

Date: Sunday, March 15, 2020; 7:01pm

**Re: Message from Dean Goldman regarding urgent ramp-down of CUIMC research**

Dear Colleagues,

You have all received messages from President Lee Bollinger and Provost Ira Katznelson today announcing a rapid ramping down of research activities in the University. CUIMC will comply fully with the conditions in the Provost's announcement. Given the complexity of our research operations and the fact that research and patient care are sometimes intimately intertwined, however, more specific guidelines are required for this campus.

We will implement the following recommendations of the Columbia University Research Working Group, effectively immediately:

1. Each principal investigator or other responsible researcher must submit to their Department Chairperson or Institute or Center Director a detailed plan for how activities on research projects and animal studies will be handled with the minimum possible number of personnel on campus. Only **essential** research or **essential functions** to maintain critical research resources will be allowed. Only personnel who are **essential** to conduct the permitted research and to maintain the equipment and other laboratory assets may remain on campus. Each principal investigator or other responsible researcher should identify critical services or resources required for sustaining essential research functions during and after the ramp-down period. **The plans must be submitted as soon as possible and the ramp-down should also be as soon as possible, but the ramp-down ABSOLUTELY MUST be completed by no later than Thursday, March 19.**
2. The term **essential research** applies both to research on COVID-19 and its downstream effects and to laboratory work that must be done in support of ongoing clinical trials.
3. **Essential functions** include the maintenance of critical animal resources and cell lines. Every effort should be made to cryopreserve sperm, embryos, and cells, as well as to reduce the census in the ICM. No animal orders can be placed or shipments received except for the **essential** work described above.
4. The NIH is allowing all normal charges to be applied to grants and contracts, and all Columbia employees who are required to work remotely will receive their normal compensation for doing so. Laboratories are encouraged to move journal clubs online and to use this time for data analysis, planning of experiments, and working on publications.
5. All investigators working remotely on data that potentially contain patient information must be aware that such data cannot be loaded on computers that will leave CUIMC. You should remotely log in to the appropriate server using the VPN. Since VPNs can become overloaded, please log out when you do not require secure access.
6. The essential staff should be limited in general to 2-4 individuals (exceptions may be requested, depending, for example, on the size of the group). This does not mean that small groups can continue business as usual. If the work is not **essential**, it may not be done.
7. Research should be assumed to continue on a ramped-down basis for at least the next 6-8 weeks. Because we are in a dynamic situation, the time period will be reviewed regularly.

8. No new on-site or in-person research projects may be commenced unless they relate to the current COVID-19 pandemic and only with the approval of the Dean of your school and the Executive Vice President of CUIMC or their designees.
9. The Pre-award Core and SPA will be operating and will handle new grant submission and other grant-related tasks.
10. To assure sample safety and IT connectivity, it is recommended that all investigators:
  - o Test and confirm remote freezer monitoring
  - o Test and confirm VPN access to on-campus systems and storage
  - o If possible, shift on-campus data to Teams/Sharepoint and Onedrive to support use of data at home
11. No visitors, guests, or family members are allowed on site. Undergraduate students are not allowed on site.
12. All construction other than emergency repairs will cease as part of our effort to restrict access to our facilities.
13. Laboratories that are performing tests or processing samples or specimens necessary for ongoing clinical trials should be proposed to the IRB for an exception, providing the IRB number and name of trial, number of participant-visits per month, and a brief statement justifying the necessity. Instructions related to this process will be posted on the forthcoming FAQs. No new trials other than directly related to COVID-19 may be opened, and new enrollment into open trials will cease immediately.
14. Research Core Resources will operate only in support of **essential** functions.

**The following offices and individuals are available to assist you:**

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Please accept my personal appreciation for all you do for Columbia, science, and humanity. We know how difficult it is to ramp down the work to which each of you is so committed. This pause would not be

implemented were there another option that would better serve the dedication and commitment of our research community.

Sincerely,

Lee Goldman