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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

# Research Scholarship Creative Activity Reopening Protocols



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## 1.0. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document describes considerations for the restoration of Research Scholarship Creative Activity (“RSCA”), taking place in labs and studios during phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reopening considerations will be different for individual labs or studios. Each lab or studio must have an approved safety and reoccupation plan. Approval authority is: Risk Management, Environmental, Health & Safety (RM/EHS). A copy of all approved plans will be provided to the Vice President of Administration and Finance.

RM/EHS and Facilities Management will need a list of buildings/rooms that are designated for reopening.

## 2.0. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this plan:

- Achieve an orderly and safe restart for RSCA facilities on campus.
- Minimize staff exposure to potential COVID-19 cases to the maximum extent possible.
- Restore all RSCA on campus as soon as reasonably (safely)
  - possible.
- Prepare for possible Phase change back to a more restrictive Phase. Please see Attachment A: CSU Guidance for 2020-21 Academic Year Planning in the Context of COVID-19.

### 3.0. RSCA APPROVAL PROCESS

The RSCA approval process involves four steps:

- 1) Complete all required safety training
- 2) Complete the RSCA Reopening Application
- 3) Send documents to College RSCA Review Committee
- 4) Request a Safety Site Assessment; and
- 5) Submit RSCA Application material via DocuSign

### 3.1. SAFETY TRAINING

The following shall be completed for lab or studio reopening consideration:

1. **Completion of the COVID-19 Safety Training** on CSU Learn. All RSCA applicants, including faculty, staff and students, who will be accessing lab or studio space shall complete the [RM/EHS COVID-19 Safety Online Course](#).
2. **Completion of the required annual [Lab Safety](#) or [Shop Safety](#) training** on CSU Learn, **(this applies only if annual renewal has not been completed)**.
3. **Completion of the required annual Lab or Studio Hazard Assessment** for the lab or studio space, **(this applies only if annual renewal has not been completed)**. The PI or faculty for the assigned lab or studio shall complete the lab or studio hazard assessment on the [RM/EHS webpage](#).

### 3.2. RSCA REOPENING APPLICATION

This application should be delivered to your College RSCA Review Committee. This committee will be formed by the Deans. PI's should contact their College Associate Dean for information related to submission deadlines and college priorities/guidelines.

### 3.3. COLLEGE RSCA REVIEW COMMITTEE

Send training certificates, [RSCA Reopening Application](#), and [Rationale Form](#) to your College RSCA Review Committee via email.

If the College Committee approves the application, then the faculty will request a Safety Site Assessment. If the College Committee has revisions for the Faculty/PI, then the faculty would have to address those before resubmitting to the College committee again.

### 3.4. SAFETY SITE ASSESSMENT

Once the College Committee approves the application, the faculty will request a Safety Site Assessment. The Faculty/PI member will need to submit an [Infrequent Campus Visit Application](#) to come to campus on the day of your scheduled Safety Site Assessment.

1. The Faculty/PI member will schedule a Safety Site Assessment by sending an email to [RMEHS@calstatela.edu](mailto:RMEHS@calstatela.edu). **Please attach the RSCA Reopening Application, Rationale Form, and email from the Chair of the College Review Committee that stipulates the application has been approved.** A safety site assessment will be confirmed with RM/EHS and Facilities Services within 24-48 hours upon receipt of the email request.
  - a. **Prior to the Safety Site Assessment**, the requestor should review and follow the [Safety Site Assessment Guidance](#) that identifies what is needed to prepare and comply with the required information identified in the Safety Site Assessment Form.
  - b. Participate in the **COVID-19: Safety Site Assessment** at your lab or studio with RM/EHS and Facilities Services personnel. Upon completion and proof of compliance during the Safety Site Assessment, RMEHS will complete the **COVID-19: Safety Site Assessment Checklist** form via DocuSign. Once this form has been signed by all parties, the requestor will receive an electronic copy with approval signatures.

### 3.5. SUBMIT RSCA APPLICATION VIA DOCUSIGN

After RSCA Safety Site Assessment has been completed, the faculty will submit all application material for approval via DocuSign.

The complete RSCA Application Material includes: 1) All required Safety Training certificates, 2) RSCA Reopening application, 3) Rationale Form, and 4) copy of signed Safety Site Assessment. This material will all be uploaded to the application via DocuSign.

## 4.0. PHYSICAL AND TEMPORAL DISTANCING

Providing for safe physical distance (social distancing) from one another is essential in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Given the nature of the work we do, social distancing guidelines may be hard to adhere to at times, however there are tools which we can use to provide physical barriers and behavioral reminders to ensure safe distances between people.

- Develop staggered schedules (AM/PM, alternate days, alternate weeks)
- Develop plans for how social distancing will be maintained in the office, studio, and bench spaces (alternating bays/desks)
- Shared Resources - Have conversations with relevant core labs about scheduling for shared equipment and how it will be cleaned (and who will be responsible for cleaning).
- In compliance with wage and hour regulations, alternate, staggered or shift schedules should be instituted to maximize physical distancing.
- If research is conducted by a single individual in a lab or studio situation where, under normal circumstances, two or more people are present, notify at least one person outside the lab as a safety precaution prior to beginning that work and upon finishing.
- Social Distancing poses special challenges for teaching new techniques. Some options for teaching techniques that require close proximity are listed below
  - If possible, delay teaching that technique. This may not be feasible, but eliminating close contact is ideal.
  - Use technology to demonstrate the techniques. This could mean recording yourself performing the technique and narrating what you're doing or using Zoom or WebEx to show the technique and then allow the trainee to try the technique while still having live feedback.
  - If live, in person training is the only feasible method (high risk activity, high value samples or equipment) use chemical splash goggles or a face shield to protect the mucous membranes (eyes, nose, mouth) of both the trainer and the trainee in addition to other recommended PPE such as gloves and face masks.

More information can be found on the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

## 5.0. LAB OR STUDIO SPACE OCCUPANCY AND DENSITY

Limit access to essential RSCA personnel. Unapproved visitors are not permitted in campus RSCA spaces. Please complete an Infrequent [Campus Visit Protocol Application](#) for all visitors. Only approved critical vendors and essential visitors will be allowed on campus and in the lab or studio space. Deliveries should be completed in designated areas and PI's/lab supervisors must keep a daily log (name, contact information) of all persons who have accessed the lab or studio, including vendors.

- Reduce the density of researchers in the lab or studio.
- For example, create sub-teams with distinct schedules (e.g., Sub-team A works M-W-F, or mornings) to reduce density in the lab or studio and limit cross-team contact.
- Ensure separation of 6 feet or more between researchers at fixed working positions in the lab or studio unless this distance is unsafe due to the nature of the work or the configuration of the space. Designate workspaces in the lab or studio that are a minimum of 6 feet apart.
- All research and activities that can be done remotely should continue to be done remotely, such as office work, data analysis, drafting papers and presentations, notebook recordings, and meetings.
- Work with the research team to determine research priorities and adjust expectations and research plans in light of reduced lab or studio time.
- Consider having teams share responsibilities, so each person can easily cover and share other teammates' responsibilities as needed.
- Continue to conduct virtual meetings for any group discussions, even if you are in the same building.
- Use visual reminders (such as tape on the floor and signage) of proper social distancing around shared equipment, fume hoods, biosafety cabinets, etc.

- Develop schedules for access to shared core instrumentation facilities and shared spaces.
- Remember that shared common spaces, such as kitchenettes, breakrooms, and conference rooms, have been closed or reconfigured to allow for 6 feet of physical distancing.
- RM/EHS will recommend room occupancy capacity based on a physical room inspection, social distancing, room density, and air-circulation.
- The appropriate number of chairs/desks/lab or studio bench work stations shall be marked as “Do Not Use” or similar in order to maintain six foot of social distancing. Consider eliminating seats closest to the door, as well as, consider front to back and side to side social distancing needs.
- Physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult to regulate spacing, shall be installed to maintain at least 6 feet apart (e.g., cash registers).
- Physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls shall be provided to ensure that individuals remain at least 6 feet apart in lines and at other times.
- Adequate air circulation for each research lab or studio will need to be implemented. Facilities Services can assist in ensuring this.
- Ventilation systems in lab or studio must operate properly. There must be an increased circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, and other methods. Windows and doors must not be opened if doing so poses a safety or health risk for current or subsequent occupants, including children (e.g., allowing outdoor environmental contaminants including carbon monoxide, molds, or pollens into the building).
- Faculty conducting fieldwork should apply the same safety measures as outlined for laboratories and studios. If physical distancing, PPE application, disinfection, and reporting in the field environment cannot be accomplished, the PI or project director should postpone the project. Field work that requires interaction with the public should be delayed until Phase 4 or Phase 5 of the plan (Attachment C.)

There must be an evaluation of the building (by EHS) and its mechanical and life safety systems to determine if the building is ready for occupancy. Check for hazards associated with prolonged facility shutdown such as mold growth, rodents or pests, or issues with stagnant water systems, and take appropriate remedial actions. More information can be found on the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov).



## 6.0. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

LA County requires cloth [face coverings](#) in public places, both indoors and outdoors, including classrooms and workplaces. You are not required to wear a cloth face covering if doing so is unsafe because of a medical condition or disability. In such cases, you must practice social distancing to the greatest degree possible.

You must wear a cloth face covering at all times while on campus, even when physically distancing. This is particularly important in conference rooms, common areas, kitchenettes, hallways, stairwells, elevators, restrooms, control rooms, and university-owned vehicles). You are not required to wear a cloth face covering if you are **alone** in a private office with the door closed.

It is important to note that face coverings are **not a substitute** for practicing physical distancing and frequent hand-washing. Therefore, wearing a cloth face covering does not eliminate the need to physically distance yourself from others and to wash your hands frequently. Face coverings are just an additional tool that can protect others from possible exposure to respiratory droplets that may come from our mouth when we talk, sneeze or cough.

Those exempted from wearing a cloth face covering include: those instructed not to use one by a medical provider; those with breathing difficulties; those who are incapacitated or unconscious; those who cannot wear or remove a cloth face covering without assistance.

Everyone on campus will be provided with a cloth face covering or mask for normal, day-to-day activity. The campus will provide masks and other PPE (gloves, goggles, face shields) in specified settings as required by health and safety officials and regulatory agencies.

- [Cloth face masks](#) **must be worn at all times**. Cloth face coverings should:
  - Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face,
  - Be secured with ties or ear loops,
  - Include multiple layers of fabric,
  - Allow for breathing without restriction, and
  - Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage

- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth when removing your cloth face covering, and wash your hands immediately before and after removal.
- Avoid handshakes with others
- When not in use, store your cloth face covering in a sealed bag or Ziploc- style plastic bag, never store in your pocket, purse, or briefcase.
- Change and launder your cloth face covering daily or obtain a new face cover daily
- Use disposable [gloves](#) when cleaning and disinfecting lab or studio surfaces that may be frequently touched in the lab or studio. Use disposable gloves when touching or having contact with individuals, lab or studio surfaces, lab or studio equipment, chemicals and biohazards. After using disposable gloves, discard them in a biohazard container, lined receptacle , or a hazardous waste container. Do not disinfect or reuse gloves. Ensure that hands are washed after gloves are removed.

## 7.0. SHARED SPACE, WORK SURFACES AND EQUIPMENT

Shared spaces are defined as RSCA spaces where members of a group routinely interact with each other in the same space, such as science and engineering labs, core facilities, studios or shared spaces in institutes or centers. It is the responsibility of the RSCA space occupants to clean equipment, surfaces, containers, etc. Facilities Services staff will clean common areas in the campus buildings. These following guidelines apply to shared space:

- **Spacing:** Limit occupancy to a single individual if at all possible. Only populate spaces with multiple individuals if it is absolutely essential. The PI is responsible for ensuring that this population rule is followed at all times. Space out desks, chairs, and/or work stations: desks/chairs in common areas must be arranged so that individuals occupying desks at the same time are at least 6 ft. apart (consider temporary walls between workstations if this spacing cannot be achieved). If a space is designed for single occupancy, the space should not be occupied by more than one individual on the same day. Within elevators, the capacity is limited to the number of people that can be accommodated while maintaining a 6-foot physical distance between riders. All riders are required to wear cloth face coverings at all times.

- **Protective Equipment:** Masks, gloves, face shields, and other required PPE must be available in shared research spaces. Obtaining these items is the responsibility of the PI, who will work with campus procurement to obtain the PPE. Gloves must be worn and [removed properly](#) when individuals interact in close proximity or share devices or equipment. Masks and gloves must be made available to visitors prior to entering lab or studio spaces. Visitors must wear masks and gloves at all times. If other protective equipment is needed, the PI will work with campus procurement to obtain these specialty items.
- **Visitors:** Visitors are allowed in shared research spaces only for the purpose of delivery, maintenance, repairs, or research collaboration that cannot be conducted remotely (see Infrequent Campus Visitor Protocol). Deliveries should be left outside the lab or studio, if possible. Visitors must adhere to the same rules as lab or studio members if they enter the lab or studio space.
- **Meetings:** Routine lab or studio/research group meetings should not be conducted face-to-face. If a face-to-face meeting is necessary, limit the number of participants and hold the meeting in a large, open and well-ventilated space continuing to maintain a distance of 6 feet apart and wear a face mask at all times.
- **Safety:** If RSCA is conducted by a single individual in a lab or studio setting where under normal circumstances, two or more individuals are present, notify at least one other person outside the lab or studio as a safety precaution prior to entering the lab or studio and upon leaving.
- **Disinfecting Labs or studios:** Disinfect shared areas and frequently touched surfaces (lab or studio benches, doorknobs, sink handles, freezer doors, fume hood sashes, keyboards, microscopes, etc.) at the end of each shift prior to the next shift arriving. Designate one or more individuals responsible for cleaning and disinfecting and have them initial the daily work schedule that they completed the cleaning. Employees should be provided time during their shifts to implement cleaning practices. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the employee's job duties.
- **Disinfecting Equipment:** Minimize the sharing of equipment and devices. If they need to be shared, thoroughly disinfect the device between uses.

## 8.0. COVID-19 SAFETY TRAINING

All laboratory personnel must complete the COVID-19 safety training to ensure that they are apprised of the hazards associated with COVID-19 in their work area. They will be provided with information to protect themselves and those around them. The specific trainings are available on [CSU Learn](#) for employees and on [CSU Bridge](#) for students. The links are below:

### **Covid-19 training for employees-**

1. Log in to the MyCalStateLA Portal. In the portal, select **CSU Learn** from the Quick Launch area. (Use Chrome or Firefox and allow pop-ups on the site).
2. Once CSU Learn opens, visit [Global Safety Short: Coronaviruses and COVID-19](#).
3. Once the course details display, click Start to launch the course modules. The training should last approximately 26 minutes

**NOTE:** Lab or studio PIs will be required to provide their training certificate to EHS personnel during site assessment.

### **Covid-19 training for students-**

**Limited participation for graduate and undergraduate students. Only those students nearing graduation whose degree completion is contingent upon their own on-campus RSCA should be considered (students cannot be compelled to return to campus and students cannot work unattended)**

- Students must log in to [CSU Bridge](#). (Use Chrome or Firefox and allow pop-ups on the site).
- After logging in, visit Compliance Short: Coronaviruses and COVID-19 (Update Available). (User must be logged in prior to clicking direct link).
- Once the course details display, click Launch to begin the course. The training should last approximately 20 minutes with a test at the end.
- When students complete the course, they may access their certificate by navigating to their My Profile menu, selecting Learning History, and using the Actions button to View Certificate.

**NOTE:** If there are problems accessing the site, lab personnel may contact [RMEHS@calstatela.edu](mailto:RMEHS@calstatela.edu). Once training is completed, a certificate of training must be provided to EHS via email at [RMEHS@calstatela.edu](mailto:RMEHS@calstatela.edu).

## **9.0. DAILY HEALTH SELF-SCREENING AND NOTIFICATION OF SYMPTOMS**

Every employee must contribute to a safe and healthy work environment. In consideration of fellow employees, and to be respectful of others' needs to protect themselves and their families, employees are responsible for conducting symptom monitoring every day before coming to work. Employees **must be free of any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19**. Cal State LA encourages all individuals returning to campus to receive the influenza vaccination.

Temperature checks for personnel that enter campus buildings should be conducted when feasible.

Employees experiencing any of these symptoms should immediately contact their medical provider, inform their supervisor, and notify the Student Health Center at (323) 343-3302. Do not report to work.

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- New gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell
- Pink eye

Employees experiencing any of the warning signs below should contact a medical provider or report to the nearest emergency department immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

## Personnel experiencing Covid-19 symptoms should do the following:

- Do not to come to work if sick, or if there was an exposure to a person with COVID-19.
- If you feel healthy but recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 stay home for 14 days after your last exposure.
- Employees experiencing Covid-19 symptoms should contact their supervisor and the Student Health Center at (323) 343-3302 immediately and should not report to work. Employees with symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their medical provider for care and advice.
- Do not participate in on-site activity if you become ill with COVID-19 symptoms or learn of having had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- Students with symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider/Student Health Center at (323) 343-3302 for care and advice.
- Individuals with positive COVID-19 test are asked to notify the Student Health Center (323) 343-3302.
- Individuals with or exposed to COVID-19 must be treated courteously, and **their privacy protected**.
- Individuals who are sick with symptoms of COVID-19 should follow home-isolation instructions.
- Individuals who have been in contact with people with COVID-19 should follow home-quarantine instructions.



## **10.0. COVID-19 LAB OR STUDIO SIGNAGE**

All lab or studios shall have COVID-19 information signs that will be conspicuously placed on outside doors and in common areas for all to see. **See Attachments D & E.**

## **11.0. COVID-19 TESTING AND RSCA SAFETY SITE ASSESSMENT**

Free COVID-19 testing site is available through the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. The site is open to the public by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, visit the [Los Angeles County COVID-19 testing website](https://covid19.lacounty.gov/testing/) (<https://covid19.lacounty.gov/testing/>). Those who do not have access to the Internet may call 2-1-1 and speak with an operator about testing.

For RSCA safety site assessment, it is essential that labs are assessed by RM/EHS and Facilities Services to ensure safe habitation of lab staff. The lab or studio safety site assessments will address: adequate air circulation, mitigation of hazardous conditions, social distancing determination based on lab or studio size and structural factors. For more information on site inspections, please refer to the **COVID-19 RSCA Safety Site Assessment (see Attachment B)**.

## **12.0. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

California State University Los Angeles. [Chemical Hygiene Plan](#)

[California State University Policy, Procedure, and Considerations for 2020-2021 Academic Year Planning in the Context of COVID-19](#)

[California State Auditor \(April 2018\). Report 2017-119](#)

California State University. [The Changing Face of Lab Safety at CSU – Leading Positive Change for Academic Success](#)

[California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5191](#), Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Chemicals in Laboratories.

[LA County Public Health](#). General Information on Coronavirus

[LA County Public Health](#). [Guidance on Social Distancing](#)

[LA County Public Health. Face Coverings](#)

[LA County Public Health. Cleaning and Disinfection](#)

[LA County Public Health. Handwashing](#)

[LA County Public Health. Cleaning Matrix](#)

[LA County Public Health. Coronavirus Symptoms and What to do if Sick](#)

[LA County Public Health. Home Isolation Protocols](#)

[LA County Public Health. Home Quarantine Protocols](#)

[OSHA. Occupational Safety & Health Administration Laboratory Safety Guidance](#)

[CDC. Guidance on Social Distancing](#)

[CDC. Guidance on Quarantine and Isolation](#)

[CDC. Guidance on COVID-19 Employer Information for Office Buildings](#)

[CDC. Guidance on How to Protect yourself & Others](#)

[CDC. Guidance on Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)

[CDC. Guidance on When to wear gloves](#)

[CDC. Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings, Especially in Areas of Significant Community-Based Transmission](#)

[CDC. Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)

[CDC. Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education](#)

[CDC. Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses and Schools](#)

[CDC Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

[CDC. Case Management Recommendations for Community Exposure](#)

[CDC. Guidance on Quarantine and Isolation](#)





[CDC. Guidance on Cloth Face Coverings](#)

[CDC. Cloth Face Coverings Do's and Don'ts Poster](#)

[CDC. Guidance on sequences for donning and doffing of PPE](#)

[CDC. Guidance on Reopening Buildings after Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation](#)

[CDC. Guidance on Social Distancing](#)

[CDC. Guidance related to People who are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness](#)

[CDC. What You Should Know Poster](#)

[CDC. Interim Guidance on Mass Gatherings and Large Events](#)

[CDC. Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)

[CDC. Interim Guidelines for Administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education](#)

[EPA. List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\)](#)

National Research Council of The National Academies. [Prudent Practices in the Laboratory](#)

American Chemical Society. [Guidelines for Chemical Laboratory Safety in Academic Institutions](#)

