

Oak Street Campus Research Institutes

Return to Onsite Research

COVID-19 Safety Plan

Overview

This document provides direction for Principal Investigators, supervisors, trainees and staff who wish to continue or resume onsite research and research support activity at BC Children's Hospital, BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre and the Oak Street campus research institutes – including BC Children's Hospital Research Institute (BCCHR), Women's Health Research Institute (WHRI) and BC Mental Health & Substance Use Services Research Institute (BCMHSUSRI).

This plan includes a review of operational activities and directives to ensure effective controls are in place to mitigate the risk of infection from SARS-CoV-2. This document and the *Guidance & Policy Due to COVID-19* document will be updated if and when mandated requirements from the Office of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), WorkSafeBC, Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) or the University of British Columbia (UBC) are changed. For more information, visit <https://covid19.ubc.ca/>.

Buildings covered by this plan:

- Clinical Services Building (948 W 28th Avenue)
- Translational Research Building (938 W 28th Avenue)
- Variety Building (950 W 28th Avenue)
- North & South Block (980 W 28th Avenue)
- Shaughnessy F5 & F6 (4500 Oak Street)

In addition to the above locations, all spaces within the WHRI and BCMHSUSRI are supported by this plan. If the spaces are outside of the above locations, then they will default to the building safety plans for their own areas.

Additional guidance and policies for supervisors and occupants concerning the numerous other site and institute-specific considerations, including intake and approval processes, can be found in the *Oak Street Campus Research Institutes Return to Onsite Research: Guidance & Policy Due to COVID-19* document.

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1. Introduction

This plan has been designed to limit the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission and prioritize a safe and healthy workplace by enforcing physical distancing and putting in place additional workplace controls.

The health of our communities comes first

- Do not come onsite if you have cold or flu-like symptoms.
- Do not come onsite if someone in your household has tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 or is suspected of having COVID-19. If someone in your household has respiratory symptoms but was not tested, self-monitor for respiratory symptoms and distance yourself from the patient as much as possible. Follow all directives as provided by BCCDC and PHO.
- Symptoms should be monitored daily with the checklists available throughout the site or by using the daily self-screening assessment tool.

Physical distancing is paramount

- Physical distancing of at least 2 metres between people must be maintained at all times onsite. If physical distancing cannot be maintained then Facilities must be consulted regarding other controls that could be put in place.

The return to onsite activities will be staged and carefully managed

- This is a gradual, staged approach; it is not a return to normal workplace conditions.
- This plan is consistent with PHO, WorkSafeBC, PHSA and UBC directives.
- All staff who can continue working remotely, must do so.
- All work onsite (i.e., work-plans) must be approved beforehand. The criteria and intake form are detailed in section 4 of the *Oak Street Campus Research Institutes Return to Onsite Research: Guidance & Policy Due to COVID-19* document.
- Changes to approved work-plans must be reviewed by Facilities before implementing, as changes could impact other programs.
- BCCHR Facilities will aid in monitoring the buildings for compliance.
- Time spent at the workplace must be kept to a minimum.
- The directives in this document apply to all personnel within the Oak Street campus research institutes, including those who have existing exemptions for ongoing work.

2. Personal protective equipment and supplies

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is considered "the last line of defense." Other methods of protection, such as physical distancing, good hygiene practices, and administrative steps (like work shift rotations) must be utilized first. This approach is based on directives from the PHO, WorkSafeBC, PHSA and UBC.

Labs will be expected to continue to supply the PPE and supplies that they normally require for their experiments as per UBC lab safety standards and practices relevant to their containment level protocols.

BCCHR Facilities will supply additional PPE and supplies that are needed due to COVID-19 safety concerns. Request supplies for your team by submitting a ticket through the support portal at support.bcchr.ca (accessible with a BCCHR, PHSA or UBC username and password). Facilities will ensure all supplies are being used responsibly.

Facilities is keeping the following items in stock:

- **Masks:** Surgical and N95 masks will be made available for those who choose to wear them onsite. At this time, there is no official requirement from UBC or PHSA to wear them. Those who require N95s in their protocols, or to prevent allergies, will have priority for N95s.
- **Disinfecting Wipes:** Wipes will be provided to labs and will be available in common areas (i.e., lunchrooms, shared equipment spaces, meeting rooms, etc.).
- **Hand Sanitizer and Soap Pumps:** Refills will be available for all hand sanitizer and soap pumps onsite. Housekeeping will refill these as per normal practice.
- **Isolation Gowns:** Labs that require the use of isolation gowns for COVID-19-related studies must notify BCCHR Facilities. Gowns that have been used and are in need of laundering must be placed in a clear plastic bag labelled "PPE," and left at the Translational Research Building's Shipping and Receiving. Signage in the loading bay indicates specific drop-off location.

NOTE: If you or your group needs any of these items, or if more wipes and/or sanitizer is needed in a common area, submit a ticket through the support portal at <https://support.bcchr.ca>.

Homemade PPE and masks brought in from offsite

Since we cannot guarantee the cleanliness of masks brought in from offsite, all personnel and visitors (including research participants) are asked to not use them when onsite. Non-medical masks and homemade masks are not Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cannot be considered as part of workplace safety planning.

Store any masks from offsite in a secure location and, if you need it, use a mask provided by Facilities when onsite. Wash or sanitize your hands immediately after storing your offsite mask.

For more information, read:

- [UBC's statement on non-medical masks and the risks associated with them](#)
- [UBC's COVID-19 Health & Safety](#)

Lab coat laundering

During the staged increase of onsite activities, BCCHR Facilities will centralize and facilitate lab coat laundering in order to reduce traffic to and from the hospital.

Drop off lab coats in BCCHR's Shipping and Receiving. Facilities will deliver them to the drop-off point in BC Children's Hospital. Make sure they are labelled with the following information:

- C&W
- BCCHR
- Lab Name
- Room Number
- Bay # (if applicable)

Lab coats can be picked up at the same location in Facilities in 7–10 business days.

3. Building access and movement

All building entrances will continue to be card access only. This ensures that members of the public cannot enter and enables Facilities to track onsite traffic.

The maximum assigned capacity of all spaces is dependent on directives from the PHO, WorkSafeBC, PHSA and UBC.

Stairwells and hallways

Some stairwells are designated for one-way traffic, and have been signed accordingly (see *BCCHR stairwell directional plan*; Appendix 2). Most hallways will still allow two-way traffic, as they are wide enough to enable proper physical distancing.

Elevators

Use stairs whenever possible and only use elevators when absolutely necessary. Elevators have a maximum occupancy of 2 people.

4. Common areas

There will be heightened cleaning by housekeeping in all common areas, with a focus on high-touch points, including but not limited to: entrance and exit points, door knobs, elevator buttons, bathrooms, kitchens, lunch spaces. These points will be cleaned at a minimum of every 4 hours.

The maximum assigned capacity of all spaces is dependent on directives from the PHO, WorkSafeBC, PHSA and UBC.

Chieng Family Atrium

Every other chair/couch can be used. Facilities has blocked off the furniture accordingly with yellow tape. Furniture can be wiped and will be cleaned every 4 hours as per the new cleaning schedule.

Meeting rooms

These are restricted to priority use for video conferencing.

All rooms have been be assigned a maximum occupancy (see Appendix I).

Washrooms

Occupants using washrooms must strictly adhere to physical distancing requirements and stay more than 2 metres (6 feet) from one another.

Multiple occupant washrooms are restricted to a maximum of two occupants at one time. Some open stalls (without a door) have been closed off to promote physical distancing. Guidelines for managing proper physical distancing for multi-occupant washrooms are outlined in section 7 of the *Oak Street Campus Research Institutes Return to Onsite Research: Guidance & Policy Due to COVID-19* document.

It can be difficult to manage physical distancing requirements for multiple occupant washrooms, even with a maximum capacity of 2 people. If personnel in your area are concerned about this, users are advised to announce when they are exiting and entering in order to warn others to stay clear.

Showers remain open and will be cleaned more frequently.

Lunch spaces, kitchens and watercoolers

All personnel are encouraged to eat at their desks or in outside spaces. The courtyard off of the atrium remains open.

Maximum capacity in different lunch spaces has been posted (see Appendix I).

Please note:

- There is a one-person maximum at tables.
- Do not share dishes and/or utensils.
- Microwaves remain available.
- Users must wipe down tables and appliances after each use. Wipes are available. To request additional wipes, submit a ticket through the support portal at <https://support.bcchr.ca>.
- Do not store items in the fridges. They have been blocked off and signed accordingly.

Watercoolers will be wiped down regularly with disinfecting wipes as per the new cleaning schedule.

Do not use personal glasses or bottles with water coolers or purification systems. Paper cups have been provided by Facilities. Use once and dispose to prevent contamination. To request additional cups, submit a ticket through the support portal at <https://support.bcchr.ca>.

5. Dry lab and office areas

As per UBC and provincial directives, work that can be done remotely must continue to be done remotely. As such, the use of offices and open concept workstations must continue to be limited as much as possible.

Personnel must remain in the assigned workspaces. Areas that are shared in any fashion must be sanitized by users at the beginning and end of every usage period. Disinfecting wipes are available. To request additional wipes, submit a ticket through the support portal at <https://support.bcchr.ca>.

The maximum assigned capacity of all spaces is dependent on directives from the PHO, WorkSafeBC, PHSA and UBC.

Study carrels

Occupancy has been reduced to every other carrel. Facilities has blocked off and closed carrels that must not be used.

Workstations

Most workstations can be used as normal as they have more than a 2 metre distance between them. In cases where physical distancing cannot be maintained between the workstations, one workstation has been closed off.

Shared photocopiers

Equipment that is shared in any fashion must be sanitized by users at the beginning and end of every usage period. Disinfecting wipes are available. To request additional wipes, submit a ticket through the support portal at <https://support.bcchr.ca>.

6. Lab spaces

Labs must continue to adhere to PPE requirements (e.g., gloves, closed-toed shoes, lab coats), and follow their decontamination procedures according to their relevant containment level protocols (e.g., properly decontaminating Bio Safety Cabinets after use).

Lab PPE must not be worn outside of labs. Remove it before entering elevators or other public spaces.

The maximum capacity of individual lab bays is dependent on the specifics of the space and ability to maintain proper physical distancing of two metres (see Appendix 1). Generally, maximum capacity is two people per bay.

The maximum assigned capacity of all spaces is dependent on directives from the PHO, WorkSafeBC, PHSA and UBC.

It is up to the Primary Investigator/supervisor to determine how best to manage physical distancing and maximum capacities in their work areas. If physical distancing cannot be maintained, then other controls must be put in place and Facilities must be consulted.

Tissue culture rooms and cold/heat rooms

Where physical distancing is not possible, occupancy is restricted to one person per room.

Shared equipment

Equipment that is shared in any fashion must be sanitized by users at the beginning and end of every usage period. Disinfecting wipes are available. To request additional wipes, submit a ticket through the support portal at <https://support.bcchr.ca>.

7. What to do if you are onsite and starting to feel sick

1. Notify anyone in your immediate area while still maintaining physical distancing.
2. Shut down your work/experiment to ensure safety.
3. Maintain your distance from others and do what you can to prevent yourself from contaminating surfaces and spaces.
4. Make your way out of the building and safely home.
5. Notify your supervisor, who in turn will notify Facilities in order to arrange appropriate cleaning of the work area.
6. Call 8-1-1.

8. Compliance and monitoring of the *Oak Street Campus Research Institutes* *Return to Onsite Research: COVID-19 Safety Plan* document

Monitoring of compliance with COVID-19 safety plans will be at the Principal Investigator/supervisor level. In addition, Facilities will be doing daily walkthroughs of the building to confirm compliance and cross-checking building access reports against lists of approved onsite personnel.

PIs are responsible for the health and safety of personnel working in their labs. Academic Heads of Unit are responsible for the health and safety of everyone who reports to them, and also responsible for ensuring that everyone in the Unit is adequately supervised.

It is of paramount importance that all community members involved in onsite research activities comply with these safety protocols at all times. It is equally important to understand that failure to comply with these protocols may result in withdrawal of access permissions, may present a risk to the health and wellbeing of our community, and could ultimately lead to disciplinary action.

Questions or concerns

For questions or concerns, please contact **Kaya Marriott**, Coordinator, Research Facilities, & Chair of BCCHR Safety Committee at kaya.marriott@bcchr.ca; and **Winnie Ho**, Coordinator, Human Resources, BCCHR at winnie.ho@bcchr.ca.

Appendix I: Maximum capacity of multi-occupant rooms in research areas on Oak Street campus

The maximum assigned capacity of all spaces is dependent on directives from the PHO, WorkSafeBC, PHSA and UBC.

Room	Maximum Capacity
Chan Centre (2111)	10
2108	4
3113	4
A2-115	4
A2-163	1
A2-164	1
A2-185	1
3090	1
202	2
V3-301	2
V3-302	4
A4-187	2
A4-188	2
Lunch Rooms*	2
Multi-Occupant Washrooms*	2
Lab Bays*	2
Tissue Culture Rooms*	1
Cold/Heat Rooms*	1

*Capacity limits are general limits for these room types. Room capacity signage posted by BCCHR Facilities may differ from the capacity limits listed here. If that is the case, BCCHR Facilities signage is correct.

Appendix II: BCCHR stairwell directional plan

