

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Office of the Dean for Research

To: Assistant, Associate and Full Professors; Department Chairs; Department Managers; and Facility Directors in Divisions III and IV
From: Pablo G. Debenedetti, Dean for Research
Subject: An Important Step Towards Normal Research Operations
Date: June 8th, 2021

Dear colleagues,

As you know, in March of 2020, in response to Governor Murphy's Executive Order 107, we halted on-campus research activities. In June of the same year, we announced the phased resumption of on-campus research.

Our research laboratories have been operating safely since then, thanks to the research community's extraordinary commitment to the health and safety of our campus. I am profoundly grateful to each and every one of you for the sacrifices that you have made during the past 15 months, both at home and at work.

Widely available, safe and efficient vaccines, made possible by research and science, have put us on a firm trajectory towards normal operations.

In light of today's memo from Provost Debbie Prentice and Executive Vice President Treby Williams, and the [University's announcement](#) of COVID vaccination and other public health policy updates, I write to convey the following research-specific good news.

Research Laboratories

The University has lifted social distancing requirements for fully vaccinated persons verified in [myUHS](#) portal (graduate students) or [VacStatus](#) (faculty; members of the research staff, including postdoctoral researchers). Accordingly, effective immediately, all fully vaccinated researchers verified in [myUHS](#) or [VacStatus](#) and who are part of a Research Laboratory Operations Plan ([RLOP](#)) (or a Research non-Laboratory Operations Plan, [RNOP](#)) no longer need to comply with occupancy limits in laboratories or other spaces. Labs can resume normal occupancy for fully vaccinated, verified members. Labs with members who are not yet fully vaccinated may consult with Environmental Health and Safety (ehs@princeton.edu) regarding questions about social distancing. Re-densification does not require submission/approval of a revised RLOP or RNOP.

The University will not routinely check whether individuals who are not practicing social distancing indoors are vaccinated except in response to credible complaints. However, the University retains the right to undertake periodic compliance reviews as needed to protect the community.

Researchers Who Have Been Working Remotely

Researchers who have been working remotely (e.g., theoretical/computational graduate students or postdoctoral researchers who are not part of an RNOP) and are fully vaccinated and verified in [myUHS](#) portal (graduate students) or [VacStatus](#) (members of the research staff, including postdoctoral researchers) are welcome to return to their campus offices and other workspaces.

If not currently in the asymptomatic testing program, researchers who have been working remotely will need to be enrolled and tested (see [Princeton COVID resources](#) for details), and upload their vaccination records in [myUHS](#) portal (graduate students) or [VacStatus](#) (members of the research staff, including postdoctoral researchers) if they have not already done so.

Department Managers will need to ensure that all researchers regularly on campus or returning to campus are enrolled in the asymptomatic testing program.

Public Health Guidance for all Researchers

- The University has updated its [face coverings policy](#). Face coverings continue to be required indoors, but are no longer required outdoors. Exceptions to the indoor face covering policy, such as when a researcher is alone in a reserved or assigned room, are outlined on the [COVID Resources website](#).
- Researchers must use the [Daily Symptom Check](#) before coming to campus.
- All researchers working on campus must be enrolled in the asymptomatic testing program and tested (see [Princeton COVID resources](#) for details), and must upload their vaccination records in [myUHS](#) portal (graduate students) or [VacStatus](#) (faculty; members of the research staff, including postdoctoral researchers) if they have not already done so.

Graduate Students and Members of the Research Staff, Including Postdoctoral Researchers

The Graduate School and the Office of the Dean of the Faculty will communicate directly with graduate students, and with members of the research staff, including postdoctoral researchers, respectively, about these public health policy updates.

In Conclusion

I want to express my gratitude to all among you who have already been vaccinated. The high rates of vaccination in New Jersey have allowed the state to lift some of the restrictions that have been in place for more than a year. The University will communicate further as the situation evolves. I am confident that vaccines and continued adherence to public health protocols will allow Princeton’s extraordinary research community to return to fully normal operations before long. Thank you for helping bring us to this promising moment.

With all good wishes,

Pablo

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