



Oregon State
University

Research Office

Dear PIs, facility managers and supervisors of animal care staff,

In anticipation of potential further COVID-19-related disruptions, measures are being taken to minimize the risk of virus exposure to critical personnel and reduce the number of on-site personnel, while supporting active critical research. The steps below are intended to decrease the risk of workplace exposure to COVID-19 by our essential animal care personnel, and conserve the availability of protective personal protective equipment (PPE) for use in medical treatment and public health response.

General requirements until further notice:

- No new animal purchases or acquisitions should occur.
- Animal breeding should be limited to efforts to maintain the line or group.
- Delay starting new projects.
- Gov. Kate Brown's Executive Order to preserve PPE is currently effective until June 15 and should be followed. Please recognize that the current situation is fluid and additional requirements regarding PPEs are possible.
- Use reusable PPE first to the extent possible while keeping personnel safe. For example, where possible, use coveralls or lab coats instead of disposable gowns. Or use dedicated shoes or boots instead of shoe covers.
- Where possible, start scaling back or wrapping up existing research projects involving animals.
- Suspend ongoing projects that involve surgery, enhanced care to minimize pain and distress, or other PPE intensive activities, such as biohazard work. Exemptions may be permitted, when authorized by the university's Attending Veterinarian and IACUC Chair.
- Minimize the number of critical staff within animal areas, by staggering work shifts.
- Configure animal housing to allow maximum social distancing of all critical personnel providing critical animal care.

Prepare a plan – that in a timely way – would provide for possible cessation of ALL research activities. An escalation of university response to the spread of COVID-19 may occur with little advance notice. Assure that all facility disaster plans fully incorporate pandemic preparations.

- A checklist for ongoing experiments will be provided shortly to you by the Animal Program Office. Be prepared to answer anticipated questions, including:
 - What are the risks associated with continuing an on-going animal research project in which you are involved?

- Describe any anticipated losses, both research-related and financial, associated with a delay or suspension of research. This information will assist in addressing critical projects that may need special consideration if the university's COVID-19 response elevates further.

For PIs with animals in LARC-managed facilities, until further notice:

- Animal care staff should not enter facilities when Laboratory Animal Resource Center staff are within animal rooms. These tasks are generally performed in the morning. A comprehensive room-by-room future calendar will be provided as it is available.
- Use LARC-provided reusable PPE first whenever possible. Preserve disposable gowns for specific situations where reusable PPE is not acceptable, such as ongoing BSL-2 work.
- Reduce colonies and transgenic animal lines to only essential maintenance breeding. Do not breed with the intent of increasing colony size for experiments at this time.

Sincerely,

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