Continuity Plans

While the university has not closed and has not issued a notice to shut down research labs, we are encouraging principal investigators to implement social distancing and prepare research continuity plans.

### **Social Distancing**

Best health practices are encouraged and the following steps are recommended:

1. Allow employees to work remotely if possible

SDSU Research Foundation Temporary Telework Guidelines

[https://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/pdf/is\\_temp\\_telework.pdf](https://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/pdf/is_temp_telework.pdf)

[https://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/pdf/is\\_temp\\_telework\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/pdf/is_temp_telework_guidelines.pdf)

SDSU Telework Policy

<https://sdsuedu.sharepoint.com/sites/BFA/HR/employment/pagedocs/COVID-19%20Crisis/Alternative%20Work%20Arrangements%20during%20COVID-19%20Crisis.pdf>

2. Advise employees to stay home if they are sick
3. Limit close contact to reduce the risk of transmission (a distance of six feet is recommended)
4. Consider postponing large meetings or conduct them online

### **Guidance for Developing Research Continuity Plans**

1. Identify procedures and processes that require regular personnel attention to support or maintain your studies (e.g. research animals, specimens and equipment).
2. Assess and prioritize critical laboratory activities. Identify any research experiments that can be ramped down, curtailed, or delayed. Identify personnel able to safely perform essential activities.
3. Ensure that you have access to contact information for your critical staff.
4. Cross-train research staff to fill in for others who may be out sick or unable to come to work.
  - a. Ensure they have appropriate training

- b. Ensure they have access to data and systems necessary to perform the work
  - c. Consider documenting critical step-by-step instructions.
- 5. Coordinate with colleagues who have similar research activities to identify ways to ensure coverage of critical activities.
- 6. Review contingency plans and emergency procedures with researchers and staff.
- 7. Maintain a sufficient inventory of critical supplies that may be impacted by global shipping delays.

### **Safety Considerations**

- 1. Researchers should disinfect lab areas and touch points with 70% ethanol (e.g. doorknobs, sink handles, freezer doors, fume hood sashes, telephones).
- 2. Consider whether work on closely spaced computers, equipment or benchtops may be dispersed to areas that are at least 6 feet apart.
- 3. Consider alternating or staggered work schedules to meet the demands of the laboratory while limiting close contact with others.
- 4. Identify work that can be done from home or remotely, such as data analysis.
- 5. Avoid in-person meetings. Use remote work technologies such as Zoom conferencing.
- 6. Ensure individuals performing critical tasks have been adequately trained and understand whom to contact with technical or safety questions.
- 7. Avoid performing high-risk procedures alone.
- 8. Notify colleagues of your schedule when working alone. Have a check-in system.
- 9. Ensure high-risk materials (radioactive, biohazards, chemicals) are secured.

### **Disruption of Operations**

If you think it is possible that the operations of your laboratory may be disrupted by staffing or quarantine issues, you should notify any program officers who are presently assigned to your funded research and engage them in a discussion about appropriately modifying your proposed timelines for progress.

Keep your program officer updated on any progress, or challenges you are experiencing related to delivery on research programs or required progress reporting. Contact them

early and keep them regularly updated. Be sure to document any agreements or approvals from program officers in writing (a follow-up email is sufficient) and copy your SDSURF grants specialist. Please also be sure to contact your SDSURF grant specialist if you need to request a no-cost extension or need assistance with other required sponsor approvals.

We have developed FAQs for researchers: [https://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/pdf/faqs\\_for\\_sdsu\\_researchers.pdf](https://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/pdf/faqs_for_sdsu_researchers.pdf)

and for SDSU Research Foundation employees: [https://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/pdf/faqs\\_employees.pdf](https://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/pdf/faqs_employees.pdf)

These will be updated regularly as new information becomes available.

Please be assured we have the safety and well-being of you and your research teams in mind. Thanks for your patience as we navigate this rapidly changing situation.