**COVID-19 Field Research Safety Protocol for University Phase I and Pre-Phase I status**

* The safety of faculty, staff, and students must be always considered as a top priority.
* Confirm all travel and/or necessary research related expenditures are approved through appropriate University channels.
* Individuals must confirm supervisors know their schedule and location.
* Acknowledgement forms have been signed and approved by each researcher involved in field research.
* One person per vehicle will be allowed for field research activity.
* Storage location of retrieved samples must be pre-authorized for access and availability.
* Confirm site access to the location where the field research is to be conducted including knowledge of any local (municipal/parish/county/state) restrictions on activity.
* When possible, work alone, but when working with another person, maintain 6 feet of distance, as often as possible.
* For work in an outside environment where the researcher is not working alone but 6 feet of distance can be maintained in between individuals, a face covering is recommended.
* For instances when 6 feet of distance cannot be maintained for extended periods of time (i.e. >15 minutes), face coverings must be utilized. Researchers are encouraged to bring their personal, reusable cloth face coverings from home. Should a personal face covering be unavailable, surgical masks (not N95 respirators) may be used instead.
* Wash hands with soap and water regularly throughout the day, especially after removing gloves, if used. Cleanse hands with soap and water and/or sanitizer between participant interactions and/or handling specimen containers received from participants.
* Equipment and/or exposed surfaces handled in the course of your research must be disinfected with approved disinfectant at the end of your research session for that day or between participants if human subjects are involved. Disinfect high-touch surfaces and shared equipment surfaces frequently during the day and at the beginning and end of each shift.
* For work in clinical environments and with animals, refer to **UL Lafayette Clinical Research Protocols**
* When entering laboratory environment for sample delivery, storage, or analysis, refer to **UL Lafayette Laboratory Research Protocol**
* When possible, avoid social interactions and high-touch surfaces during building and room entry and exit, elevator rides, movement in stairways, and bathroom breaks.
* Avoid common areas for lunch or coffee breaks unless you are alone or seated at distant tables; otherwise find an isolated location in lobby areas or outside the building.

*Choice of lab members who return to work.* When considering which lab members will be allowed to return to work initially, each PI should first determine which research activities are the most important to resume at this time (for example, research performed by students or postdocs may be a high priority if needed to meet a thesis, paper submission, or grant submission deadline). Then, in consultation with lab trainees and staff, the PI should determine which lab members are most appropriate for continuing that work, and whether it is possible to resume multiple projects using shift work. Selections of returning lab members should also be based on the following factors:

* Trainees (Graduate students and postdocs) should be given high priority due to the need to complete their research projects in a timely fashion.
* Consider occasional rotation of lab members in the schedule to allow as many lab members as possible to enjoy some progress in their projects.
* Consider equity, diversity, and inclusion, as well as the well-being of lab members who are feeling isolated and may benefit greatly from the ability to come to the lab.
* Undergraduate volunteers will not be allowed in our laboratories until further notice.

*Monitoring compliance.* Based on good compliance with current research shutdown policies, we are confident that faculty, trainees, and staff understand the importance of these policies and will strive to operate their labs accordingly. PIs are required to modify staff schedules or take other measures to minimize risk of transmission. Lab members are empowered and encouraged to report recurring noncompliant practices to the PI of the noncompliant lab or to their own PI. PIs should then make every effort to resolve the problem locally if possible. If safety deficiencies are not resolved locally in a timely fashion, the issue will be escalated to the appropriate higher administrative level for swift correction.