Research Priority Timeline 1 and 2: Building Preparation Guidance

The following FAQ will assist faculty, unit heads, and building managers/officials in preparing for on-site research facility start-up following approval of a research access request.

Please also see the Return to Campus Guidelines produced through the Campus Operations Group (COG).

Updated: Friday, June 5, 2020

1. Now that access to an on-site research facility has been granted, what are the next steps?

Building managers/unit heads should work closely with the Associate/Vice Deans (Research) within the Faculties as there is considerable support available to help with the appropriate posting of signs, “pedestrian” flow, common room and laboratory scheduling, and building capacity determinations.

2. What is the current guidance in regard to self-monitoring and active monitoring of research personnel? How do I report issues?

Checking-in with your team daily to confirm that they are not showing symptoms is an important aspect of ensuring the continuation of on-site research, and the wellbeing of your team and the community. Anyone who is feeling unwell should stay home. If someone has symptoms of COVID-19 or believes they have been exposed, they should go to an assessment centre for testing. Information on symptoms and response are available on the Queen’s University COVID-19 information webpage.

In the case of a confirmed positive case, the supervisor/manager must immediately inform Dan Langham, Director Environmental Health and Safety (613-533-6000 ext. 74980; dan.langham@queensu.ca). The University administration will work with Public Health to determine the next steps required. Public Health will do the contact tracing and will identify those who are required to self-isolate. You are reminded that personal health information must be treated confidentially and therefore emails with the infected individual’s name should not be sent.

Dan Langham will also coordinate with Physical Plant Services, if appropriate or required, to organize a deep cleaning of the affected space.

3. What steps are being taken to prepare a building for access?

The University will provide overall guidance on signage in buildings to direct traffic flow in the main/common areas, i.e., corridors and stairwells, including physical distancing markers. Principal Investigators (PI’s) are asked post signage in their facilities.
4. **What is the guidance for building entrances, hallways, elevators and bathrooms?**

   COVID-19 related signage at the entry of and within the building should be respected and strictly adhered to. Research personnel should be mindful of the number of individuals entering the building and practice appropriate physical distancing (2 metres) as there may be high entry volumes at specific times during the day. Where appropriate, use hand sanitizer upon entry and follow physical distancing guidelines (2 metre separation).

   Elevator use should be limited to the extent possible. In most instances, physical distancing guidelines (2 metre separation) will restrict elevator and bathroom capacity to one individual. Signs should be posted as appropriate.

5. **Where should personal items be stored when at the research lab?**

   Provision for storing personal items should be considered in preparing to open the research facility as offices/workstation spaces outside the facility are not approved for access.

6. **Who is responsible for cleaning which areas of a research lab?**

   All buildings are being regularly cleaned by Physical Plant Services (PPS). Cleaning of the actual research lab/facility (beyond the service provided by PPS), such as wiping down high touch areas (benches and equipment, knobs, etc.) is the responsibility of the occupants. Post signs or label shared equipment with reminders to wipe down before and after use, and remind all research personnel to wash their hands when entering and leaving the lab. Custodial staff will increase the frequency of cleaning highly touched surfaces outside the laboratory (handles, elevators, washrooms).

   Information from Physical Plant Services on cleaning protocols:

7. **Who do I contact to get cleaning supplies for my research lab?**

   Information on how to order cleaning supplies is available on the Strategic Procurement Services website:
   [https://www.queensu.ca/procurement/preferred-suppliers/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe](https://www.queensu.ca/procurement/preferred-suppliers/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe)

8. **Should face masks be worn?**
Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for medical masks and are, at present, not mandatory in Ontario. Surgical/medical masks (including N95) should only be used as needed for laboratory work. These items are in short supply and are needed by health professionals.

At this time, Public Health is emphasizing physical distancing whenever possible as this, along with hand washing, have been shown to be the most effective at limiting the transmission of virus. It is important that cloth masks be used if physical distancing is not possible, however, this should be a very rare circumstance. Physical distancing is always the preferred strategy.

Individuals may choose to wear non-medical masks (cloth face coverings) for personal reasons.

Helpful video on how to appropriately wear a cloth mask: https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1738233411668/

9. Where can I find hand-sanitizer stations in buildings?

Hand sanitizer stations have been installed at building entrances and are being serviced by Physical Plant Services. Individuals are reminded to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. In combination with physical distancing, appropriate hygiene practices are a critical prevention measure for COVID-19.

10. Can researchers (faculty, staff, or students) access offices/workstations that were not listed as rooms/areas approved for on-site research?

No. Only those areas approved in the on-site request can be accessed. Individuals should only be present in a building to conduct approved research.

11. What are the options for research personnel during break/lunch time?

In many instances, break and lunchrooms will have limited capacity to maintain physical distancing. Building managers are encouraged to identify other potential break areas in the building and, given the nicer weather, encourage taking breaks outside. A reminder not to allow the eating of food/drink in areas of the research facility where this is not usually permitted or appropriate.

12. Who do I notify if the schedule of research personnel accessing facility changes or if I want to have additional personnel use the facility?

The new or revised details must be submitted through the approval process identified by the relevant Faculty.
13. Do faculty members or students arriving from outside Kingston have to self-quarantine before accessing the facility?

Self-quarantine is not required for the specific reason of returning to Kingston from another jurisdiction in Canada. Other factors, including return from international travel, may require quarantine. Please review the information contained in the [travel section](#) of the University’s COVID-19 information webpage.

14. What will happen if an outbreak is linked to the facility in use?

In this instance, the University will coordinate closely with Public Health and be guided by the expertise of Environment Health and Safety. Various steps are being taken to prepare for this eventuality, including a cleaning protocol from Physical Plant Services.

An outbreak may require that an approved on-site research request be revoked and plans should be in place to shut-down a facility quickly.

15. Where do I go to get the latest information on proper hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and physical distancing?

Visit the University’s Covid Info website: [https://www.queensu.ca/covidinfo/prevention](https://www.queensu.ca/covidinfo/prevention)

16. Who are the key contacts that can assist with start-up activity and answering questions?

Research start-up approval processes and questions related to the approval process should be directed to the respective Faculty Office.

**PPS cleaning contact:** Brendan Bilow, Program Manager, Custodial Services  Tel:(613) 533-6000 Ext:33042, Cell(613) 532-0721

**PPE supplies:** [https://www.queensu.ca/procurement/preferred-suppliers/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe](https://www.queensu.ca/procurement/preferred-suppliers/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe).  E-mail: queensupe@queensu.ca

17. What are the Research Priority Timelines and how do they impact research and building access?

On April 23rd, a process was released to help guide requests for on-site research access. The process outlined three priority timelines by which facilities could be opened in order, from immediate priority to long term priority, and in a manner which ensured the safety of researchers and the communities in which the research is undertaken. Since this time, only Priority Timeline 1 (Research requiring immediate on-site activity to minimize negative
impacts which would occur by the end of the summer) requests have been reviewed and approved, with a significant portion of the approvals related to supporting timely COVID-19 research and long running research in which a serious loss of research material, data, or equipment could occur.

Details on the Research Priority Timelines, and the expansion to Priority Timeline 2 request, are available on the Vice-Principal (Research) website.