

For information about what work is deemed essential, go to the UVM COVID-19 information page (<https://www.uvm.edu/emergency/covid-19-coronavirus-information-and-updates>) or contact your chair or dean.

New information will be added to this FAW list as questions are asked. Each post will be dated to avoid any confusion.

Q: Am I allowed to access a lab area to do certain critical activities such as fill my cell storage dewars with liquid nitrogen, add liquid nitrogen/helium to equipment, change gas tanks on critical instruments, etc.?

A: All personnel should minimize coming to campus. However, if you must perform a critical activity and have CatCard access, you will have access to your building. (3/27/2020)

Q: If a piece of equipment breaks, what should I do?

A: TSP (Technical Services Partnership) has been deemed essential and will maintain a presence on campus. Should ESSENTIAL lab equipment need repairs, please reach out to Tom Cota or Scott Whiteman or call their main office number (covered 24/7). See: <https://www.uvm.edu/research/tsp/forms/contact-us> (3/27/2020)

Q: My lab is closed, but we left some lab waste there for pickup. What should I do?

A: Waste pickup needs on campus will be monitored remotely. Just make sure your waste is tagged and entered online properly. (3/27/2020)

Q: My lab technician will not be present when the waste collection occurs. How can I make sure that waste will be collected?

A: Safety personnel have CatCard and/or key access to most campus labs. If the location of your waste is not obvious, please provide the storage location information in the “comment box” of the online Tags Entry page. Additional lab waste questions may be directed to waste@uvm.edu. (3/27/2020)

Q: What precautions should be taken by a person going into the lab alone for critical activities?

A: As is always the case, if an individual is working alone in a lab or research space, the individual must do the following:

- Avoid conducting experiments or procedures that could result in harm to themselves or UVM facilities,
- Inform a colleague, in advance, about where and when they will be in the lab, and
- Confirm with their colleague when they have left the lab.

Make sure that whatever work will be done along has been approved on the Working Alone Form (https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Risk-Management-and-Safety/working_alone_may_2012_0.pdf). The lab supervisor/PI determines what can and can't be safely done alone. (3/27/2020)

Q: My research does not require any on-campus or in-person activity. Do I have to shut it down?

A: No. To the contrary, all researchers should continue to work on research projects remotely to the full extent possible. (3/27/2020)

Q: How long is the shutdown expected to last?

A: Under the current mandate through the Governor's office, this shutdown is to continue, at a minimum, until April 15th. Please know that this current situation is dynamic and changing every day. Please watch for University-wide COVID-19 updates (<https://www.uvm.edu/emergency/covid-19-coronavirus-information-and-updates>). (3/27/2020)

Q: How should -80 freezers be monitored?

A: Some labs have paid for freezers to be remotely monitored. Some Sensaphone freezer alarms are set up to email or text the PI during a power outage or temperature loss. However, not all freezers have remote alarms. Freezers with local alarms, or no alarms, that contain critical materials may need periodic monitoring by lab personnel. Contact your chair or dean if this is the case in your lab.

Ensure that you know what type of alarm system you have on your lab freezer(s), if any. Freezers with local alarms and freezers located in areas where the alarm cannot be heard will be the most challenging. (3/27/2020)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Should essential personnel, who have both clinical responsibilities and science appointments, be allowed to transition from conducting patient care in UVMMC to the laboratory during the working day?

A: It is strongly recommended that clinicians NOT travel between laboratory spaces and patient or hospital care areas. Please minimize this activity to reduce any potential exposure of lab personnel and the public to COVID-19. (3/27/2020)

Q: My lab is being renovated. Will this construction proceed as planned?

A: Our understanding is that only construction related to any type of COVID-19 facility or effort is continuing. For more information, contact UVM Planning, Design, and Construction (PDC) to find out which construction activities will continue. See: <https://www.uvm.edu/arch/contact-us> (3/27/2020)

Q: Is there a form I should use if I need to leave something running unattended?

A: As is always the case, use the Unattended Operations form (https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Risk-Management-and-Safety/unattended_operations_2012.pdf). This should be completed and placed on the outside of the lab door, cold room, etc. (3/27/2020)

Q: (IACUC-related) Will protocols continue to be reviewed by the IACUC?

A: Yes, IACUC protocol review will continue as usual until further notice. Contact iacuc@uvm.edu with any questions or concerns. (3/27/2020)

Q: (IBC-related) Will protocols continue to be reviewed by the IBC?

A: Yes, IBC protocol review will continue as usual until further notice. Contact ibc@uvm.edu with any questions or concerns. (3/27/2020)

Q: What will happen to my research animals if I am not on campus?

A: IACUC: The Priority One animal care staff are currently maintaining regular hours and husbandry duties and will continue to operate with a reduced staff. Please contact them if you

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need assistance with your animals. At this time, please try to limit your entry into the animal facilities, and delay any new experiments, if possible.

Non-IACUC: Insects and other invertebrate animals not covered by IACUC should be cared for as needed by lab personnel. (3/27/2020)

Q: Will UVM Service Operations Support (SOS) still be functioning during the campus closure?

A: Yes, UVM SOS is considered critical personnel and can be reached for questions at SOS@uvm.edu. For more critical needs, call 802-656-2560, ext. 1. They can page the appropriate personnel on campus if you provide clear details of your need. Remember to provide them with your full name and a cell phone number so those responding can contact you for more information. (3/27/2020)

Q: Will biowaste pickup still occur during the shutdown?

A: Yes. Any lab that has Chair/Dean permission to remain open, and that generates biowaste, should be able to bring their full biowaste boxes to the Shed at the HSRF loading dock. Labs that are functioning and in buildings that get biowaste box pickups on Mondays need to email waste@uvm.edu before Monday mornings to let us know they need assistance. (3/27/2020)

Q: What changes can we expect for loading dock procedures or protocols?

A: Given mail room will continue to be fully operational at this time, except for package deliveries. Packages will be held at the mail room and will require ID and signature for pickup. All other UVM deliveries will go to Print and Mail's Williston location. Print and Mail will contact you if there is mail or a package waiting for you. If you have ordered chemicals, please do NOT transfer these in your personal vehicle. (3/27/2020)

Q: Do I need to complete the April lab self-inspection checklist during the shutdown?

A: No. Do not come to campus just to complete the self-inspection checklist. If your lab is currently operational, then the checklist should be completed like normal. Upon returning to campus and *before* beginning any lab work, complete the self-inspection checklist for May, and flush the eyewash and safety shower in your lab. (4/14/2020)

Q: What should I use for disinfection or surfaces during the pandemic?



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A: There are a number of different disinfection solutions that can be effective. For guidelines about which solutions to use on what surfaces, as well as contact time, go to the EPA's website on disinfectants specific for COVID-19. See: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2> (4/16/2020)
