RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
VIRGINIA TECH.

Virginia Tech Research Preparation Guidelines
Updated: 03.24.2020

Review and implement the following guidance in planning and conducting your research activities:

1. Virginia Tech research is continuing, but all activities should be functioning differently to maximize physical distancing or stay at home practices. All faculty, staff, post docs, graduate students, and undergraduate students should work with their supervisor to take the following steps:

- All research and scholarship activities that can be conducted by teleworking, should be conducted off-campus.
- Any activity that requires access to campus facilities should be modified to follow CDC social distancing or stay at home recommendations while maintaining safe practices.
- Research involving in-person human subject studies must be paused immediately to reduce the risk of exposure to both participants and researchers.
    - Read the Human Subjects Research FAQ section: https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts/faqs.html
- Research administration services that support researchers remain available through phone, email, and video methods.
    - See the Research Contact section: https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts/contacts.html
- Follow tips to stay healthy, including frequent handwashing and surface sanitization:
    - Stay home if you are sick.
    - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
    - Wipe down frequently used touch surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
    - Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
    - Avoid crowded areas.
    - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
    - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

2. All researchers should immediately develop contingency plans to prepare for curtailing all but the most essential on-campus activities. Your plan should address:
- How research might be altered or slowed to prepare for a reduction in personnel or operations, and what you would do if the work had to be placed on hold with short notice.

- What steps would be required to prepare for an extended period without personnel available to care for and support sensitive equipment, facilities, and animals.
- How you might structure your group's work to maximize productivity at a remote location through computational or theoretical work; paper and publications; and other planning activities.
- How to cross-train employees to avoid single points of failure for critical tasks and conduct training remotely.
- How you will connect with your department leadership and IT staff to let them know if you and your team have capabilities to meet virtually and maintain effective communication in the possibility that the impacts on operations will be long-term.
  - Working Remotely: A Guide to Maintaining Continuity: https://it.vt.edu/resources/working-remotely.html

3. Researchers should work with their department chairs, research center and institute directors, and associate deans for research to determine whether their research activities should:
- Continue through telework arrangements;
- Be modified to conduct minimal on-campus or field/farm-based research while maximizing social distancing and reducing the environmental, health, and safety risks;
- Be suspended.

Researchers please be sensitive to the needs and concerns of graduate students when making decisions and plans.

4. Principal Investigators should communicate with sponsors on any delays that might occur with their research.
  - Read about sponsor communications in the FAQs: https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts/faqs.html

5. Researchers should follow best practices to prepare their laboratories for reduced operations and for disinfecting their laboratories.
  - See Guidelines and Checklists: https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts/downloads.html

6. Stay up-to-date with the latest news, and use all resources available to you:
- CDC's COVID-19 website:
  - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html
- Research web page:
  - https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts.html
- FAQs: https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts/faqs.html
- Contacts: https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts/contacts.html
- Resources:
  - https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts/resources.html
- Guidelines and Checklists:
  - https://www.research.vt.edu/covid-19-updates-impacts/downloads.html