Dear Johns Hopkins Community:

We have reached a point in our extensive planning efforts at which we are ready to resume on-site laboratory research starting June 15.

This move is made possible by announcements that the state of Maryland and Baltimore City are permitting a broader range of organizations to open. The decision also relies on our own careful review of medical advice and public health trends in consultation with Johns Hopkins experts, and significant preparation within the university to ensure the safety of affiliates who return to campus.

This first step in reopening reflects weeks of discussions by our planning workgroups; ideas from our faculty, staff, and students across the university; feedback from hundreds of people online and in our town halls; and dedicated preparation by PIs and department leaders. There is still significant work ahead to plan for academic and student life activities in the coming months, but it is rewarding to see a vital part of our enterprise resume.

Please be aware of these important details:

- Not all labs will open immediately on June 15 or ramp up activity at the same pace; researchers should wait for direction from their PIs before returning to campus.

- PIs are required to get approval for individual reopening plans and will provide specific instructions to the faculty, staff, and graduate students in their labs about when and how to resume work in ways that observe social distancing, required face covering, enhanced cleaning, and other measures.

- Essential personnel who are currently working at university campuses or buildings, including those focused on COVID-19 research, will continue to do so.

- Those who are at higher risk for negative outcomes from COVID-19 according to CDC guidelines may seek accommodations through the Office of Institutional Equity (faculty and staff) or through the Student Disability Services Coordinator (students) at their
respectively. Individuals who do not fall within the CDC’s COVID-19 guidelines for a “vulnerable person” but have other concerns about returning to campus due to their individual circumstances (such as household members who may be at higher risk) should contact their departmental or divisional human resources manager to discuss their concerns and whether adjustments to their work environment may be made to address them. You may also contact Central HR at EmployeeRelations@jhu.edu. Students with similar concerns should contact the dean of students or equivalent at their school.

- Nonlaboratory research, such as that in the social sciences and humanities as well as computational/theory research, is not included in this first phase of reopening.

- Undergraduates are not yet permitted to join in-person research.

- All work or learning that can be accomplished remotely should continue to be done at home, and people should be at JHU locations only for the time periods necessary to accomplish their required tasks.

- Workgroups are continuing to develop guidelines for resuming human subject research, and more information will be forthcoming.

- The university is developing plans for scheduling limited library use and will announce them soon.

- We will closely monitor the pandemic to determine whether our plans must be changed. It is possible, if conditions warrant, that our return could be further limited or reversed, and we ask researchers for their understanding as we seek to put the community’s health and safety first.

Details about the health and safety guidance and operational aspects that will govern individuals returning to campus are outlined in the Research Return to Campus Phase 1 Guidance and the Return to Campus Guide, both of which will be finalized soon. The documents include information on where to go if you have questions or concerns; requirements for face coverings inside and outside JHU buildings, social distancing, monitoring symptoms, and keeping the density of people in each space low; and more details about policies related to accommodations for those who are at high risk for adverse outcomes from COVID and adjustments for those with other concerns about returning to campus.

Additional information is available in the frequently asked questions section on the JHU Planning website, and further guidance about procedures for masking, cleaning, and other measures to limit the spread of COVID will be provided in the coming days.
Thank you for your patience and flexibility over these difficult weeks and for your vital input into the planning process.

Sincerely,

Denis Wirtz
Vice Provost for Research
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