

Lab Re-Opening: Phase-2 Checklist for HMS Labs

Version 1.1

June 7, 2020

The University, School, Department, and Labs are engaged in a shared pursuit to ramp-up wet-lab research activities safely, building on a culture of health, well-being and safety already inherent within the research environment. In these unprecedented times, we ask for ongoing partnership in fulfilling steps required by the State of Massachusetts, and culled from recommendations from the Harvard University Laboratory Reopening Planning Committee, the HMS/HSDM Lab Ramp-up Committee, and the Business Continuity Task Force, with advice and feedback from the Preclinical Department Chairs and the Preclinical Department Administrators. Thank you in advance for your efforts in fulfilling these required items.

Phase-2 Item	Status (Date Complete)
<p>Develop a detailed cleaning schedule and protocols for items to be cleaned by lab workers, including surfaces and shared equipment; align protocols with EH&S guidance.</p> <p><i>Note: There is forthcoming guidance regarding potential special considerations for union personnel.</i></p>	
<p>Confirm that planned lab reorganizations and preparations are aligned with approved lab ramp-up proposals and adhere to the most up-to-date guidance (to be provided by the HMS COVID-19 Advisory Team).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm that lab configuration, including bench assignments, assures adequate physical distancing.• Confirm signage is correct.	
<p>If required, complete the relocations of shared equipment needed to be in compliance with physical distancing guidelines (if this has already been requested by departments, it will be performed by facilities).</p>	
<p>Confirm appointment of and support installation of COVID-19 Safety Officer(s) (CSO). (See CSO document)</p> <p><i>Note: Installation will require that CSO attend a specialized orientation provided by the HMS COVID-19 Advisory Team (CAT) and, if the department requires, a department-specific orientation provided by the research operations manager (ROM).</i></p>	
<p>Ensure that adequate supplies for COVID-19 decontamination and safety protocols are stocked and reordered on a regular schedule, especially in light of current supply chain issues (e.g., gloves, safety glasses, and disinfectants, including those for use in tissue cultures).</p>	
<p>Hold lab meeting or use other formal mechanism to communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health/safety/waste removal protocols for the lab;	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab procedures for compliance reporting, resolution and departmental oversight, including role of CSO; • The need for change in cultural norms, most importantly minimizing time spent on campus, minimizing close contact and wearing masks at all times; • Reminders of availability of health and well-being resources for all HU employees; and • Dependencies on department/school Phase-2 steps. <p>Communicate that all lab personnel are expected to complete baseline viral testing via HUHS within two weeks of lab opening.</p>	
---	--

Please note that department and school administration are in active communication on the following topics. Guidance on these issues is forthcoming, and such dependencies will impact the ability to complete the above checklist:

- *Implementing COVID-19 Safety Officer Oversight Structure:* The Coronavirus Advisory Team, which includes faculty, department administration, facilities, EH&S, research compliance, HR, emergency preparedness and institutional planning offices has convened and issued guidance (See CSO Document) on the roles and responsibilities of COVID-19 Safety Officers. It has also established compliance reporting tools. Assessment of the effectiveness of such tools, and implications for repeated and serious non-adherence to protocols, is underway.
- *Department-wide cleaning schedules and protocols:* Specifics on how each lab, kitchen, restroom, eating area, shared research space, etc. within department footprint will be cleaned is forthcoming. Dept/lab protocols may require some iteration in developing protocols depending on the availability of cleaning supplies.
- *Confirming signage:* Over 5,000 signs have been affixed at HMS over the past week in accordance with MA regulations. Confirming correct installation is an ongoing process.
- *Waste-removal protocol:* Guidance and clarity on the locations for trash removal and adherence to MA regulations on food waste, including addressing associated egress/fire hazard concerns, is forthcoming and will then require communication to lab personnel.
- *Procuring safety supplies on an initial and ongoing basis:* A coordinated school-level purchase is expected, though not guaranteed, to arrive by **Friday, June 12**. Analyzing burn-rates in supplies and developing streamlined communication among the PI, department, and School on supply-chain matters is a critical workstream that is in progress.
- *Further elucidating occupational health protocols:* HUHS has provided [guidelines](#) on the notification process for those testing positive for COVID-19. Some additional questions have arisen on specific workflows and communications, and guidance will be forthcoming on how best to resolve such questions.
- *Testing:* The University has required that all personnel returning during Phase-1 and Phase-2 receive [baseline viral testing](#) within two weeks of lab reopening. More information is forthcoming. Mechanisms for tracking and communicating who has or has not completed this requirement will also be developed.