

We are writing to clarify the March 12, 2020 guidance from Dean Gay regarding the ramp down of FAS & SEAS research activities.

We are asking all PI's to ramp down their research program to a "highly restricted access" mode, as described below (much of the wording below is borrowed, with gratitude, from Stanford).

Harvard University's Environmental Health and Safety has developed a [Lab Ramp-Down Checklist](#)

Assume that:

- Many daily functions, such as ordering, may be unavailable or delayed;
- All research buildings will be locked;
- Employees and researchers should conduct only a very limited scope of work on campus;
- Maintenance of existing equipment that cannot be shut down and requires routine care should continue, such as checking CO2 levels in incubators, filling LN2 or Helium;
- Maintenance of some experiments that require ongoing care should continue, such as tissue cultures that cannot be frozen;
- Service Centers and Cores, including CNS, machine shops, etc. will suspend operations;
- Your lab members would only do limited amounts of approved high-priority lab work;
- Your lab members will continue to conduct research remotely: data analysis, literature review, modeling and computation, writing, planning, etc.
- We will continue to support Research Computing access and utilization.
- Animal care in central facilities is being maintained. Individual PIs with animals in their labs are responsible for their care and should plan accordingly.
- Staff in Environmental Health and Safety, your school, and your department/area will support approved high-priority operations.
- We will entertain petitions for exceptions in cases where restricted access imposes truly large fiscal (many millions) and/or time-loss (many months) consequences. Before you leap to the conclusion that your research program meets this bar, read the paragraph below.

We are asking the Harvard community to heed the advice of experts, such as the Deans of HMS and HSPH and their networks (both internal and external), and help us flatten the curve of infection vs. time. We are striving to absolutely minimize person-to-person interactions, and contacts with shared surfaces.

We realize that this "restricted access" mode has consequences for effort certification, project progress, and other grant compliance factors. We are far from the only state that has declared a state of emergency, and are far from the only university that is taking action in this domain. As was the case with hurricanes and other unexpected events, we expect the federal agencies will be understanding. Preliminary interactions with funding agencies and other institutions by Harvard's Office of the Vice Provost for Research support this expectation, and we will share further information once it becomes available. Please see the following links for updated guidance on this issue from the NIH and NSF:

NSF: <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2020/nsf20053/nsf20053.jsp>

NIH: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-086.html>

FAS and SEAS PIs who feel they can contribute to diagnostic or therapeutic or analytic aspects of COVID-19 research are encouraged to contact appropriate collaborators at HMS and/or HSPH. Dean Daley of HMS is coordinating an international effort on the clinical aspects.

If you believe your research program has vital elements for which restricted access would impose unacceptable consequences, you can petition for an exception. We will want to know

- a. what personnel access is requested, with appropriate attention to both lab safety (more than one person) and isolation (far apart).
- b. With what cadence personnel desire access
- c. What are the consequences, explicitly in terms of time, money, and careers, of not doing this work?
- d. Why this research takes precedence over acting in our common interest.

Exception petitions will be evaluated by the Dean of SEAS and/or the FAS divisional dean, with area chairs and department chairs (respectively) serving as an advisory committee. You can submit your exception using this FAS & SEAS exception [request form](#). Exception requests must be submitted no later than 12:00 pm, Sunday, March 15th.

Christopher Stubbs  
FAS Science Divisional Dean

Francis Doyle  
Dean,  
Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Science