

June 18, 2020

Important Details about Recovery Planning and the Ramping Up of On-site Activity

We now have a target date of Monday, June 22, for beginning the ramping-up of laboratory and clinical research on campus. For those already working on campus, there are new requirements, too.

This document contains important details about how the ramping-up will work. We urge you to read it carefully, even if you're not a laboratory or clinical researcher, and focus on the sections that are particularly relevant to you. **For everyone, there are important requirements spelled out here, involving COVID-19 testing, training and a daily symptom self-check, that will require action on your part.**

Who is affected by the June 22 date?

The critical first step is determining to which of the following three Groups you belong. Later in this message you will find guidance applicable to you and others in your Group. The Groups are:

- (A) Those who are eligible to return to campus as part of the ramping-up of laboratory and clinical research, which begins on June 22;
- (B) Those already working on campus even before June 22 (i.e., those doing work that has been considered essential to be done on campus); and
- (C) Those not yet eligible to return to work on campus.

June 22 begins a process of gradually returning to campus for persons in Group (A). If you are in Group (B) or (C), you are to continue working as you are now. You will find more specific guidance for each of these Groups below.

So how do you tell if you're in Group (A)? This is not a judgment you are to make on your own. All our schools and institutes have prepared for the ramping-up of research by establishing their own priorities and procedures. That includes a determination of which research can resume on campus, and when. **Unless permitted by the ramp-up plan that applies to you, you're not in Group (A).** In that case, you are to continue as is.

Even for those who are in Group (A) and eligible to return to campus, June 22 will not necessarily be your first day back. The research ramp-up is a staged process that begins on June 22. The actual date of return will depend on when you have satisfied applicable conditions for return (see below) and are permitted to do so under the terms of your school or institute's ramp-up plan.

And you should keep in mind an overriding principle: Those who can accomplish their work remotely should continue to work remotely. Nothing changes on that score on June 22. That's true for clinical and laboratory researchers along with all the rest of our personnel.

Group A: Guidance for those who are eligible to return to campus as part of the research ramp-up that begins on June 22

If you are eligible to return to campus as part of your school or institute's first phase of the research ramp-up, please read this section carefully.

A [website](#) is available where you can find a summary of key information for ramping up research. It will be updated regularly, so keep checking back to see what's new. The key points you need to know are made here in summary form. You can find links to take you to more information that may be relevant to your particular situation.

For the initial phase of the ramp-up of research, the return to campus is **voluntary**. If you are uncomfortable returning for any reason, including childcare, eldercare or other reasons, you do not need to return as part of this first phase. Your school or institute will provide you with guidance on how to report that you do not intend to return to campus as part of this initial research ramp-up phase.

If you are eligible for return and plan to do so, please pay particular attention to the [testing, training and symptom self-check requirements](#) spelled out below. Access to our campus premises is not permitted unless you are in compliance with them.

1. **Your own return-to-campus date** depends on the guidance provided to you under the ramp-up plan of your own school or institute. That plan may start some types of research earlier than others and may restrict the days and hours you are permitted on campus.
2. While on campus you are required (along with everyone else on campus) to adhere to our newly established [Enhanced Health Policy](#).
3. You will be required to complete a daily [symptom self-check](#) before you enter campus premises. If you do not complete that process, or if the process shows you are ineligible to enter, access is not permitted. This is a daily requirement imposed by New York State. You can facilitate completion of the required self-check by using a [smartphone app](#) that we are providing, but you can also complete it on the website to be provided. The app can be downloaded as of Sunday, June 21. If you do not have easy access to either a smartphone or a web browser, you can use a check-in kiosk on campus. We strongly urge you to use the app or the website before you arrive on campus, if feasible for you, to avoid delays at the kiosk.
4. We have established a [required baseline SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic testing program](#) for researchers newly returning to campus on or after June 22. The overall SARS-CoV-2 testing plan will include baseline testing to be followed by a sampling approach for testing. (If you have been on campus consistently before June 22, this new testing requirement is not applicable to you, but see the guidance below for those already on campus.) If you are newly returning, you are required to obtain the baseline diagnostic test at a Columbia or New York Presbyterian Hospital testing center within 14 days of your return (either 14 days before or after the return date). Information about the location of the testing sites and how to make an appointment (appointments are required) can be found [here](#). Please call directly for an appointment at 646-317-1999.

5. While on campus you must comply with our policies on the use of **personal protective equipment (PPE)**. You will be provided with necessary PPE by your school, department or institute.
6. Everyone working on any of our campuses beginning on June 22 must complete a [required training program](#). You must complete the training before you return to campus – in other words, by June 22 for those who return that date, or by the date of your return if later. Returning researchers are to take “[COVID-19 Training: Safe Research at Columbia](#)” training, which they can complete in Rascal. Principal investigators and departments are responsible for ensuring that all returning researchers complete this training. The training takes 15-20 minutes to complete.
7. If your work involves **field research**, you can find additional information [here](#). Resumption of field research requires prior approval by the relevant dean, director, or vice president; with a report to the Office of the Provost. State and University travel policies must be followed.
8. If you have **concerns about your own personal situation or health vulnerability** (age, preexisting condition, childcare or eldercare obligations), you can find information that may be of use to you [here](#). Remember that for those eligible to begin to return to campus after June 22, the return is voluntary during the first phase.
9. If you have concerns relating to the ramping-up of research and/or returning to campus, there are a number of resources available. If possible, first contact your supervisor, department, or the office of the Dean or Director of your school or institute. There are also a number of existing resources available, such as the [Compliance Hotline](#), which offers the option to report anonymously, and the [University Ombuds](#), which is confidential. Finally, in the next week, we will also be announcing Research Ramp-Up ambassadors who will serve as additional, local contacts to address specific safety concerns (e.g., whether others are properly following public health precautions or if you feel you are being pressured to return before you are ready). For convenience, these and other key resources available to individuals with concerns are listed on the [Research Ramp Up](#) website.
10. On everything else, you should look to the guidance from your school or institute. That guidance will tell you what the research ramp-up means specifically for you.

Group B. Guidance for those who are already working on campus, even before June 22

If you are already working on campus, you should carry on as before, with the following additional requirements.

1. While on campus you are required (along with everyone else on campus) to adhere to our newly established [Enhanced Health Policy](#).
2. Beginning on June 22 you will be required to complete a [symptom self-check](#) each day before you enter campus premises. If you do not complete that process, or if the process shows you are ineligible to enter, access is not permitted. This is a daily requirement imposed by New York State. You can facilitate completion of the required self-check by using a [smartphone app](#) that we are providing, but you can also complete it on the website to be provided. The app can be

downloaded as of Sunday, June 21. If you do not have easy access to either a smartphone or a web browser, you can use a check-in kiosk on campus. We strongly urge you to use the app or the website before you arrive on campus, if feasible for you, to avoid delays at the kiosk.

3. You are **not required** to obtain a SARS-CoV-2 baseline **diagnostic test** to continue working on campus. But if you wish to have such a test you may contact a Columbia or New York Presbyterian Hospital testing center to make an appointment for a test. Information about the location of the testing sites and how to make an appointment (appointments are required) can be found [here](#). Please call directly for an appointment at 646-317-1999.
4. Everyone working on any of our campuses beginning on June 22, including those who have worked on campus prior to that date, must complete the [required training program](#). Because you are already working on campus, you will have until **June 29** to complete it.
5. As before, you should look to your school, institute or department for guidance specific to your situation.

Group C. Guidance for those not yet eligible to return to campus

The ramping up of research is just one step in a gradual process of reactivating our campuses. Further steps will come as New York State and other authorities permit and as the University considers it to be safe and appropriate.

For now, you should carry on as before. That means:

1. Continue to work remotely as directed by your school, institute or department.
2. Adhere to recommended public health measures for prevention of COVID-19 wherever you are working.
3. As before, look to your school, institute or department for guidance specific to your situation.

We will provide additional guidance about what comes next, and when you can expect to return to work on campus, as that information becomes available to us.

Conclusion

We appreciate that there is much to absorb here and new requirements that many will have to comply with. These requirements are mandated by State authorities or public health guidance – generally both. It is essential that we satisfy them if the reactivation of our campuses is to proceed safely and effectively.