

**Management of safety concerns in research settings during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

In order to maintain a safe environment for on-site activity during the COVID-19 pandemic, safety requirements for activity have been instituted pursuant to recommendations from the Return to Learn Plan, COG, Educational Continuity Task Force, Research Continuity Task Force, and Staff/Administration Return to Campus Task Force. Requirements include guidance regarding the use of face coverings, reduced density of on-site population, physical distancing that maintains a minimum distance of 6 feet between persons at all times, and sanitization procedures for all work spaces, shared equipment, and commonly touched surfaces at the beginning and end of each day, shift, or use. Additional requirements may be applicable to research settings and are specified for each research setting in the approved on-site research plan.

These requirements are necessary elements of UC San Diego's Return to Learn plans which will enable students, faculty, and staff to resume their participation in the educational and research missions of the university.

Compliance with these requirements is a community responsibility, an opportunity for all members of the UC San Diego community to share in promoting the health and welfare of the community as a whole. Non-compliance is therefore subject to progressive engagement and discipline, in accordance with appropriate policies and processes for students,<sup>1</sup> faculty,<sup>2</sup> and staff.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to progressive engagement and discipline pursued through existing policies, a timely response to concerns in research contexts is required in order to ensure the safety of all of those engaged in on-site research, scholarship and creative activity. Therefore, instances of non-compliance with COVID-19 safety requirements in a research setting will also be subject to the following procedures:

**Identification of concerns:** Individuals who recognize and identify noncompliance with any element of on-site safety requirements should report their concerns to the lab manager or research PI.

Alternatively, the campus may be informed via one of the following routes:

- Notification to the lab/research leader's academic department chair, or
  - Notification to the lab/research leader's divisional/school dean, or
  - Notification to the Emergency Operations Center (858-246-4841), EH&S (858-534-3660 or <http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/safetyconcern>), or
  - Notification to the UC Whistleblower Hotline (800-403-4744 or [www.UniversityofCalifornia.edu/Hotline](http://www.UniversityofCalifornia.edu/Hotline)).
- **Investigation of reported concerns** in research contexts will be handled at the local level, in consultation with Environmental Health & Safety and the Office of Research Affairs.

---

<sup>1</sup> Student Conduct and COVID-19; [PPM 160-10](#).

<sup>2</sup> Pathway to Progressive Engagement; APM 011, Academic Freedom, Protection of Professional Standards, and Responsibilities of Non-Faculty Academic Appointees; or, APM 015, The Faculty Code of Conduct and APM 016 University Policy on Faculty Conduct and the Administration of Discipline APM-016; or, APM 150, Non-Senate Academic Appointees/Corrective Action and Dismissal. For represented academic employees subject to a collective bargaining agreement, progressive discipline will be implemented as per that agreement.

<sup>3</sup> Pathway to Progressive Engagement for Staff. [PPSM-62](#).

- PIs and other research leaders are expected to ensure full compliance with required safety procedures. Tolerance or encouragement of noncompliance by research leaders may result in immediate initiation of progressive discipline<sup>2</sup> and lab closure.

**Responses to Non-compliance in a research setting:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> instance of non-compliance will result in a warning to those who are not complying with safety requirements, notification of an individual's supervisor (PI, department chair, lab manager, etc.) and may result in EH&S determination that sanitization of facility is needed. Such sanitization may prohibit access to the lab/facility for up to 48 hours.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> instance of substantive non-compliance will result in notification of an individual's supervisor, chair and Dean (or equivalent), and to prohibit community transmission of COVID-19, may result in required closure of the research setting for a length of time to ensure no on site transmission of the virus for a length of time in compliance with County Public Health guidance (10-14 days).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> instance of non-compliance will result in VCR determined closure of facility/lab for up to 30 days and notification of the oversight authorities for standard progressive discipline for students, faculty, or staff<sup>4</sup>.

When addressing noncompliance with safety requirements in a research setting, consultation with the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (for academic appointees), Chief Human Resources Officer and Senior Director of Labor Relations & Employee Relations (for non-academic appointees), and Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs (for students) is required, as are all steps described in the associated policies, collective bargaining agreements (CBA) and guidance documents. Non-residential applies to all campus spaces, offices, units and facilities and includes off-campus jurisdiction when approved by the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.

Records of reported instances of noncompliance will be maintained so that repeat noncompliance can be identified as such by ORA and unit leaders.

---

<sup>4</sup>Cases involving conduct by academic appointees will be assessed by Academic Personnel Services. The Chief Human Resources Officer and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs are responsible for compliance by staff employees and students, respectively.