

4/20/20

Dear Colleagues,

Although there has been significant ramping down of research activities due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, the University's Office of Research Safety (ORS) continues to support the laboratory/research community, including the research efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A number of our faculty have already begun to ramp back up lab activities to initiate COVID-19 research. In effort to support this vital research while at the same time promoting safety and compliance with public health mandates, ORS has developed a novel training program highlighting biosafety level 3 (BSL3) practices to supplement practices appropriate for research involving specimens derived from COVID-19 patients being conducted in a BSL2 laboratory. There will be two standing sessions per week which will be open to any COVID-19 investigator. ORS also encourages training sessions for specific research teams and these sessions are also available upon request.

If you plan to conduct research involving either SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19 patient-derived specimens, you must complete the following simple steps:

1. Contact ORS at researchsafety@uchicago.edu to register for training or to schedule a training session for your research team;
2. Participate in a virtual meeting with one of the ORS Biosafety Officers to discuss details of your planned research (e.g. samples to be used, research activities to performed, location, etc.);
3. Virtual training session with ORS, which involves:
 - Virtual information session with ORS
 - Discussion/video of safety techniques to be used (PPE, biosafety cabinet usage, etc.)
4. Supply names and CNET IDs of people who will be working on the project;
5. If you plan on any of the following, you will need approval from the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) prior to work:
 - Culturing/propagating SARS-CoV-2
 - Administration of samples to animals
 - Performing genetic manipulation using recombinant/synthetic DNA

Once the above steps have been completed, the Office of Research Safety will confirm with the Deans Office that your training requirement has been completed.

Be well,



Associate Vice President for Research Safety
Professor of Microbiology