

June 30, 2020

Principal Investigators and Members of the Columbia University Research Community –

On behalf of EH&S, I hope that this message finds you and yours to be in continued good health and wellness. The following important topics bear reminding during the University's research ramp-up.

#### **Laboratory Attire – Summer safety and COVID-19 prevention**

As we continue to adjust to life during a global pandemic, we are also adjusting to summer temperatures, locally. The arrival of warm weather invites the wearing of shorts, open shoes, and tee shirts. This attire is unsafe in a laboratory setting, and contrary to the requirements of the University's [laboratory PPE Policy](#). Please ensure that in addition to required PPE to limit the transmission of COVID-19, including face coverings, all personnel must be appropriately dressed for work in the laboratory each day, including long pants or the equivalent and closed shoes. Good laboratory practices require that laboratory attire cover all exposed skin. One option for a comfortable commute during warm weather is to keep a set of laboratory-appropriate clothing at the lab to change into upon arrival.

Please note face coverings are required at all times in all locations on campus, with the exception of closed offices, while working alone.

#### **Training**

In accordance with instructions in the Provost's email of Thursday, June 18, it is our hope that required training has been completed by all on-site personnel to ensure understanding and compliance with modified campus procedures. This requirement applies to faculty, staff and students returning to campus for the first time since the research ramp-down - whenever that return is scheduled to occur – as well as anyone that has been performing essential work on campus. As a reminder, please ensure all laboratory personnel have completed **COVID-19: Safe Research at Columbia**, via Rascal course #TC5550. This module details other requirements, including diagnostic testing and daily symptom self-checking, that must be followed.

#### **FDNY C-14 Certificate of Fitness**

In light of the occupancy limitations imposed by the current COVID-19 pandemic, EH&S has reached an agreement with the FDNY to allow modified arrangements for laboratory C-14 Certificate of Fitness coverage. Typically, a C-14 holder is required in all laboratories at all times during active operations. Under the current circumstances, laboratories will also be offered the option to enter into a formal agreement with one neighboring research group - in the same building, on the same floor - to provide cross-coverage for both labs.

Research groups wishing to enter into a cross-coverage agreement [must complete this form](#) and return to EH&S via [labsafety@columbia.edu](mailto:labsafety@columbia.edu). Upon approval, a copy of the schedule must be posted on each laboratory's entrance, and enrolled personnel must strictly abide by the scheduling agreement.

These arrangements are intended to be temporary, until such time as public health circumstances allow for a return to individual laboratory-specific C-14 coverage. EH&S will notify all enrolled laboratories at the time of expiration.

Thank you in advance for your attention to the above. As always, please contact [labsafety@columbia.edu](mailto:labsafety@columbia.edu) with any questions or concerns.

Best Regards,

Chris

Christopher M. Pitoscia, MPH, CSP  
Associate Director  
Columbia University - Environmental Health & Safety