

Guidelines for conducting research during COVID-19 pandemic

Research Activity Level	Laboratory Staffing/ Activities	Fieldwork¹	Allowable Fieldwork related travel	Allowable Overnight Fieldwork Accommodation	Face-to-face direct contact research with human subjects²	Undergrad Participation	Research Building Access³	In-person Lab Meetings
Research 5	Essential ⁴ workers/ activities only: faculty/staff; approved post-docs, approved grad students	None, except by essential ⁴ designation obtained from Dean’s Office and OVPR	None, except by essential ⁴ designation obtained from Dean’s Office and OVPR	None, except by essential ⁴ designation obtained from Dean’s Office and OVPR	Essential ⁴ clinical research projects; remote data collection can continue.	No Undergraduate Research Assistants	Approved Essential workers only	No in-person meetings
Research 4	Wet lab activities by faculty/staff, post-docs, grad students, medical students only	Activities absolutely required to protect the integrity of existing data sets or to protect valuable field equipment	Only local, in-state travel. Minimal field crews who can travel in separate vehicles or vehicles (boats) where adequate physical distancing is possible.	Only if team members can isolate in separate accommodations or are domestic co-residents.	In clinical setting, PPE protocols must align with institutional requirements; Socially distant, non-contact in-person can continue; no more than one researcher & one participant per interaction/room; where remote data collection is possible, it should be used	No Undergraduate Research Assistants	Building occupants only; no UVM or external visitors	No in-person meetings

¹ Denotes outdoor activity. Related indoor lab activity is determined by the Laboratory Staffing column.

² This column applies to face-to-face human subjects/clinical research. As was the case during the March/April 2020 shutdown, remote activities can continue at all levels. Please note that all human subjects research must have prior approval by the UVM IRB; protocols must account for COVID-19 risk assessments and prevention activities appropriate to the respective protocol.

³ Practicality may vary by building.

⁴ Determinations of “core objectives” and “Essential Activities/Personnel” will follow March 2020 guidelines and procedures. Research-related activities on COVID-19, clinical research where possible harm to participants may result from a suspension of research activity and work necessary to maintain critical research infrastructure (including both vulnerable equipment and critical research assets) will be considered essential. Designation of Essential Activity/Personnel is determined by the respective Dean’s Office in consultation with the Office of the Vice President of Research. Under these conditions, PPE protocols must align with institutional requirements for high transmission risk clinical settings.

Research Activity Level	Laboratory Staffing/ Activities	Fieldwork	Allowable Fieldwork related travel	Allowable Overnight Fieldwork Accommodation	Face-to-face direct contact research with human subjects	Undergrad Participation	Research Building Access	In-person Lab Meetings
Research 3	Wet and dry lab activities by faculty/ staff, grad/post-doc, medical students, approved undergrads only	Activities restricted to fulfilling core ⁴ project objectives	Only in-state travel. Participation restricted to minimal field crews who can travel in separate vehicles or vehicles (boats) where adequate physical distancing is possible	Only if team members can isolate in separate accommodations or are part of an existing "family unit."	In clinical setting, PPE protocols must align with institutional requirements; Incidental or low risk physical contact only; where remote data collection is possible, it should be used. Face-to-face with groups is limited to 3 participants and the researcher and only where social distancing is possible.	Approved, project "critical" UVM undergraduate student assistants; no non-UVM students or volunteers. No UVM students prevented from attending class/activities due to possible COVID exposure ⁵	No building transit / pass through, UVM-based colleagues with prior approval	Per approved laboratory plans
Research 2	Wet and dry lab activities by faculty/ staff, grad/post-doc, medical students, approved undergrads only	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals	Unrestricted travel to Vermont ACCD ⁶ "green counties" where reasonable physical distancing is possible and facial masks used in transit. Only with permission for out of state activity	Only if team members can maintain reasonable physical distancing and masking when together.	Allowed with masking (both researcher and participant) and general social distancing; IRB approved physical contact is allowed; where remote data collection is possible, it should be used. Face-to-face interaction is limited to 6 participants and the researcher and only where social distancing is possible.	Approved UVM and non-UVM undergraduate student assistants and volunteers	UVM-based colleagues, external visitors with prior approval/ training/ waiver	Per approved laboratory plans
Research 1	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals	No COVID-19 related conditions or approvals

⁵ Per UVM testing and contract tracing guidelines.

⁶ See map at: <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>