

Resumption of Social Psychology Research during COVID-19 Pandemic
June 2020
Department of Psychology and Neuroscience

Following the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control, researchers in the UNC Social Psychology Doctoral Program will use the following procedures as they continue and resume research activities:

A. Avoid close contact with others:

As much as possible, research activities shall be carried out remotely, using available technology such as telephoning and online survey completion for data collection, and various platforms (e.g., Zoom, Skype, Google) for remote meetings of research teams.

When work in the laboratory is absolutely necessary, work schedules will be staggered. No visitors are allowed. The ideal is to have only one person working in each laboratory room at any given time. If this ideal is not possible, floor markings should be installed to indicate six-foot distances between any two persons in the same room (<https://24hourwristbands.com/custom-social-distancing-stickers>). Shared Google calendars will be used to ensure lab spaces are kept at 50% capacity or less. Arrival/departure times will be staggered by at least 30min. If more than one individual is in the lab, contact time should be limited to decrease potential exposure. In spaces where a six-foot buffer is not feasible, plastic shields will be used to minimize particle flow between persons.

All persons entering laboratory rooms will be required to wear face masks for the duration of their time in the lab. Cloth or paper/dust masks are acceptable. See CDC guidelines for removing masks safely (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering.pdf>). Disposable gloves will be used when research activities include handling any shared equipment.

Individuals who are classified as high risk should have appropriate accommodations for their well-being and protection. These individuals should discuss accommodations with their supervisor, the Department Chair, and/or Human Resources.

B. Clean and disinfect surfaces

All persons will either thoroughly wash hands (minimum of 20 seconds with soap and water) or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately before entering the lab (see CDC guidelines for handwashing www.cdc.gov/handwashing). Lab personnel and research participants will be asked to avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. Cover any coughs or sneezes with tissue and immediately wash hands afterwards. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content if soap and water are not available.

Any shared equipment (e.g., video coding or data cleaning stations) should be reserved on a shared Google calendar, with the individual responsible for sanitizing it before and after use. All work surfaces (including computer keyboards, doorknobs, tables, light switches, countertops, etc.) will be cleaned with 70% alcohol solution or wipes. High-touch areas in labs should be sanitized regularly, with sign-off sheets to verify regular disinfecting procedures are being followed. The PI or lab manager will monitor the log to verify regular disinfecting procedures are followed. See Appendix A for sanitation log.

C. Monitor health

All persons who enter lab space will be asked to complete a checklist of COVID-19 symptoms (see Appendix B). Persons who exhibit one or more symptoms will be sent home/not permitted to enter the lab space. If symptoms warrant it, they will be sent to UNC Hospitals for testing. The checklist will also ask if the person has been in proximity during the prior two weeks to anyone who has tested positive for the virus.

Any individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 will be provided with the following guidelines:

- Stay home. Do not leave your home except to receive medical treatment. Do not go to public spaces.
- Self-quarantine for two weeks after such exposure; Isolate away from others in your home
- Notify supervisor immediately.
- Rest and stay hydrated. Take over-the-counter medicine, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.
- Avoid ride-sharing and public transportation
- Wash hands frequently, with soap, for 20 seconds or more.
- Clean all commonly used surfaces frequently and avoid sharing items with household members.
- Monitor symptoms and seek medical attention if symptoms worsen.
- Emergency warning signs to seek immediate attention include: trouble breathing, pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face – call your local emergency facility or 911 to inform them you suspect COVID-19

If someone is infected and was in the lab, work should be halted in the space and a thorough professional cleaning of all surfaces will occur before resumption.

If you travel out of state, once you return to NC you must self-quarantine for 14-days before returning to the lab. This is a requirement.

Check out the CDC website for more information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html#>

D. Guidance for in-person human subjects research

As much as possible, studies should avoid in-person contact. If that is not possible or scientifically sound, PIs should seek approval from a Departmental Review Committee (details forthcoming). New approval from the IRB may also be needed. Keep an eye on the following COVID-19 UPDATES FOR RESEARCHERS: <https://research.unc.edu/covid-19/> and <https://research.unc.edu/files/2020/03/COVID-Submission-Table.pdf>)

Study participants should undergo health screening for COVID-19 symptoms by telephone no more than 24 hours prior to a scheduled visit AND be screened again on arrival, at the front door of the building. Again, no visitors are allowed.

During face-to-face research visits, physical distancing, masks, and proper hand sanitization procedures should be followed at all times.

Similar precautions should be used for field-based research. If travel to field-based research sites is taken by car, no more than two people should occupy a standard vehicle, each wearing masks, and with open windows if possible.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ALL OF THESE GUIDELINES IS AVAILABLE IN THE ACCOMPANYING SLIDE DECK (i.e., “Ramping up research for Social June 2020”).

Appendix B

LAB ENTRY CHECKLIST

During the last two weeks, have you been in close proximity to anyone who has tested positive for the COVID-19?

_____ Yes _____ No

Please indicate below if you are experiencing any of the following today:

_____ fever

_____ cough

_____ shortness of breath

_____ fatigue

_____ muscle aches

_____ headache

_____ loss of taste or smell

_____ sore throat

_____ congestion or runny nose

_____ nausea or vomiting

_____ diarrhea

This is an accurate report of my current health.

Signature

Date