

## COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures for On-Site Laboratories

*This document must be visibly displayed in the lab.*

Updated: 03.22.2021

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	
<b>Date approved by Principal Investigator:</b>	
<b>Internal Lab Safety Coordinator/Lab Manager:</b>	
<b>Lab Phone:</b>	
<b>Location(s):</b>	

### Surface Disinfection:

- COVID-19 can survive up to 72 hours (3 days) on plastic and stainless-steel surfaces. From the first moment of viral contamination, the amount of the live virus on surfaces decreases significantly over these time periods.
- It is critical that every high-touch surface in the work area (drawer and cupboard handles, faucet and dispenser handles, supply bottle tops, etc.) be frequently sanitized.
- Identify and mark surfaces for disinfection and put a disinfection schedule in place that should be posted in the lab and initialed upon completion.

### Physical Distancing:

- COVID-19 is readily transmitted from person-to-person when they are in each other's breathing zones.
- Maintain six feet of distance between you and your coworkers. For example:
  - Maintain a distance of six tiles where there are floors tiled with 12" square tiles.
  - Hold out arms and step back until two feet separate your fingertips from others' outstretched fingertips.
  - Mark a six-foot distance with tape on the floor in commonly used spaces.
- Ask those that are too close to step back– you have the right to calmly and politely ask that of anyone you encounter in your work. If you are asked to yield space, please comply.
- Implement a work schedule so that individuals can avoid using the same space or equipment at the same time as other individuals.

### Personal Protective Equipment:

Individuals working in labs must wear personal protective equipment, potentially more than they are typically included in their standard operating schedule.

### Face Coverings (Required)

- All lab personnel must continue to follow mask and respirator requirements for the specific agents, materials, and/or procedures being performed.
- If no facial PPE is required for the work being performed, a face covering (surgical mask or personal cloth mask) must be worn.
  - Visit Virginia Tech’s Ready Site (<https://ready.vt.edu/public-health-guidelines.html#masks>) for current recommendations related to masks.
- The use of one mask per worker per day is recommended. If respirators must be re-used due to shortages, contact EHS (540-231-3600) for assistance in devising a safe re-use method.

### Gloves

- Gloves should be worn as required for the specific agents, materials, and/or procedures being performed.
- If not required for the work performed, gloves are not recommended because they will become contaminated. Instead, frequent hand washing is recommended.
- If you are not near handwashing facilities, disinfect your hands with hand sanitizer that contains a minimum of 60% alcohol, then wash hands with soap and water as soon as you can
- Avoid touching your face (or mask) with your gloved, or un-gloved, hands.

**Identification of surfaces to be disinfected, frequency of disinfection, and appropriate products listed below:**

Equipment	Product to be used	Frequency of disinfection
Doorknobs, Sink, Faucet handles, light switches, etc.	70% ethanol	Start of the day and End of the day
Cell phone and/or key card	70% ethanol or Lysol wipes found in building	Upon entry and exit of building

**Daily Best Practices:**

- Take your temperature prior to leaving home. If you have a fever, stay home.
- Shower before coming to work and wear a fresh change of clothes.
- Upon entering the building, visit the restroom/washroom and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Continue to wear your personal cloth mask while on-site and social distance yourself from others.
- Do not touch your face or mask. If you do, wash your hands immediately.
- Sneeze or cough into your elbow or tissue; immediately place tissue in the trash. Maintain this habit even when masked.
- Before you leave the building, wash your hands with soap and water one last time for 20 seconds. After you leave the building, use hand sanitizer before touching car keys or car door handle.
- It is suggested that you immediately remove shoes when returning home and spray them with disinfectant. Any clothes worn outside the home should be immediately washed.

**Prohibition against occupancy, if the individual:**

- Have fever or respiratory symptoms, \*
- Have tested positive for COVID-19 and have not yet been cleared to return to work,
- Is not fully vaccinated and has been in contact with anyone with these symptoms in the past 14 days.

NOTE: Individuals with an underlying health condition that might predispose them to COVID-19 are discouraged from working on-site.

*\*If there is a medical emergency, dial 911.*

**Guidelines for fully vaccinated individuals**

- A person is considered fully vaccinated if it has been more than two weeks since the individual received the final required dose of the vaccine.
  - Moderna and Pfizer vaccines require two doses; Johnson & Johnson vaccine requires one dose.
- Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine if exposed to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 if
  - It has been less than 3 months since the individual received their final vaccine dose; and
  - The individual remains asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.
  - However, the individual should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days following the exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should isolate from others, be clinically-evaluated for COVID-19, and tested, if indicated.

**Training Documentation of (signature of all users is required)  
Principal Investigator Standard Operating Procedures Approval**

Principal Investigator Name	Signature	Date

Co-Director/Investigator Name	Signature	Date

**Student:** I have read and understand

Student Name	Signature	Date

**Other Laboratory Personnel:** I have read and understand

Name	Signature	Date