The Research Safety 2020-2021 Safety Plan Development Guide provides researchers an overview of the types of controls that can be used to minimize the impact of illness caused by the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Each research group must develop a work-specific safety plan that describes the specific actions that will be used to minimize staff exposures to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most research positions at NMSU will fall into the lower and medium risk exposure categories as defined in the NMSU Employee Safety and Administrative Controls for Return to Work - FALL 2020 guidelines.

There are four general strategies for managing the risk of staff contracting COVID-19 and transmitting the SARS-CoV-2 virus in research settings. Most researchers will need to use a combination of these to tailor their research safety plans to their specific operation and work processes.

1. **Staffing** - Minimize the number of staff on-site.
2. **Space Management** - Establish social distancing requirements and reconfigure workspace utilization / design.
3. **Personal and Workplace Hygiene** - Enhance personal and workplace hygiene practices.
4. **Monitoring / Reporting** – Implement staff health monitoring, testing (if available), location monitoring and the rapid reporting of positive contacts to public health officials.

---

**Staffing and Space Management Practices**

1. Provide additional staff training. At a minimum, all research staff must read the Research Training Supplement and complete the Commitment to Public Health Practices form electronically on the Research webpage <https://research.nmsu.edu>.
2. Rearrange research workspaces to facilitate a minimum six feet of distancing between staff. Plan for a minimum of 150 to 200 sq. ft. of workspace per individual or workstation in enclosed areas such as laboratories or shops.

3. Reduce the number of areas accessible to staff research facilities.
   3.1. Close or restrict access to common areas such as break rooms.
   3.2. Use signage to clearly identify closed/restricted areas.

4. Establish work schedules that reduce the occupancy density in research laboratories and shops.
   4.1. Schedule extra or alternate shifts.
   4.2. Promote teleworking, where possible, (data analysis, research paper writing, etc.)

5. Coordinate workspace plans and staff work schedules with other researchers to keep occupancy densities as low as possible (150 to 200 sq. ft. / person minimum) in shared spaces.

6. Organize work functions and tasks in a way that minimizes the amount of time staff are required to be at on-site.

7. Potentially hazardous operations still require at least two trained and qualified persons to be present unless the use of a supervised remote monitoring system has been established.

8. Use phones and virtual communication tools to minimize face-to-face contacts between staff whenever possible. Maintain social distancing and face covering protocols whenever face-to-face contact is required.

9. Enforce a “one person per vehicle” requirement. If more than one person must be in a vehicle then all people must wear a courtesy face covering or respirator.

Hygiene Practices

1. Reinforce the requirement that sick staff must stay home.

2. Require the use of face coverings when in public and when social distancing requirements cannot be maintained.

3. Require the use disposable gloves, if supplies are available.

4. Reinforce proper hand hygiene including frequent hand washing / sanitizing.
5. Train staff to treat all common surfaces and items as if they were contaminated.

6. Establish enhanced cleaning protocols and frequently sanitize high-touch areas such as counters, keyboards, instrument controls, door handles, light switches and other high-contact surfaces.

7. Limit sharing of office supplies, equipment and tools whenever feasible. Assign equipment and tools to individuals and label with individual names. Clean and sanitize equipment and tools before and after use.

8. Routinely sanitizing personal equipment and spaces (keyboards, computer mouse, phones, desktops, hand tools, etc.) in offices and other workspaces.

**Health Monitoring and Reporting Practices**

1. Personnel entry and exit logs must be established for all research facilities including agricultural and other field locations to facilitate contact tracing.
   - Use no-touch / low-touch, electronic logging techniques whenever possible.

2. Staff must monitor their own health before coming to work and stay home if sick.

3. Staff must report any direct personal contact with persons known to have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus or COVID-19 to their PI or supervisor.

4. Supervisors must immediately report any positive test cases received from staff to NMSU Aggie Health & Wellness Center. In addition, supervisors should compile and provide NMSU facility entry/exit log information for use in contact tracing.

For questions and assistance with developing your plan, contact:

Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management
Phone: (575) 646-3327
Email: ehs@nmsu.edu

**BE BOLD - BE KIND — STAY SAFE!**

New Mexico State University