

Restarting Research Lab, Field, and Studio Activities

Transition to Research Phase 5 (see below 9.)

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Plan for Restarting Research Lab, Field, and Studio Activities (May 18, 2020)

This document describes a structured plan for restarting research activities at all Stony Brook University facilities. In response to the Directive from the VPR on March 20th, all lab-based research activities were curtailed as of March 22nd, with only critical maintenance being permitted by essential personnel designated specifically for that purpose. Research directly involving COVID-19 was also allowed with the provision that appropriate safeguards were observed. The purpose of the current plan is to establish a framework for an orderly and phased resumption of research that is consistent with guidance from relevant authorities and aligned with Stony Brook's broader plan for returning to campus facilities and operations. This plan is guided by six principles intended to safeguard the research workforce while enabling research to resume as quickly and efficiently as conditions and guidance allow. While this phased return to operations focuses on research activities, the phased approach to opening research labs is applicable to all scholarly and creative activities that need facilities on or off campus to proceed.

Principal investigators (PIs) or faculty supervisors are responsible for adapting the provisions of this plan for their own research lab and/or activities. This requires implementation of safe work practices, including appropriate engineering measures, administrative measures, and use of face coverings/PPE to comply with key elements of the plan. Principal investigators must submit their operational plan for approval by their respective Chair or Director, who will coordinate with their Dean and Facilities representative to enable compliant implementation. Additional oversight will be provided by the COVID Key Area Research Recovery Committee and the Senior Executive Group, as needed.

Outline of the Plan

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1. Principles Informing the Plan

Principle 1: Follow the cognizant directives and guidance from NY State, SUNY, and SBU leadership, and ensure the plan to restart research is aligned with Stony Brook's broader plans for returning to work.

Principle 2: Protect the emotional and physical health and safety of the research workforce, with particular consideration for vulnerable and immunocompromised members of our community. No researcher should feel they are being pressured to work on campus or in the field during periods when NY Pause is in effect. Safety within laboratories and related spaces must be rigorously maintained, with adequate access to face

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coverings/PPE and other safety-related supplies. The health and safety of our clinical patients and human research subjects must also be protected.

Principle 3: Protect early career researchers. Junior faculty are at a critical time in their careers when research productivity is especially important. Postdoctoral researchers are particularly vulnerable with the implementation of hiring freezes at many academic, government, and industry organizations. As such, early career researchers who wish to return to their labs should do so as soon as they safely can.

Principle 4: Graduate students are students in addition to being researchers. Critical skills are gained in the classroom as well as in the lab. New graduate students arriving in the Fall of 2020 must be afforded a proper balance of classwork and practical laboratory experience following appropriate safety protocols. Senior graduate students with limited funding or who require additional laboratory or field research to complete their dissertation work should be given preference as labs open.

Principle 5: Undergraduates are students first, researchers second. Engagement of undergraduates in research should only occur subsequent to the incorporation of postdoctoral researchers and graduate students back into lab spaces.

Principle 6: A transparent process for a phased return to research activities, accounting for equity and fairness, should be implemented as rapidly as public health conditions and guidance/approval from relevant authorities allow. Principal investigators are best able to adapt the plan to their lab operations and/or research activities. Oversight must be provided by Department Chairs, unit directors, and higher leadership to assure compliance.

2. Framework of Controls and Practices for Safeguarding the Research Workforce

Guidance from the [CDC](#) states that the virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

The plan requires safe work practices to be introduced to minimize the risk of transmission of the coronavirus in the research workplace in accordance with [guidance](#) from the CDC, State health authorities, and Stony Brook leadership. These safe work practices are categorized as [engineering controls](#), [administrative controls](#), and [face coverings/personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#). The lists below identify possible measures that may be adopted as safeguards for resumption of research activities. Whereas most of these apply to the lab setting, equivalent controls may be appropriate for core facilities, studios, rehearsal rooms, computer labs, field-based research, shipboard, or other research areas.

2.1 Engineering Controls

- Separation of personal workspaces to achieve minimum 6' distance, or other barriers between personnel when otherwise needed. Examples include:
 - o Staggered use of "bench-top" space.
 - o Use of tape on benchtops and/or floors to delineate space and maintain separation of personnel.
 - o Construction of "sneeze barriers" (e.g., plexiglass; may require request through Building Manager).
 - o Separation of or limited access to common equipment and instrumentation to avoid close contact and cross-contamination (hygiene, see below).
 - o Separate storage of individuals' face coverings/PPE.
- Post appropriate signage at lab entrance and at essential locations within labs to remind personnel of safeguard procedures.
- Ensure adequate air flow in labs and fume hoods.
- Ensure hand washing stations with soap and signage are available within labs. Hand sanitizer should be made available as an alternative, especially for field work.

2.2 Administrative Controls

- All normal safe lab and field practices appropriate for the intended research should be observed.
- Regular health screening as required by SBU. Current SBU guidance requires:
 - o All non-health care employees will be required to conduct a brief health care screening before coming to campus. This daily screening will involve temperature check and a review for COVID related symptoms. These currently include shortness of breath, cough, body aches/muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste and/or sense of smell, fatigue, and headache. For an employee who returns or remains on campus after 12 hours this screening must be repeated.

o If the temperature recorded is less than 100 F without use of fever reducing medication, and no other symptoms are observed, the employee may attest to their supervisor/PI that they screened negative, and may come to campus. An employee who screens positive for a temperature over 100 F or one or more symptoms must notify their supervisor and not come to campus. If during the day an employee begins to feel unwell, they should notify their supervisor/PI and leave the campus immediately.

o Employees who identify themselves as symptomatic are provided information about diagnostic testing, including the testing available to employees at P lot. They should contact the health information line (HIL) at 631-632-5000 and will also be advised to seek guidance from their health care provider. The employee may not return to campus without a clearance from their healthcare provider or the HIL, which must be shared with HR Time and Attendance at hrs_timeatt@stonybrook.edu. HRS Time and Attendance will notify the Supervisor/PI and the employee that the employee has been cleared to return to work.

- Diagnostic testing for COVID-19 virus and/or antibodies if required by SBU. As of 5/18/2020, SBU guidance does not require testing. However, PIs should check for updated guidance.
- Control lab access to limit personnel density. A 6' minimum separation is the goal, however other mitigation strategies may need to be employed on a case-by-case basis.
 - o Implement staggered work hours and/or shifts as needed.
 - o See separation of personal workspace in Engineering Controls
- Continue use of teleconferencing for meetings.
- Comply with SBU's guidance regarding non-essential travel.
- Implement regular cleaning of common areas and contact surfaces (including control surfaces of instrumentation).

2.3 Face Coverings/Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Comply with SBU guidance regarding use of face coverings or masks. Currently, SBU requires the use of a face covering or mask in situations where social distancing (minimum 6' separation) cannot be achieved. Care must be taken to wear face protection when transiting public spaces (e.g., hallways, elevators, bathrooms) to avoid unexpected infringement of social distancing.
- If the standard operating procedure for a research activity requires use of more protective PPE or face coverings, the standard practice takes precedence.

3. Schedule for Phased Return to Research

Research activities will resume following a multi-phase approach. The goal of this approach is to ensure a gradual and safe return to operations. The plan comprises five phases, with Phase 1 being the current state of research stand-by, and Phase 5 being the return to normal research operations. The phases reflect increasing levels of activity achieved by gradually relaxing limitations on the number of research units open and projects per unit allowed. Estimated percentages of the total research workforce are suggested for different phases. The criteria for prioritizing research efforts depend on: operational readiness, access to shared facilities (i.e., core facilities), impact of delay, time-sensitivity of research, funding commitments, and fairness. Activities that can be done remotely (e.g., data analysis, computation and theory, writing, seminars, group meetings, mentoring) should not be conducted on site until Phase 5, unless consistent with SBU's broader plan for returning to work.

Progression through the phases will be dictated by guidance from the Key Area Research Recovery Committee, as informed by the Senior Executive Group, NY State, SUNY, and local policies based on external conditions, and by a lab's readiness to operate safely with increasing workforce. For this, PIs and core facilities' directors/coordinators will need to demonstrate lab operational readiness through the submission of a "Laboratory Operations Plan □". Factors that contribute to readiness include compliance with all necessary controls for social distancing, availability and use of face coverings/PPE, access to all related instruments, facilities, or cores needed to conduct research, available supply chain for all necessary materials, reagents, cleaning procedures, necessary custodial and related services, etc. PIs must coordinate with their respective Chair and Building Manager to ensure readiness of common areas (e.g., building entrances, hallways, bathrooms, elevators, offices) with appropriate safeguards, including regular cleaning/disinfecting of common touch surfaces. If research activities require access to another lab or facility (e.g., a core facility), it is necessary to ensure that such access is available at times that permit research activities. PIs that share a lab space must coordinate among themselves to ensure equitable implementation. Plans for a return to earlier phases should remain in place if warranted by a deterioration of external conditions.

The Laboratory Operations Plan must be submitted to the Department Chair, Unit Director, or corresponding reporting authority for review and approval, with the Dean (or the Dean's Coordination 5 Team) and the Key Area Research Recovery Committee providing oversight and acting to resolve questions. Once approval is in place, Department Chairs or unit Directors will then identify the timing for the progression of core facilities and individual research projects/labs to the next Phase. For progression to a higher Phase, the PI updates their existing Laboratory Operations Plan, and resubmits for approval as described.

PHASE I - Standby			
Safeguards: health screening, social distancing, use of masks or face coverings, cleaning measures as described by SBU's policy for returning to work			
Phase description	Anticipated Activities	Preparation for next phase	External Condition and Expected Period
Standby <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations limited to critical maintenance only Exemption: COVID-19 related research Essential employees only <p>Estimated 0-10% operations.</p>	<p><i>Research facilities, studios and field stations are closed, except where personnel are required to protect life safety and critical infrastructure & capability (maintaining cell lines, animal health, instrumentation, computer systems, etc.).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum staffing present when absolutely necessary. Limited occasional access elsewhere for maintenance. COVID-19 related research allowed with appropriate safeguards. 	<p>Keep record of expenses related to damaged equipment and supplies.</p> <p>Compile a list of supplies necessary for restarting on-site activities.</p> <p>Initiate plan for health screening.</p> <p>PI creates a Laboratory Operations Plan and submits to Chair or Director for restarting operations through phases 2-5.</p> <p>To transition into phase 2, prioritize existing projects and develop a schedule for staggered work.</p> <p>Begin purchasing necessary supplies making arrangements for deliveries in phase 2.</p>	<p>Rising or plateaued number of new infections per day.</p> <p>"NY State on Pause" order remains in effect for LI region at least until May 31st.</p>

PHASE II - Ramp Up - Minimal Operation			
Safeguards: health screening, social distancing, use of masks or face coverings, cleaning measures as described by SBU's policy for returning to work			
Phase description	Anticipated Activities	Preparation for next phase	External Condition and Expected Period
Ramp Up - Minimal Operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded research resumes limited operations in approved high-priority areas Essential employees only, increased number of approved individuals <p>Estimated 10-30% of total research workforce on campus</p>	<p><i>Minimal operation of critical and time sensitive research, which otherwise could lead to substantial loss or catastrophic delay of research results and/or funding.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All research and activities that can be done remotely should continue remotely Labs with funding commitments begin re-staffing to operate at low capacity maintaining low density (e.g., staggered shifts) Core campus functions can begin to re-staff and operate for increased load Core facilities resume minimal operations Labs are able to purchase necessary supplies and make arrangements for deliveries Field Research: prioritize seasonal data collection or experiments close to completion. 	<p>Update Laboratory Operations Plan for transitioning into phase 3 including a schedule for staggered work assuming increased research staffing levels.</p> <p>Maintain plans for sudden return to phase 1 if required</p>	<p>More than one-half of the seven Regional COVID-19 Metrics achieved for LI.</p> <p>"NY State on Pause" is relaxed other regions of NY, and some businesses reopen.</p> <p>Work at home stays in place for most residents.</p>

PHASE III - Moderate Operation			
Safeguards: health screening, social distancing, use of masks or face coverings, cleaning measures as described by SBU's policy for returning to work			
Phase description	Anticipated Activities	Preparation for next phase	External Condition and Expected Period
Moderate Operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onsite operations resume at reduced effort based on time-sensitive activities. Essential employees mainly, but significantly increased number of approved individuals Strict social distancing, staggered shifts, cleaning protocols etc. <p>Estimated 30-60 % of total research workforce on campus</p>	<p><i>Moderate operations of research labs, studios, and field stations, with prioritization on critical and time-sensitive work (research that is deadline driven, e.g., grant submission, manuscript revisions, graduate student dissertations, researchers approaching termination of their appointments, junior faculty starting their laboratories, etc.).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health screening, social distancing, face mask, cleaning measures remain in place Research that can be done remotely continues remotely Core campus functions and core facilities continue to increase capacity Studios ramp up activities Field research: expand approvals depending on what current restrictions are in the locations where field research is to be conducted. Some monitored access to offices for limited time (e.g., 3 times weeks) with strict social distancing. 	<p>Update Laboratory Operations Plan for transitioning into phase 3, with a schedule for further increasing research workforce.</p> <p>Maintain plans for sudden return to phase 1 or 2 if required</p>	<p>All seven Regional COVID-19 Metrics achieved.</p> <p>"NY State on Pause" relaxed for LI. More businesses reopen with strict social distancing.</p> <p>Work from home recommended for most residents.</p>

PHASE IV - Sustained Operation			
Safeguards: health screening, social distancing, use of masks or face coverings, cleaning measures as described by SBU's policy for returning to work			
Phase description	Anticipated Activities	Preparation for next phase	External Condition and Expected Period
<p>Sustained Operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation with social distancing or masks/gloves/PPE where social distancing is not guaranteed at all times. <p>Estimated 60-80% of total research workforce on campus</p>	<p><i>All research operations resume providing that social distancing, personal protection and cleaning can be ensured.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staggered work scheduling should be maintained 	<p>Maintain plans for return to phases 1-3 if required.</p>	<p>All seven Regional COVID-19 Metrics achieved.</p> <p>Significant testing and tracing capabilities become widely available.</p> <p>NY State reopens most businesses with social distancing requirements.</p> <p>Work from home recommended where possible.</p>

PHASE V - Normal Operation			
Phase description	Anticipated Activities	Preparation for next phase	External Condition and Expected Period
<p>Return to normal operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation at full capacity without the need of social distancing. <p>100% of research workforce on campus</p>			<p>NY State lifts all restrictions</p>

3.1 Special Research Activities

Human Subject Research: PIs should consult [updated guidance](#) for changes to research involving human subjects. Research activities must follow IRB policies for changes in operation of research facilities. The IRB should be notified of any changes to procedures that were not part of the initial approved protocol. Screening of subjects for [clinical research](#) should incorporate the following new inquiries: i) Ask if subjects have been tested for coronavirus and/or antibodies, and the results of these tests, ii) Ask for any current symptoms of fever, cough, fatigue, shortness of breath, sore throat, headache or body aches, and iii) Ask for any contact with known COVID-19 cases or with individuals with the symptoms above. Exclude subjects from participation/screening/visit to research facilities, if answer is yes to ii and iii. For i, include only if evidence supports immune status (subject to further guidelines from either the CDC or local health authorities).

For [non-clinical research](#), subjects must be interviewed by phone or sent an on-line questionnaire/survey in order to avoid direct interactions. Consent can be mailed to the individual or can be part of the on-line questionnaire/survey. If subjects need to be screened, phone or email (written) screening can be performed without having actual interaction with the individual. In studies where there is direct interaction with the individual, videotaping or observation through a two-way window is preferable. Direct interaction where no indirect alternatives with subjects are available, must follow the precautions listed above.

Animal Research: PIs should consult updated guidance for changes to research involving animals (provide link). PIs should outline procedures for coordinating and complying with DLAR procedures for return to research. Briefly, i) the use of DLAR procedural space will be limited to ensure proper social distancing, ii) for procedures requiring two people that do not allow social distancing to be observed, proper PPE will be worn at all times, iii) orientation will be provided on-line instead of in-person and group training sessions will be replaced with one-on-one sessions with proper PPE worn, and iv) use of all equipment and special procedure areas will be prioritized according to the campus phasing plan.

Field and Off-Campus Research: PIs conducting field or off-site research should follow the same process outlined for lab spaces, accounting for the particular aspects of the off-site activities. Additional guidelines for hazardous activities (e.g., SCUBA diving) will also apply as appropriate to ensure personal safety. During all aspects of operations, social distancing must be maintained unless appropriate PPE are employed. It must be recognized that the 6' distance is generally specified for indoor, land-based conditions. In a windy and moisture-laden environment such as on a boat, downwind positions require greater distancing. Social distancing applies to all activities, including transportation to and from the site, as well as sample work-up and storage. Food and liquids must be separately maintained and handled for and by each member of the field team. Operational planning, briefing, and communications should be conducted prior to departing for the field site. A responsible party not associated with the research trip must be made aware of the full details of the plan, including departure and return ETAs. For individuals conducting approved fieldwork alone, a responsible party must be made aware of the full details, including times of departure, return and receive periodic check-in calls at agreed upon times. All shared vehicles, vessels and equipment, must be properly disinfected according to CDC procedures before and after use by the person using it. Field work involving travel outside of New York State must comply with all local safety recommendations pertaining to mode of travel, registration with local authorities, and quarantines as appropriate, and ensure adequate supplies of all necessary safety equipment, including PPE prior to departure. Out-of-state travel must be pre-approved by the Department Chair, Dean, and/or relevant supervisor. Research to be conducted at remote facilities must operate in accordance the safety protocols in place for that institution in addition to protocols stipulated in this plan, whichever is more protective.

4. Principal Investigator Laboratory Operation Plan

Download the Word template [here](#)

Guidance to PIs: Use this template to create a plan for your research activities that accounts for the requirements set out in the *Plan for Restarting Research Lab, Field, and Studio Activities* document. This template is also required for core facilities, studios, rehearsal rooms, computer labs, field (off-site), shipboard, or other research activities. PIs in shared/open lab spaces will need to coordinate with each other and describe the coordination in the template. Once completed, submit this plan to your Department Chair, unit Director, or corresponding reporting authority for review and approval.

5. Checklist for Returning a Lab from Standby to Operations

Laboratory Contingency Plan – Returning to the Laboratory

6. Updated Guidance for Restarting Research Activities at Stony Brook University

Revision date: June 9, 2020

NY State continues to release more guidance for reopening as regions in the State progress through the phases outlined by the Governor's Office. Research activities are approved to restart when regions move into the State's Phase 2. Long Island is expected to advance to the State's Phase 2 on Wednesday, June 10th. Contingent on confirmation by the Governor's Office, principal investigators (PIs) are able to restart research activities in labs and off-site locations provided they have submitted and received approval for their individual plans from their department Chair or unit Director and Dean.

NY State guidance for reopening requires implementation of the safeguards that were outlined in Stony Brook's *Plan for Restarting Research Lab, Field, and Studio Activities*. These include daily health screening by all personnel before coming to work, social distancing in the workplace, use of masks/face coverings, and reduced density in labs and other shared spaces. In addition, all employees will be required to take online COVID-19 Returning to the Workplace training prior to returning.

Principal Investigators' Individual Lab/Activity Plans. We are aware that many PIs have already created their plan for restarting activities in their labs or at off-site locations. The updated guidance provided here does not require any changes to these plans. PIs' initial plans should describe the return of a cohort of research personnel (estimated 10-30% of the total research workforce), as described in Phase 2 of SBU's Plan (hereafter SBU Phase 2). (Yes, it's unfortunate that SBU and NY State both designated the progression of reopening using "Phases". There is no correspondence between them.) When reviewing plans, Chairs and unit Directors must coordinate with their respective Dean or supervisor before granting approval and scheduling returns. In addition, Chairs and unit Directors must also coordinate with respective Building Managers to ensure readiness of building spaces. As noted above, PIs may restart research activities as described in their approved plans when so informed by their Chair or unit Director. This is dependent on official announcement of Long Island advancing to the State's Phase 2.

PIs must keep a copy of their signed/approved plan in the lab (or off-site location) and accessible to approved research personnel.

Upon returning to labs and other research activities, PIs should evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguards implemented and introduce any corrections, as preparation for advancing to SBU Phase 3. To advance to SBU Phase 3, PIs must revise/update their approved plan and submit it to their department Chair or unit Director for review and approval. The increase in research personnel accompanying SBU Phase 3 (30-60% of the total workforce) should be accounted for using staggered shifts (as needed), while continuing to maintain social distancing, use of masks/face coverings, and other safeguards.

Required Daily Health Screening. SBU and NY State require daily health screening by all personnel before coming to the lab or off-site work location. This self-screening involves taking the temperature and reviewing symptoms identified by the CDC for COVID-19, and noting if you have been exposed, symptomatic, or if tested positive to COVID-19 in the last 14 days. Research personnel may elect to use the online health screening tool or must complete a **daily log** in order to confirm that they have completed a self-screening, and that they are free of symptoms prior to reporting to work. A separate email will be sent detailing the online self-screening option. NY State has required that daily screening compliance is reviewed, and supervisors/PIs must monitor whether their lab personnel have completed the screening. If an employee identifies that they have one or more symptoms, or indicates recent exposure, they may not come to the workplace, are instructed to call the Health Information line at 631-631-5000, and will be advised of next steps.

Required COVID-19 Return to Work Training. NY State and SBU are requiring all individuals to complete the "Return to Work" training video prior to returning to campus. This requirement applies to those who have been working remotely and those essential employees who have remained working on campus, as well as those restarting research activities at off-site locations. The video can be accessed within SOLAR as follows:

- Log into SOLAR
- Goto>For Employees>Learning & Development>Return To Work Training
- Use the password "employeesback" to access and watch the video
- Check the completion box and hit save

Access Control. The department Chair or unit Director must provide a list of research personnel for their department/unit who have been approved to return to research. The list will be used to enable building access for those approved to return. The list should be taken from the Personnel sections of the individual plans provided by PIs, and should specify the department and building(s). The lists should be sent to Eric Olsen (eric.olsen@stonybrook.edu). When a PI's lab is approved to advance to the next SBU Phase, this list should be updated with added names and resent to Eric Olsen

Additional Information. As explicitly stated in SBU's Plan for Restarting Research Lab, Field, and Studio Activities, no research personnel should be pressured to return to the lab if they feel reluctant. A separate email was sent to Chairs and unit Directors of masks and gloves for returning researchers. PIs should ask their Chair or unit Director about availability of masks/face coverings prior to their re

Additional information is provided in the FAQ section of Stony Brook University Brook's [Coming Back Safe and Strong](#) webpage.

7. Guidance for Masks Starting Winter Term

Revision Date: November 24, 2020

New SUNY Policy on Masks Starting with Winter Term

Finally, I want to make all researchers aware of the recent policy guidance from SUNY regarding health and safety measures for the Winter and Spring 2021 terms. One section of the [SUNY guidance](#) regarding use of face coverings (masks) supersedes the guidance provided in the [Restarting Research Plan](#). Section 4b of the new SUNY guidance states:

Face coverings (masks) must be worn by all members of the campus community on campus at all times, including in classrooms, conference rooms and other spaces, even when six-foot social distancing exists. Exceptions to mask wearing include when students are (1) in their private residential or personal space, (2) eating meals on campus while seated and social distancing is appropriately enforced, or (3) by themselves. Faculty and staff are likewise exempt when alone in their office or other space. Any request for a medical, religious, or other accommodation to this policy should be reviewed on an individual basis in accordance with relevant laws and campus procedures.

This policy requires that all personnel wear masks when present in laboratory and other research spaces even when maintaining a 6 ft separation from others. The only exception is when an individual is alone in the lab or other space. Previous guidance provided in the Restarting Research Plan did not require use of masks in labs when social distancing was maintained. Effective December 1, 2020, our [Restarting Research Plan](#) is being updated to comply with this new SUNY guidance. It is the responsibility of principal investigators (PIs) to inform all personnel listed in their individual lab operating plan of this updated guidance. Remember to keep the list of research personnel current. Any lab signage should also be updated to require wearing of masks except when an individual occupant is alone. This change in policy does not require that individual Lab Operating Plans are updated.

8. Guidance for In-person Participation of Undergraduate and High School Students in Research Labs and Field Research During the Summer

Revision date: March 16, 2021

With the continuing improvements in the current pandemic conditions, combined with the increased availability of vaccines, there has been greater interest in expanding in-person participation by students in research activities, both in research labs and in field settings. We recognize that many of you are already planning summer research activities and may be considering including students interested in summer research opportunities. Therefore, I want to advise you now of changes that we expect to implement for summer 2021. Provided that Covid-19 infection rates continue to decline or remain at or near the current level, we intend to allow limited in-person participation of undergraduate students (both SBU and non-SBU), as well as high school students under appropriate circumstances, in research. Such participation will be at the discretion of the Principal Investigator (PI) and will require approval by their Department Chair or Director. This change will be effective on May 1st, 2021, provided that pandemic health conditions permit, and may be subject to change.

We are aware that most organized programs normally offering summer research experiences for undergraduate and high school students have already committed to remote operations in summer 2021. The current change in guidance is mainly focused at PIs who may be contacted by individual students requesting to participate in research in person. Faculty may wish to give preference to Stony Brook students inasmuch as few of them will have had access to in-person research opportunities during the past year.

Please keep in mind that we remain in [Research Phase 4 of the Restarting Research Plan](#), which allows 60-80% of research personnel to be present in a lab at any given time, subject to space requirements necessary to maintain physical distancing. Therefore, the addition of any student must be in full compliance with the PI's [Lab Operation Plan](#) and must be approved by their

Department Chair or Director. New in-person students must comply with all safeguards and practices described in the Lab Operation Plan, including use of masks and physical distancing. In addition, all students must participate in any Covid-19 surveillance testing and daily self health screening, as required by the University.

This updated guidance is intended to help PIs in planning for research activities during the summer. Given the fast pace of change in pandemic conditions and the increasing availability of vaccines, we should anticipate additional changes in guidance before summer begins. Please consult the [Restarting Research](#) webpage and the [Coming Back Safe and Strong](#) webpage for up-to-date information.

Summary of requirements for in-person participation by students in research labs or field research in Summer 2021 :

- In-person participation is permitted solely at the discretion of the Principal Investigator (PI).
- PI must include all students in their Lab Operation Plan and receive approval from their Chair.
- Students must comply with all safety guidance in Lab Operation Plan, which currently includes use of a mask and physical distancing. Students must sign the Lab Operation Plan to acknowledge compliance.
- Students must participate in Covid-19 surveillance testing as required by SBU.
- Students must complete a daily self health screening before coming to campus.
- Written consent from parent or guardian is required for a high school student (or any minor) for in-person participation.
- PI must ensure that appropriate training and in-person supervision are provided for students.

Transition to Research Phase 5

Revision date: June 24, 2021

Effective immediately, Stony Brook's research operations are transitioning to Research Phase 5, the final phase of our [Restarting Research Plan](#), which began in June 2020. This action follows the announcements by the Governor and the NY State Department of Health that relax certain restrictions because of significant progress in Covid-19 vaccinations and declines in Covid-19 cases. It is important to note that the guidelines for Research Phase 5 have been modified in order to align guidance for laboratory-based and field-based research activities with campus-wide guidance, which will be provided by Stony Brook's Human Resource Services Office and through [Coming Back Safe and Strong updates](#).

Current campus guidance is provided [here](#). Notable provisions that apply at the current time include:

- **Capacity:** Lab and related space capacity is only limited by the space available for individuals to maintain physical distancing based on vaccination status.
- **Physical Distancing:** Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to be physically distanced, indoors or out. Individuals who are unvaccinated and/or whose vaccination status is unknown must continue to maintain six feet of physical distance, in accordance with federal CDC guidelines.
- **Masks:** Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to wear masks, indoors or out. Individuals who are unvaccinated and/or whose vaccination status is unknown need to wear masks in accordance with CDC guidelines. Individuals who are unvaccinated and/or whose vaccination status is unknown may remove their mask indoors while physically distanced, seated, and eating/drinking or while working at their workstation. Individuals who are unvaccinated and/or whose vaccination status is unknown may remove their mask outdoors unless they are in a gathering or crowded event where they are unable to maintain six feet of physical distancing. Note that in patient-facing areas, including Stony Brook Medicine buildings, which encompass the hospitals, the Health Sciences and Basic Sciences Towers, all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear masks per CDC guidance.

The transition to modified Research Phase 5 lifts the requirement to maintain and update an individual lab operating plan for restarting research, including personnel lists and the need to obtain approval from department Chairs or supervisors. Changes to signage must be consistent with current campus guidance.

It is important to remember that the relaxing of restrictions does not signal the end of the pandemic. Compliance with campus-wide guidelines is necessary to minimize risks, while allowing research activities to resume.

Transition to Research Phase 5

Revision date: August 24, 2021

On June 24th, 2021, Stony Brook's research operations transitioned to Research Phase 5, the final phase of our [Restarting Research Plan](#). This action follows the announcements by the Governor and the NY State Department of Health that relax certain restrictions because of significant progress in Covid-19 vaccinations and declines in Covid-19 cases. It is important to note that the guidelines for Research Phase 5 have been modified in order to align guidance for laboratory-based and field-based research activities with current campus-wide guidance, which will be provided through Stony Brook latest guidance section of the [Stronger Together](#) webpage.

The transition to modified Research Phase 5 lifts the requirement to maintain and update an individual lab operating plan for restarting research, including personnel lists and the need to obtain approval from department Chairs or supervisors. Changes to signage must be consistent with current campus guidance.

It is important to remember that the relaxing of restrictions does not signal the end of the pandemic. Compliance with campus-wide guidelines is necessary to minimize risks, while allowing research activities to resume.