

Illinois Institute of Technology

Research Contingency Planning

As the University continues to monitor the effects of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), we wanted to provide you with some guidelines regarding your research programs during this time. As such, updates and additional information will be posted on Illinois Tech's website under "[Resources for Research during COVID-19](#)" Please check the website regularly.

Proposal submissions, reporting and other such anticipated deadlines continue to be met, unless government agencies must shut down their portals in order to accommodate their internal response to COVID-19. Communications sent by the OMB and other governmental agencies are being watched carefully, to ensure pertinent information is passed on to all faculty and staff. Please continue to check our website: [Resources for Research during COVID-19](#)

If you should have any questions, please contact [Domenica Pappas](#), Assistant Vice Provost for Research.

Preparing Your Research Program

Here are a few simple scenarios in which to consider these impacts:

- What would the impact be to my research and sponsored programs if I had to self-isolate for a period of time?
- What would the impact be to my research and sponsored programs if more than one of my research staff or students had to self-isolate for a period of time?
- What would the impact be to my research and sponsored programs if Illinois Tech advised all faculty and staff to work remotely?
- What would the impact be to my research and sponsored programs in the event of a pause of normal operations?
- What would the impact be to my research and sponsored programs if the event duration were two, four, or six weeks?

Here are a few ways to begin assessing the potential impact of the COVID-19 on your research in any of the above scenarios:

- Are there any studies involving human participants, animals, ingredients, biohazardous materials, or experiments that would be adversely affected? If so, what plans should be put in place to allow for them to continue or allow for them to be stopped and later resumed in the least impactful way?
- What standing purchasing orders or human resource issues might be impacted?
- Would data collection/analysis/storage be impacted?
- What costs would be associated with these impacts?

- What regulatory approvals will expire soon and might be impacted if they are not renewed? Can they be renewed early?
- Are there any collaborators that need to be notified?
- What sponsor reports or deadlines might be due during this time period?
- Would the impact of these actions warrant a for-cost or no-cost extension request for any of my sponsored projects?
- What notice might I need to give sponsors or regulators if the research is going to be paused or significantly delayed beyond a couple of weeks?

Once you have considered the impact for each of these scenarios, please take appropriate steps to make sure your research program is prepared.

Additional Considerations for Human or Animal Subjects Research

- Is the location of the study remaining open and available for participants to be present? Has the location implemented any procedures to slow the spread of the coronavirus that will affect participation in your study or the ability of your study to proceed?
- Does your protocol require in-person participation or treatment? Can it be modified for remote participation?
- Does your protocol require in-person monitoring? Can it be modified for remote monitoring?
- Should your participants be screened for coronavirus as part of your inclusion/exclusion criteria?
- Would your data or results be affected if your participants had to self-quarantine or if they contracted coronavirus?
- Do any modifications made to your protocol and approved by the IRB due to the coronavirus also need to be reflected in ClinicalTrials.gov?

Remember, any modifications you make to your protocols as a result of preparation for the coronavirus need to be submitted to the IRB and approved *before* implementation. If you have any questions, please send an email to irb@iit.edu.

All researchers utilizing animal subjects should be mindful of their animal welfare responsibilities. Animal research teams must be prepared to ensure that animal subjects receive all necessary care. If your research utilizes animal subjects, please contact your research team members and remind them of their animal welfare responsibilities (including timely feeding, cage washing, and environmental enrichment).

Additionally, **please submit contact information** of research team members who will be responsible for animal welfare in the event of any disruptions to normal university operations. The Institutional Official (IO) will forward this information to the proper offices to ensure that animal caretakers have access to the animal facility in the event of any disruptions. These common-sense measures are needed out of an abundance of

caution and to underscore our commitment to ensuring the welfare of animal subjects. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the IACUC at iacuc@iit.edu.

Additional Considerations for Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)

Most considerations for environmental health and safety would only come into play should critical lab staff with unique knowledge be unavailable.

- Do you have a limited number of critical lab staff with unique knowledge? Are there others in your lab who can be cross-trained?
- Does your lab operate machines that use active cooling through liquid gasses, dry boxes, or inert boxes using gas blankets? What would happen if materials like liquid gasses, CO₂, nitrogen, or dry ice become unavailable?
- How frequently are you saving or freezing samples of your cell cultures?
- Do you have long-term experiments that might benefit from more frequent preservation?
- Do you have the requisite local knowledge to do controlled shutdowns of complex machines or devices without on-site help from the company?
- Have you shared with Environmental Health and Safety the locations and amounts of materials that are air, water, or otherwise unstable for observation in case of lab closure?
- Do you have a plan for safe start-up once conditions return to normal.

For questions about EHS, or to report locations of unstable materials or other related concerns, please contact Cindy Chaffee at cchaffee@iit.edu

Illinois Tech gratefully acknowledges that much of this information comes from an analogous document from Case Western University and is used with their permission.