

TBEP RESEARCH RESTART GUIDELINES – PHASE 2

Researchers, trainees and staff must agree to uphold all guidelines upon returning to work; those found to be in violation of the principles and/or guidelines outlined below, or communicated in any other form, may have their research privileges restricted. Please note that these guidelines are subject to change and future adjustments may be required as the situation evolves.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. The health and safety of occupants is the priority at all times. This includes practicing the newly accepted forms of hygiene, physical distancing measures and use of personal protective equipment (masks and gloves) where necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
2. Anyone who is feeling unwell must not come into the lab. Should anyone be advised by public health authority that they have tested positive for COVID-19, they must contact ehs.occhealth@utoronto.ca immediately.

1. OCCUPANCY & WORK SCHEDULES

Occupancy:

Now at 100% occupancy.

- Active research will be limited to that which can be feasibly conducted under all applicable guidelines and restrictions. As of March 7, 2022, this represents 100% of normal research capacity.
- COVID-19 related work can continue in Phase-2. Personnel involved in COVID-19 research will be required to adhere to the measures for Phase-2.

2. TBEP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

TBEP Administrative Staff will continue to work from home as much as possible, but will be on site as needed to take care of infrastructural, facilities and equipment maintenance.

3. BUILDING & FLOOR ACCESS

MaRS/UofT Sign-in/Sign-out:

- There are currently only two designated entrances open for access to the MaRS West Tower:
 1. 661 University Ave. pedestrian entrance, beside the Starbucks on the ground level.
 2. 661 University Ave. parking garage. Note that parking is limited to the West Tower parking lot.
- All personnel must swipe their access cards at one of the two designated entrances – 661 University Ave. and the top of the ramp of the parking garage – before entering the MaRS West Tower. By swiping your access card, you are acknowledging that you do not have any COVID-19 symptoms nor have you been in contact with a possible or presumed case. Access cards are a requirement for all personnel upon building entry.
- Upon leaving the MaRS West Tower, personnel are required to sign-out by swiping their access cards on the designated “sign-out” readers located either by the exit near 661 University Ave. or at the top of the ramp of the parking garage exit.
- The MaRS West Tower lobby is configured with stanchions to guide personnel to either the security desk, the elevator banks, or the mailroom/exit. Signage and staff will be present to assist as needed.

Elevator & Stairs Access:

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- All elevators are operational and require you to tap your access card. Elevators are limited to a maximum of three occupants at a time.
- Personnel are permitted to use Stairwell D, located past the low-rise elevators, next to the entrance to Aroma, to access TBEP. Access cards are required to open the stairwell door on the 14th floor.

Access to TBEP:

- In Phase-2, access will be granted to TBEP personnel with access cards as well as preapproved vendors, contractors, service providers, collaborators and visitors external to TBEP.
- All personnel must use their own access card to tap into TBEP using one of the two lobby doors.
- Personnel should not follow someone else onto the floor without tapping their own card. This is critical for tracking access.

Deliveries:

- All deliveries will be routed to the loading dock. The MaRS Dockmaster will inform TBEP Administration of deliveries, and TBEP Administration will contact the administrator/designate for each lab. The administrator/designate for each lab is responsible for arranging pickup from the loading dock. Do not go to the dock until contacted by TBEP Administration.
- All deliveries must be retrieved and signed out from the loading dock. The loading dock is open for package pickup from Monday to Friday, 7 am to 4 pm. The loading dock can be accessed via service elevator or through the hallway behind the MaRS West Tower Security Desk.
- All personnel entering the loading dock are required to wear a face mask/covering while in the dock area.

Visitors

- TBEP personnel must provide Meriem Ali (reception.tbep@utoronto.ca) with at least 48 hrs notice of a scheduled arrival of a visitor, including the visitor's name and email address so that they can be pre-registered at MaRS Tenant Services. **Visitors include: vendors, contractors, service providers, collaborators and anyone external to TBEP without an access card.**
- TBEP personnel must notify their visitor to expect a wellness acknowledgement ahead of their visit including additional MaRS Centre entry related details as well as a QR code (to scan upon entry) via email. Note: the QR code is valid for the entire day to accommodate early or late arrivals.
- TBEP personnel must ask their visitor to notify them upon arrival so that they can meet them in the Atrium.

Contractors (e.g., service technicians, service providers, etc.) with whom you have a contract for services:

- Contractors who are not University of Toronto personnel must complete the [COVID-19 Acknowledgement Form for External Third Parties](#) sections 2, 3, and 4 prior to arrival to site and return to their host; the host must complete sections 1 and 2, and submit to EHS as outlined in the instructions section.

Non-contractors (e.g., research collaborators, visitors, etc.) with whom you do NOT have a contract for services:

- Non-contractors who are not University of Toronto personnel must the [UCheck COVID-19 Screening for Visitors and Volunteers](#) and submit to their host; the host must keep the form on file for a minimum of 30 days.
- Non-contractors who are University of Toronto personnel must complete [UCheck online](#).

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4. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) & SAFETY

Physical Distancing:

All personnel must maintain a 2-metre distance in non-instructional spaces (lounge, kitchen and bathrooms). Social distancing, although not required, is encouraged in instructional spaces (lab spaces, office spaces, conference and meeting rooms).

Face Masks:

- **Update to Mask Requirements:** Masks are required for all employees, students, visitors and contractors in common use areas. Medical masks, also called surgical or procedural masks, are recommended. Medical masks should hold a rating of ASTM Level 2 or 3. Layering a cloth mask over a medical mask, or knotting and tucking your medical mask, may improve fit and add protection. Please refer to the University of Toronto's [updated mask guidelines](#) for additional information.
- **Mask Distribution:** Medical masks will be made available for pickup on all three campuses to community members with an active UTORID as supplies allow and for a limited time. You will be required to present your completed UCheck self-assessment with a green result. Distribution details can be found as part of the University of Toronto's [updated mask guidelines](#).
- **Donning/Doffing Face Masks:** Please refer to [EHS guidelines](#) outlining how to properly don and doff your face mask.
- **Lab Spaces:** Non-medical face coverings/masks are not to be used for laboratory work that require surgical masks or respirators (e.g. N95). The flammability of the face covering needs to be considered when using open flames. If your face covering/mask is contaminated or suspected to be contaminated with biological or chemical materials:
 - **Disposable face coverings/masks:** dispose of it immediately, in either biological or chemical waste, and replace it with a new mask.
 - **Cloth face coverings/masks:** autoclave and launder it prior to wearing again.
- **Non-Lab Spaces:** In non-lab spaces, personnel are required to wear face masks/coverings. You are permitted to wear your face covering/mask between laboratory and office spaces.
- **Mask Disposal:** Personnel are advised to sanitize their hands prior to removing their face covering/mask, using a hand washing sink, sanitizer station or 70% ethanol spray bottle. Disposable face coverings/masks can be disposed of in the PPE disposal bins, located in the kitchen, outside of the bathrooms, the north end office space, the south end office space, and in the elevator lobby. If you wear a non-medical face covering/mask while commuting, please ensure that you change to a TBEP-dedicated face covering/mask for the duration of your shift.
- **Mask Maintenance:** Personnel opting to use cloth face coverings/masks must launder their masks regularly, and replace them periodically following the instructions of the manufacturer and advice of public health authorities.
- **Public Spaces:** Face masks must be worn in all publicly-accessible spaces including the MaRS lobby, MaRS elevators, and MaRS loading dock.
- **University Spaces:** Wearing masks or face coverings is required in all common-use indoor University spaces, which include: lobbies, elevators, hallways and corridors, stairwells, washrooms, service desks, cafeterias and lunchrooms, common areas in residences, study lounges, meeting rooms, classrooms, research and teaching labs, shared or open-space offices, and other locations used in common where practicing physical distancing may be difficult or unpredictable. Refer to the [University Policy on Face Masks](#) for more details.
- **Exemptions and Accommodations:** Individuals may be exempt from the University's face covering/non-medical mask guidelines under specific circumstances outlined in the [Joint Provostial and Human Resources Guideline on Non-Medical Masks](#).

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Gloves & Lab Coats:

- Lab coats will continue to be required while working in the lab space, and should continue to be hung on a lab coat rack when not in use.
- We continue to maintain a “no gloves on doors” policy. See below for protocols addressing safely entering/exiting through doorways.

Sanitizers and Dispensers:

- Sanitizer dispensing stations are located outside of the bathrooms and in the elevator lobby of the 14th floor. These will be refilled regularly by MaRS.
- Please contact MaRS Tenant Services (MaRSTenantServices@marsdd.com) if either dispenser is empty.

Entering/Exiting:

- Personnel are advised to use paper towel to open doors/press buttons when entering/exiting spaces. Receptacles will be placed on both sides of lab doors, in the elevator lobby, and outside of the bathrooms.
- Some doors will be propped open including: (i) double doors between the lounge/kitchen and both the north-end and south-end office spaces; (ii) south end door connecting the office space to the locker hallway; and (iii) the exterior bathroom doors.
- Do not remove the doorstops.

5. FACILITIES

Lounge/Kitchen:

- In accordance with [the General Workplace Guideline](#) and [General Assessment Tool](#), the maximum capacity of the lounge/kitchen is 25% of maximum capacity.
- In Phase-2, all kitchen amenities (fridge, microwaves, coffee makers, toaster etc.) will be available for use. Personnel are expected to wipe down high-touch surfaces (i.e., appliance handles) with a paper towel moistened with 70% ethanol, both before and after use.
- Plates, cups and cutlery will continue to be off-limits.
- The drinking fountain will also be off-limits, but the water bottle filler will be operational.
- Tables will be set up in the lounge, spaced apart at appropriate distances, with one chair per table. Please do not move the tables.
- Personnel are required to sanitize their table and chair both before and after use with the 70% ethanol spray bottle available in the lounge.

Conference Rooms:

- The small meeting room (1423) and large conference room (1422B) are available at full capacity with no social distancing requirements as of Monday, March 7. Social distancing is still encouraged.
- Bookings must be completed through Booked Scheduler.

Bathrooms:

- In Phase-2, bathroom occupancy will be increased to a maximum of four people. Some urinals, stalls and sinks will be off-limits to ensure social distancing.
- Personnel are expected to check urinal/stall availability upon entering the bathroom, and if at capacity, wait outside of the exterior bathroom door.

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- All personnel are strongly encouraged to wear masks in the bathrooms, especially when entering/exiting.
- The use of all hand dryers will be prohibited to reduce droplet dispersal; sufficient supply of paper towels will be provided.

6. OFFICE & LAB SPACES

Office Spaces:

- There are no longer maximum occupancy limits and social distancing requirements in office spaces. Social distancing is still encouraged.
- Office spaces are limited to TBEP personnel only. In-person meetings with non-TBEP personnel are not permitted at this time.
- 70% ethanol spray bottles will continue to be available for each lab to clean desk spaces both at the beginning and end of shifts. Labs are responsible for refilling their ethanol bottles as required.
- MaRS Cleaning Staff will no longer be cleaning and sanitizing desks on a daily basis.
- Minimize use of the printer/photocopier. Use the provided 70% ethanol spray bottle to moisten the paper towel and wipe down the printer/photocopier before and after use.

PI and Administrative Offices:

- There are no longer maximum occupancy limits and social distancing requirements in PI and administrative offices. Social distancing is still encouraged.

Open Lab:

- There are no longer maximum occupancy limits and social distancing requirements in the open lab. Social distancing is still encouraged.
- Fume hood sashes are to remain closed when not in use.

Anterooms:

- There are no longer maximum occupancy limits and social distancing requirements in anterooms. Social distancing is still encouraged.
- The doors to anterooms housing RG2 biologicals (i.e., tissue culture rooms, histology, and surgical isolation), the fly room, and the mass spec anteroom must remain closed. The doors to other anterooms can be propped open to facilitate easier movement.

Tissue Culture Rooms:

- There are no longer maximum occupancy limits and social distancing requirements in tissue culture rooms. Social distancing is still encouraged.

7. EQUIPMENT

Equipment Booking:

Equipment booking is done through tbep.bookedscheduler.com. A recording of the TBEP training session can be accessed in Appendix-B.

- It is critical that all personnel book common use equipment through the booking system to mitigate scheduling conflicts.

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- In some cases, both the anteroom and the equipment inside the anteroom will need to be booked to ensure that occupancy limits are not exceeded. Equipment also requiring anteroom booking is indicated in Booked Scheduler.

Equipment/Infrastructural Maintenance:

- All common use equipment and infrastructure continues to be maintained (i.e., cold rooms, RO system, ice machine, etc.). Eyewash stations continue to be flushed on a weekly basis.
- **IMPORTANT:** if there are any infrastructural issues, please report them immediately to both MaRS Tenant Services (MaRSTenantServices@marsdd.com) and Noah Frank (admin.tbep@utoronto.ca).

Disinfecting Lab Equipment:

Lab members are responsible for disinfecting of all equipment and surfaces after their use using 70% ethanol or recommended disinfectant. In general, every time a piece of common equipment is used, it should be wiped down.

Special Considerations:

- Microscopes: See Appendix B for SOPs from Olympus and Nikon outlining how best to sanitize microscopes. Note that only 70% ethanol should be used, and lens paper must be used when cleaning any optical components.
- BSCs and Fume Hoods: BSC and fume hood glass should be wiped down with 70% ethanol both before and after use.
- Liquid N₂ and CO₂: Personnel are required to wear their own pair of safety goggles or face shield when using liquid N₂ or CO₂. The common use face shield will be unavailable for use. Note that safety goggles and face shields are available for purchase from the UofT MedStore.

8. WASTE REMOVAL & CLEANING SERVICES

Waste Removal:

- Environmental Protection Services will continue to service our floor to remove biological and chemical waste.
- MaRS Cleaning Staff will continue to empty garbage and recycling bins.

Supplemental Cleaning Services:

MaRS Cleaning Services will continue to clean and sanitize our space as follows:

- Washrooms: Every evening, all washrooms will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. All touch points will be disinfected. Toilets, urinals, sinks, taps, counters, mirrors, waste receptacles, doors, handles and hand dryers will all be wiped down. Floors are thoroughly mopped with disinfectant. The Clorox® Total 360TM machine will be used on a rotational basis. During the day, these washrooms are attended to three times for an additional wipe down of toilets, urinals, sinks and countertops.
- Tenant Spaces: In addition to removing garbage and regular cleaning duties, the evening staff will be wiping down all door handles and glass partitions. Vacuuming will be increased to twice per week.

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9. REPORTING & FEEDBACK

Reporting & Feedback:

If there are any questions, concerns or feedback regarding the TBEP research restart (e.g., operations, safety, etc.), please do not hesitate to contact your supervising PI and cc Noah Frank (admin.tbep@utoronto.ca).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: University Guidelines

Please refer to the below documents released by the University for more information regarding research ramp-up:

- [Principles for Research Recovery and Adaptation](#)
- [Approach for Research Recovery and Adaptation](#)
- [Guideline for Reopening Research Spaces](#)

Appendix B: Relevant SOPs & Guidelines

Microscope Disinfection

- Nikon SOP: <https://www.microscope.healthcare.nikon.com/about/news/recommended-handling-and-disinfecting-procedures-for-nikon-microscope-products-to-reduce-spread-of-infectious-agents-including-sars-cov-2-coronavirus>
- Olympus SOP: <https://www.olympus-lifescience.com/en/discovery/how-to-clean-and-sterilize-your-microscope/>

Protocol for Wearing Masks

<https://ehs.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/How-to-put-on-or-take-off-surgical-masks-and-gloves-20200331.pdf>

University Guidelines on Non-Medical Masks and Face Coverings

- [University Policy on Non-Medical Masks and Face Coverings](#)
- [Joint Provostial and Human Resources Guideline on Non-Medical Masks](#)

TBEP Webinars

- Booked Scheduler Training Webinar: <http://labs.tbep.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Video-Noah-Booked-Scheduler-Training-June-1-2020.mp4>
- Return to Work Webinar: <http://labs.tbep.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Video-TBEP-Return-to-Work-June-5-2020.mp4>