

Texas Tech University

Animal Care Services

Return to Research Activities Guidance

IACUC Operations

The Texas Tech IACUC continues to conduct official business, including but not limited to: meeting regularly to review the Program of Animal Care and Use, conducting protocol review and approval, accepting reports of and investigating animal welfare concerns, reporting to federal agencies and AAALAC and completing grant congruency reviews.

IACUC staff are available to answer questions iacuc@ttu.edu

Animal Related Research Projects

Until the university has returned to normal operations under Phase I of the Emergency Remote Work Operational Plan, and with the possibility of returning to Phase 4 of the Emergency Operational Plan, it is expected that PIs will design experiments and creative activities that have relatively limited time durations with regards to the scope of projects being planned to accomplish research goals.

Animal Facilities

Animal Care Services staff and veterinarians are still continuing to be on-site daily to provide veterinary care and husbandry for all animals. Personnel who are permitted to enter Texas Tech facilities may enter the ACS vivarium space and must follow the ACS facility entry guidelines:

- Follow CDC guidelines when presented with COVID-19 symptoms (see below)
- Each lab should schedule activities such that the minimum number of personnel (144 ft²/individual) are present in the animal facilities at the same time.
- Personnel entering the vivarium space are strongly encouraged to wear an approved facemask and follow [hygiene and social distancing guidelines](#).
- If working with animals, scrubs must be worn.
- Hands must be washed prior to entry into animal facilities.

If necessary, shift schedules can be considered to ensure social distancing

- To allow multiple people to sequentially occupy the allotted space, lab groups should develop calendar systems to schedule work shifts throughout the day and on weekends.
- The structure of these schedules and the length of shifts can be flexible, depending on the type of experiment and the needs of the lab. Lab shifts may range from three to 12 hours in length, not to be outside the scheduled 7am – 7pm light cycle.

- Another option is for specific people to reserve certain days of the week. Lab staff should understand that their time in the facility is limited and they have to make the most of it. Laboratory safety must be considered during times of low staff density.
- Lab members should plan ahead to maximize the use of their limited time, and they should do their notebook updating and other desktop activities when they return home.
- Remove and discard disposable PPE and hands should be washed when exiting the facility.
- Scrubs and lab coats should be dispensed into the laundry hamper for cleaning.

Disinfection supplies (spray, wipes) will be supplied in shared facilities. **Clean the area before use, and after use for the next user.**

According to the CDC people with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with the following symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Other less common symptoms have also been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Those experiencing symptoms like COVID-19 should be tested and should stay home until results are obtained. It is recommended those with symptoms of COVID-19 use drive-up testing facilities at Covenant Hospital or UMC. Infected individuals must self-report results and self-isolate for 14 days after symptoms subside. If an infected individual was conducting research, the Office of Research and Innovation (OR&I) must be notified. According to OR&I, a contact tracer will survey infected workers to identify campus contacts over the prior 14 days.

Based on excellent compliance with current research shutdown policies, we are confident that faculty and staff understand the importance of these policies and will operate their labs accordingly. However, spot checks will be used to identify laboratories where there is inappropriate density or lack of distancing and protective measures. In these cases, faculty will be required to modify staff schedules or take other measures to minimize risk of transmission. Irresponsible activities that may put our animal care staff or other research staff at risk may result in the loss of animal facility access.