

Office of Nursing Research
Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing
Telecommuting Strategy for Faculty, Research Staff, and Students

These strategies are evolving regularly and rapidly. We will do our best to update these policies as timely as possible.

The Office of Nursing Research is dedicated to service all **Faculty, Research Staff, and Students**. The ONR plans to move all business operations to a remote environment using the following guiding principles:

- **Hours:** The ONR will maintain their normal hours of 7am – 4pm and job responsibilities while working remotely.
- **Meetings:** All meetings are still scheduled via Zoom.
- **Communication:** The ONR will be accessible by phone, email, and text as needed to complete work assignments and to respond to the needs of the School.
- All calls to the Office of Nursing Research will be forwarded to staff to triage remotely.
- All calls to the Senior Associate Dean for Research and Innovation (Eun-Ok Im) and Assistant Dean for Research Operations and Training (Drenna Waldrop) can be placed directly and/or forwarded to the Senior Administrative Assistant to answer remotely.
- **Resources:** Please use the resources that are available to you via our website, including the Office of Nursing Research Toolbox, and more.

Office of Nursing Research Team:

Eun-Ok Im, Senior Associate Dean for Research and Innovation
eun.ok.im@emory.edu 404-712-9805

Drenna Waldrop, Assistant Dean for Research Operations and Training
drenna.waldrop@emory.edu 404-712-9487

Jessica Abrams, Senior Research Program Coordinator
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404.712.9633, Cell: 615-653-0044

Rachel Nash, Program Manager
rachel.nash@emory.edu 404.712.9578

Effective Immediately:
Office of Nursing Research

- Faculty and staff can maintain majority of their administrative tasks remotely. Some research projects will need to be modified or suspended—depending on the nature of the project. This determination will be made at the discretion of the principal investigator.

- The Office of Research Administration will provide guidance on managing research projects remotely.

RAS

All RAS Team Members (Pre-Award and Post Award) will be working remotely during normal business hours.

They are available via email, cell phone, ZOOM and Skype.

Here are the names, positions, and emails of all RAS Team Members:

Beatriz Ibanez-Alvarez, **Senior Director, Research Administration Services**

beatriz.ibanez-alvarez@emory.edu - 404-712-8429

Jamila Edwards (**Pre-Award Manager**) - jamila.edwards@emory.edu - 470-259-1872

Charlotte Harmon (**Pre-Award**) - charmo2@emory.edu - 470-217-5333

Diana Gutsaeva (**Pre-Award**) - diana.r.gutsaeva@emory.edu - 470-698-3473

Mariana Popa (**Post Award**) - mpopa@emory.edu - 404-712-8429

Tammy Babitz (**Post Award**) - tammy.babitz@emory.edu - 470-259-0317

The Office of Research Administration

The Office of Research Administration has been compiling as much information as possible on impacts to sponsored research from COVID-19. ORA will continue to update this page with information as we receive it from each agency. In addition, we have compiled a list of **Frequently Asked Questions (click link)** related to sponsored research. As we receive more questions, and answers, we will continue to update the list.

The Senior Vice President for Research and the Office of Research Administration (ORA) are committed to the business continuity of our research enterprise. As a result, we are sharing with you the latest information regarding our response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation.

- First, ORA is directing all research personnel to Emory's **centralized webpage** that contains travel guidance, what to do if a member of your research team thinks they may have contracted the virus and potential cancellations of activities on campus. This website is updated regularly, and we encourage you to visit this page often to remain aware of the latest developments. We also encourage you to share information with your research teams and begin thinking about the continuity of your research activities.
- Second, ORA has developed a website for researchers and research staff at **ORA – COVID-19**.
- Third, review with all research team members and staff the importance of proper handwashing practices. A video is a helpful tool <http://www.or.emory.edu/COVID/index.html>. For staff who may have English as a second language, consider primary language instruction. See the following link for assistance <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html#posters-general-public>. Posting reminders in the lab may be helpful.
- Fourth, as you communicate with your research team and staff, reinforce that proactive planning is an assurance that their health and safety is the number 1 concern, and that research continuity is a priority.

A proactive approach by both ORA and your lab is needed to minimize the impact of our service to faculty and researchers and minimize interruption to your experiments and research.

Here is what ORA is doing:

We want to assure you that our offices have established plans to mitigate any interruption of the research support we provide you and your colleagues across our many campuses. Specifically, all of the offices of ORA are prepared to increase telecommuting, increase the use of Zoom for virtual face-to-face meetings, are gaining access to DocuSign for electronic signature capture, and are communicating with their associated committees (e.g., IRB, IACUC, Biosafety, Radiation Safety) to ensure that all members have the capability of participating in virtual meetings. Essential functions such as oversight and review of human research studies, care and use of animals, grant, and agreement reviews, environmental health training, and decontamination activities, and coordination within the RAS units will continue as we respond to the threat of a COVID-19 outbreak.

Here is what your research team can do:

We encourage you and research team/ lab staff to create (or review) and communicate a plan to ensure the continuity of critical functions of your research program. In your planning, you can think of best- and worst-case scenarios that include some of the following:

1. What is the plan if a large portion of your research team are out sick or telecommuting
 - a. Is there assigned back up for critical functions
 - b. Can faculty and staff be cross-trained in critical functions
 - c. What is the communication plan when a team member is out and cannot perform critical function
2. Have you taken inventory of essential research infrastructure and reviewed university plans or contacts for maintaining critical functions such as animal care, power, telecommunications, electronic systems, etc.?
3. Have you taken inventory of essential research related supplies and planned for possible delays in ordering or shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) or other supplies.
4. Have you assigned someone on your team to check for and communicate to the research team updated guidance from the university website and the ORA research website on COVID19? Follow any guidance on need for more frequent decontamination of laboratories and workspaces if they are issued.
5. Research collaborators at other sites may be negatively impacted by COVID-19, is there a contact list, coordination and communication of essential multi-site functions.

Frequently Asked Questions and Research Issues to Consider:

We have begun receiving numerous questions from researchers and research administrators, so we have compiled a list of items that may be helpful to you as you prepare your research teams for continuity procedures:

- Discuss approaches of research continuity now in the event that some personnel are unable to come to work. Such advanced planning will make future decisions straightforward and minimize disruption to research activities.
- Take an inventory of procedures that require regular personnel attention (e.g., cell

culture maintenance, human and animal studies, etc.).

- Depending upon the nature of your research, you might consider prioritizing work that can only be carried out in your research facility. Stockpiling results and data that could be analyzed remotely in the future is a potential option that might create future flexibility.
- Think about saving samples more frequently if you are carrying out a long-term experiment and if it is feasible to freeze or otherwise capture samples at specific steps.
- Identify any research experiments that can be ramped down or delayed, should the need arise.
- Coordinate with the other offices with which you work if they are conducting critical functions.
- Ensure that members of the research team have access to information they need to carry out work remotely. Examples of the types of research work that can be performed remotely include data analysis, literature reviews, writing proposals, reviews, or research papers, writing the background sections of theses, computational work, meetings, discussions, etc.
- Confirm that you have access to contact information for your staff and key contacts on campus.
- Cross-train research staff to fill in for others who may be out sick or unable to come to work, including documenting step-by-step instructions for team members who may be asked to cover for their colleagues.
- Maintain a sufficient inventory of critical supplies that may be impacted by global shipping delays.
- Review contingency plans and emergency procedures with your research team and related staff.
- Communicate significant planned absences and/or lab closures to departmental administrators, and contact Environmental Health & Safety Office if you need assistance with decontamination procedures.
- Be thoughtful about travel to conferences and other research-related trips.
- Currently, we have not received any federal guidance relating to charges to awards for non-refundable travel, conferences, and related expenses due to COVID-19. Please continue to follow the University Travel Policy and general cost principles described in Uniform Guidance.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) created [travel guidelines](#) that have been implemented by the University. New CDC guidance directs travelers to stay home for 14 days from the time they left countries that have a Level 3 travel health notice. Currently, this includes China, Iran, Italy, and South Korea. Emory University is following this directive for all returning travelers, including faculty, staff, and students. This means all returning travelers must stay home for 14 days from the time they left these countries before coming back to Emory in order to maintain social distancing. The CDC advises to take these steps to monitor your health and practice social distancing:
 - Take your temperature with a thermometer two times a day and monitor for fever. Also, watch for a cough or trouble breathing. Stay home and avoid contact

with others. Do not go to work or school for this 14-day period. Discuss your work situation with your employer before returning to work. Do not take public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares during the time you are practicing social distancing. Avoid crowded places and limit your activities in public. Keep your distance from others (about 6 feet or 2 meters).

- Faculty and staff who have traveled to or through Level-3 countries should call the Office of Occupational Injury Management at 404-686-8587 to receive a questionnaire. Additional details can be found on [Emory's COVID-19 site](#).
- Trip cancellation insurance is typically an unallowable charge to sponsored awards. Emory is monitoring the federal agencies for any additional guidance related to travel.
- If you are the Principal Investigator of a grant and you anticipate that your grant deliverables will be delayed, please contact your Program Officer immediately to let them know of your work plan adjustments. Additionally, please prepare a brief explanation of the delay for your next progress report. The explanation should outline the alternative work completed and your plan for accomplishing the original deliverables.

We understand there is a substantial amount of information available. We encourage you and your teams to remain knowledgeable by utilizing the resources listed above. Visit our [ORA – COVID-19](#) website for updates. We appreciate your dedication and commitment to Emory and our research enterprise. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Additional Resources:

In addition to Emory's webpage, we are directing research teams to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website to follow the guidance and learn about COVID-19's virulence, transmission, and statistics related to the outbreak. The CDC has prepared an Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) to Plan, Prepare, and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), to help higher education organizations, like Emory, prevent the spread of COVID-19 among students, staff, and faculty.

NIH Notice

The purpose of this notice is to provide guidance outlining the flexibilities available to recipients conducting NIH-funded clinical trials and human subject studies that are impacted by the [declared public health emergency](#) for COVID-19. NIH recognizes the significant effects that this emergency is having on NIH-funded clinical trials and other human subject's studies. First and foremost, NIH is concerned about the safety and welfare of human subject participants and research staff. Institutions should take all steps necessary to ensure the safety of all human participants and research staff involved in NIH-funded clinical trials and human subject's studies.

At this time, NIH encourages recipients to consult with their IRB and institutions about potential measures to protect participants and research staff. Examples of such measures are:

- Limiting study visits to those needed for participant safety or coincident with clinical care.
- Conducting virtual study visits
- Arranging flexibilities for required laboratory tests or imaging needed for safety monitoring to occur at local laboratories or clinics
- Canceling large gatherings of 50 or more people
- Limiting or suspending unnecessary travel

Recipients will likely encounter delays to ongoing research based on the effects of COVID-19. As outlined in [NOT-OD-20-086](#), recipients may submit late financial and progress reports, if research is delayed due to COVID-19, and may carryover unobligated balances on active grants without requesting prior approval.

Below are additional details related to current and expanded flexibilities:

Delays in Research Progress:

As outlined in the NIH Grants Policy Statement [8.1.1.3](#), recipients may extend the final budget period of the approved project on active grants one time for up to 12 months without requesting prior approval from NIH.

To support participant health and safety, and continuity of research during this public health emergency, NIH will allow for additional extensions, including mid-project period extensions, for awards supporting NIH-funded clinical trials and human subject's research. Recipients should contact the awarding Institute or Center (IC) to provide details on the effects of COVID-19, and the need for an extension. NIH is committed to working with its recipients during this public health emergency.

Typically, project periods for NIH awards supporting clinical trials and other human subject's research are limited to seven years. NIH will allow project periods to extend beyond the 7-year timeframe for extensions related to COVID-19.

Unanticipated Costs

As a result of COVID-19, recipients may incur unanticipated costs. For example:

- Costs incurred to arrange for participants to receive care at their local sites or virtually, rather than the study site, for required visits.
- Supply chain disruptions
- Personnel disruptions due to illness or closure of facilities
- Additional lab testing (e.g. for COVID-19)
- Increased transportation costs

If unanticipated costs are identified due to impacts of COVID-19, and unobligated balances are not available to rebudget, recipients may request administrative supplements from the funding ICs (see [PA-18-591 Administrative Supplements to Existing NIH Grants and Cooperative Agreements \(Parent Admin Supp Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)). ICs will make funding decisions on a

case by case basis in an effort to support the safety and welfare of participants and sustain research during any delays.

Additional NIH resources related to COVID-19 are available [here](#) which includes FAQs that include, but are not limited to, human research and clinical trials specific questions. NIH is continuing to monitor the situation and will publish any additional information regarding this ongoing public health emergency in the [NIH Guide](#).

Inquiries

Please direct all inquiries to:

Division of Grants Policy
Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration
Office of Extramural Research
Telephone: 301-435-0949
GrantsPolicy@nih.gov

IRB

The eIRB New System Training will still take place via ZOOM on Tuesday, March 24th from 12pm – 1pm: <https://zoom.us/j/825732263>

New protocols may also need rapid IRB review.

The current guidance is attached and on the IRB [website](#).

This will also be covered in today's webinar (more info below).

Addressed in this Guidance:

- When and how must the Emory IRB must be notified of changes to approved research?
- When may prior Emory IRB approval not be needed?
- How quickly can the IRB review new COVID-19 protocols?
- Will Emory IRB's review capacity be impacted if Emory closes?

The IRB hosted a webinar, Thursday, 3/12 at 12:00 pm entitled "**IRB's Researcher Guidance for COVID-19 & the Study Closeout Process/Latest News.**" The presentation includes questions and answers, and it also covered the recently published [Researcher Guidance: COVID-19 and IRB Review](#) first. Here is the link to the recordings of the Thursday session and past webinars, visit the [Webinars page](#) on the IRB website.

REAL and FWS

Students can work off-site. In the past it has been discouraged for them to work from home since it is supposed to be a supervised position. You can ask (with a justification) that students be allowed to clock in remotely so that they do not have to do timecard adjustments every day. I did this for students who worked off site with me at a clinic. I have asked our staff to complete weekly logs of work completed. I can share the example if needed.

Below is the information regarding the Rollins Earn and Learn (REAL) students:

CORRECTION: International Students may NOT work more than 20 hours per week during extended break

I learned from Emory's International Students and Scholars Services that since Emory's extended spring break has not yet been approved by the Department of Homeland Security, and we will not get a response from DHS before the break ends, International Students (F and J visas) may NOT work more than 20 hours during the extended spring break.

Letter Update from RSPH on the REAL Program and COVID-19 from Heather Zesiger

Dear Rollins Earn and Learn (REAL) partners:

We would like to update you on the RSPH response to COVID-19 and provide guidance during this challenging time. The following set of guidelines, drafted in concert with Emory University and RSPH plans regarding COVID-19, is intended to offer assurance to our students and partners in the REAL program that we are taking all of the necessary steps to ensure health, safety and continuation of the program. This plan is subject to change as guidelines regarding COVID-19 evolve. Updates will be communicated to partners in the REAL program via email.

Emory's plan: Spring Break has been extended through March 22. Beginning March 23, all classes will take place online through the end of the Spring semester, May 9.

REAL Program Guidance 03.12.20:

1. Maintain your health and the health of your colleagues and work-site.
2. Please make a plan now for alternative work arrangements for the REAL students if your work-site should close or if you or the student should need to engage in social distancing.
 - a. Discuss your company's or organization's policy and approach to remote work.
 - b. Agree on a communication method if one of you becomes ill or if the work location is closed suddenly.
 - c. Be as flexible as possible. If students cannot complete task A remotely because the software is only available at the job site, could they do task B (a literature review; prepare a presentation; read a journal; edit a manuscript; draft communications; etc.) instead?
3. If you are unsure what duties students could perform remotely, please discuss with your student(s) and feel free to reach out to Heather Zesiger to brainstorm appropriate tasks.
4. When/if remote work is in effect, please maintain or enhance your current communication and accountability practices with your REAL student. Refer to the Partner Guidebook and the Student Workplan. Consider short, virtual check-ins via phone or supported technology during social distancing or when work-sites are closed.

FAQs during COVID-19 Response

How are students receiving updates from REAL?

- All students in the REAL program are enrolled in an online “course” in our learning environment, Canvas. If students have questions, encourage them to look at the REAL Canvas page first, before contacting real@emory.edu.

Can students work up to 40 hours during Emory’s extended Spring Break?

- Yes, students may work up to 40 hours through March 22. While classes (now online) are in session, students may work up to 20 hours.

We'll close by sharing this excerpt from an email from RSPH leadership earlier today: *Often, times of uncertainty can serve as opportunities for fear and discrimination to take hold. Please be reminded that stigma and discrimination related to COVID-19 transmission goes against our values as an Emory community. Moreover, it undermines our desire to cultivate an inclusive environment and our ability to control the spread of transmission. To that end, we request that you continue to treat others with respect and generosity. We do our best work when we work together.*

In health,
The REAL Team

Office of Human Resources

Please view the links below for more information on the Remote Work policies and procedures:

<https://www.hr.emory.edu/eu/working-covid-19/index.html>

<https://www.hr.emory.edu/eu/index.html>

Please continue to stay informed by checking [Emory's Coronavirus website](#) regularly. Thank you for your commitment to making Emory safe and productive during this time.

In closing, here are all of the links to Emory University and Healthcare COVID-19

Emory University COVID-19 Updates

- Messages: <https://www.emory.edu/coronavirus/messages/index.html>
- FAQ: <https://www.emory.edu/coronavirus/faq/index.html>

Emory Healthcare COVID-19 Updates and Information

- <https://www.emoryhealthcare.org/>

Emory IRB COVID-19

- Guidance: <http://www.irb.emory.edu/documents/guidance-Covid-19.pdf>

Emory HR COVID-19

- <https://hr.emory.edu/eu/working-covid-19/index.html>
- Links to “Preparing to Work Remotely”, “Tips for Remote Work” and “Supporting a Telecommuting Team

Thank you all so much!
The Office of Nursing Research