

Memorandum

To: All Faculty and Staff subscribed to the ERA listserv
From: Michele Masucci
Vice President for Research
Subject: Notice to Temple Research Community – Update on COVID-19 Return
to Research Planning Process and Guidelines
Date: May 23, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Temple University is involved in a university-wide effort to develop plans for the resumption of activities beginning after the Governor’s stay-at-home guidance is lifted for Philadelphia, currently planned for June 4, 2020.

Currently research activities on Temple University campuses are restricted to **essential activities only**, as indicated in the [Notice to Temple Research Community](#) that was issued on March 16, 2020. The ramp down of research was implemented in order to respond to the impending public health crisis due to the effects of COVID-19 and in order to protect the safety of our research community.

The Office of the Vice President for Research along with Associate Deans for Research in Temple University Schools and Colleges and other senior administrators across the institution have been working on the development of a plan and associated procedures to guide the return to campus research in alignment with the conditions surrounding the COVID-19 impacts in Philadelphia and its surrounding areas.

The goal and priority for the return to research is to ensure the safe, orderly, and equitable return to campus research. The approach aims to minimize the physical, psychological, and safety impacts to researchers and research participants, to support the needs of trainees and early career researchers, to sustain our research activities to the extent possible, and to continue to support Temple’s contributions to the advancement of knowledge and treatment related to COVID-19.

Temple University is implementing a phased and tiered approach for the planning and scheduling of the return to research. The approach for the return to research is found in the document entitled: [Guiding Principles and Phases for the Return to Campus Research](#). Temple University requests that investigators and facility managers apply for returning to campus research facilities by identifying the desired phase for the return to campus facilities, the scope activities and personnel required, and the feasibility of the described effort based on available resources and university guidelines or constraints.

Phases for Return to Campus Research Facilities

Phase 0, Essential Research Only: March 16 – May 26, 2020

Phase 1, Expanded Essential Research: Begins on May 26, 2020

Phase 2, Expanded Essential Research – Priority 1: Target to begin June 8, 2020

Phase 3, Expanded Essential Research – Priority 2: Target to begin June 22, 2020
Phase 4, Full return to Research with Restrictions: Target to begin August, 31, 2020
Phase 5, Return to normal: Anticipated no sooner than January 2021

Request for applications

All investigators and managers of research facilities are requested to complete an [Application for the Return to Campus Research Facilities](#) and associated [Safety Assessment for the Return to Campus Research](#). All researchers are also advised to carefully review two guidelines established by the Environmental Health and Radiation Safety office, called: [Guidelines for Restarting Laboratories](#) and [Social Distancing Guidelines for Laboratories](#).

Application approval

The application form needs to be provided to your Department Chairs and Associate Dean for Research for review and approval in order to gain authorization to return to your research facility. In some cases Associate Deans from different colleges may need to consult with each other if the work effort includes multiple investigators from multiple schools and colleges. This needs to be completed and approved prior to your return. Temple University emphasizes that those who can work from home continue to do so, even as the guidelines for returning to campus are beginning to be implemented. Be advised that guidelines may be adapted to reflect changes in the conditions and impacts of COVID-19 on our campus and in Philadelphia. The return to research may advance in sequence through the currently scheduled phases of return to research but may also require the return to prior phases if conditions require a reassessment of our plans.

Alignment with plans of schools and colleges

Applications for the return to research along with the requested supporting documents need to align with the guidelines provided by schools and colleges. The Office of the Vice President for Research will maintain an archive of all plans provided by the schools and colleges and review them for alignment with university-wide plans, available resources, and feasibility. Questions or concerns related to the plans of individual schools and colleges, along with individual investigators or managers of facilities will be directed to the respective Associate Dean for Research or administrative equivalent.

Temple University greatly appreciates the work the research community has done to transition activities off campus, to maintain essential research activities, and to push forward in research efforts related to COVID-19.

Current updates from Temple's Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) website can be found [here](#) and continued research operations updates can be found [here](#).
