

Agreement and protocols for working during COVID-19 risk

Wetzel Lab

Spring and Summer 2020

Last updates: 30 April 2020, LZ; 5 May 2020, WW;

21 May 2020, WW

We have all been inundated with information about the novel coronavirus, and various levels of precautions to minimize risk to oneself and to others have been mandated and/or suggested in recent weeks and months. The goal of this document is to provide a concise yet complete reminder checklist of safety measures that we all need to follow in order to continue our important work during this time. The documents provided by MSU are essential to follow, but we will also have specific restrictions and protocols to follow at KBS, and these will likely evolve over the course of the pandemic.

Please refer to the live Google Docs version of this document frequently, especially as we begin field work in the next few weeks. Please also save the current version of this document as a pdf, sign it digitally, and put the signed version into the “Signed forms” folder in our Wetzel Lab Covid-19 folder. Note that there is a place for you to sign at the bottom of this document to indicate that you agree to all of these protocols.

1. BEFORE beginning your work on any given day, you MUST first complete CANR’s brief self-evaluation of personal health.

- ☐ At KBS, or elsewhere not in Ingham County:
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a9Sj7TeQdSBFtc1
- ☐ On campus, or elsewhere in Ingham County:
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3OTGcFjV97W6FAV

2. Assuming you “pass” that screening, you can proceed to the work site, with a copy of your signed “MSU Essential Travel Letter”, and must follow the requirements provided in the “Operational Requirements for Approved Essential Research Activities and Related In-State Travel” document from MSU AgBio Research. As of 21 May 2020, the members of the lab who have completed travel waivers on file with the university are Will, Moria, Elizeth, Dan, Luke, Haley, Andrea, and Minali. Note that different lab members have approval to work at different sites. Please work only at the sites for which you have approval (see your essential work approval form).

3. Follow general good hygiene practices:

- ☐ Please stay home if you are feeling sick or have interacted with anyone who has been feeling sick in the last two weeks
- ☐ If you have to cough or sneeze, please go home. If you can’t go home, please cough into a tissue and throw it in the trash and wash your hands
- ☐ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

- ☐ Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- ☐ Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces

3. Follow every specific safety guideline below:

- ☐ Always carry a copy of both your signed Essential Research Designation document, as well as your signed Travel Waiver
- ☐ Conduct only the most essential research tasks, with a minimal number of personnel (please save paper and computer work for at home)
- ☐ Only 1 person per vehicle for work purposes (also applies to personal vehicles)
- ☐ Only 1 person per room for overnight lodging
- ☐ Maintain at least 6 feet of personal distance from others at all times
- ☐ Alternate schedules to minimize contact
- ☐ No handshakes or shared food
- ☐ Wear a mask anytime in public enclosed spaces (including trips to the bathroom), and any time physical distancing is difficult/impossible
- ☐ Hand sanitizer and disinfectant (e.g., Lysol wipes) must be carried at all times, frequently disinfect hard surfaces that have frequent hand contact
- ☐ If you use a university vehicle, please disinfect interior (e.g., steering wheel, arm rests, window buttons, and other surfaces) and door handles before and after use
- ☐ Don't share tools, equipment, etc. Have your own set of all required materials for work
- ☐ Wash hands frequently and thoroughly. Use gloves when possible.
- ☐ You must be in direct contact with the facility manager before visiting any facility or site (e.g. – Mark Hammond needs to be notified via email or text before any trips to PEFL; Andy Fogiel would need to be contacted if anyone ever needs access to Stack labs at KBS)
- ☐ If visiting private land for research, you must get written consent prior to going
- ☐ You must follow all rules in place for specific facility use at KBS (official guidelines still pending)
- ☐ Some KBS-specific guidelines are:
 - ☐ Only 1 person per room at a time, always wearing masks when indoors
 - ☐ You are responsible for disinfecting surfaces that are frequently contacted (lab will supply the materials)
 - ☐ Never share your code nor help someone else gain key code access
 - ☐ Use only the first room at PEFL for research material storage. Access to the food fridge is permitted, but wash hands thoroughly after access.
 - ☐ Only use Room 2 for restroom access. The shared use computer and printer are not to be used by our lab unless we get prior approval from Mark, and move them into Room 1.
 - ☐ Access to the storage garage is permitted by our lab, but only for essential reasons. If you will be at PEFL all day and need access to the garage, leave the garage door open, so that fewer hands have to touch door knobs throughout the day.


- ❑ Very few others have essential research waivers at this point. For now, Lindsey Kemmerling will likely be the only other person using PEFL (in addition to Mark Hammond). Lindsey will mostly be using the greenhouse at PEFL. If and when more people begin needing to access PEFL, we might have to make a schedule, to maintain proper distancing. Mark and I will notify you if this is required.

No one is required to leave home to work onsite in the lab or field

Strict adherence to protocols above can reduce but may not eliminate the risk of acquiring the novel coronavirus associated with covid-19. The Wetzel Lab is fully supportive of all personnel (e.g., postdocs, graduate students, undergraduate students, and technicians) working from home as long as the risk of covid-19 continues. No one is required or encouraged to work onsite in the lab and/or field. All of our lab and/or field projects can be paused or completed personally by the PI. The PI of the lab is committed to keeping everyone employed and working from home. The lab has plenty of important projects that could be done from home. Moreover, the PI would be enthusiastic about working with personnel to develop new projects that can be done fully on a computer from home. These include meta-analyses, perspective papers, review papers, theoretical papers, data papers, and other impactful science that does not require new lab and/or field work. Anyone who applies for essential research status and decides to travel to lab and/or field sites is doing so entirely voluntarily because they personally recognize the risks and personally have decided that they want to work in the lab and/or field.

I agree to abide by all of the protocols above and acknowledge that I am working onsite in the field and/or lab by my own choice. I recognize the risks and would like to proceed regardless. I also recognize that there are many options for work I could be doing digitally at home and that the PI of the lab would be fully supportive of me deciding to work only from home. Despite all that, I am choosing to work in the lab and/or field, following all of the protocols above.

Name Daniel B. Turner

Signature 

Date 23 June 2020