

## COVID-19 Safety Plan – Human Subjects Research (All sections must be completed)

### Responsible Faculty Member/Principal Investigator

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The Faculty Member/Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring compliance with this plan. Failure to follow this plan will result in restrictions up to and including immediate shutdown of the offending research lab or area.

### Location(s) to which this Safety Plan applies: Specify all applicable Campus/Building/Floor/Room Numbers and any non-campus sites.

BIRC has established the following policies for resuming operations. For more information regarding research operations and guidelines, please refer to Office of the Vice President of Research ([ovpr.uconn.edu](http://ovpr.uconn.edu)). All BIRC Staff and researcher personnel will follow guidelines by UConn's Office of the Vice President of Research (<http://ovpr.uconn.edu>) and will complete training (<https://ehs.uconn.edu/returning-to-research-at-uconn-and-uconn-health-training-course/>) before performing any activities at BIRC. Researchers are also required to have their laboratory-specific Safety Plan approved by the OVPR and BIRC Director or Associate Director before resuming research. These policies apply to PCSB rooms 137, 137A, 137B/C, 138/138A, 138B, 139, 140/140A, 141, 142, L1B, C1G.

**Describe the steps that will be taken in regards to staff and students to minimize personnel density, allow distancing, and reduce the chances for transmission for the office and research areas where research participants are not seen. These steps must be consistent with CDC guidelines, state guidelines, and applicable University policies, including the [UConn Working Alone Policy](#) and [UConn Health Working Alone Policy](#).**

**The steps/plan must be specific for your research area or situation. You should include at least:**

- 1) A description of the of areas or locations (size, configuration, shared or single space, etc.) where people may be present, such as the lab, project space, and areas with common equipment;
- 2) The number of people that will be in the area/space at any one time and how that number minimizes personnel density and will generally provide for distancing of six feet.
- 3) A description of anticipated work schedules, including staggering, alternate days, partial days or other adjustments and how work schedules minimize personnel density and provide for general distancing of six feet.
- 4) State if coordination with other teams or labs also using the space or area is required, and if so how will you coordinate access to minimize personnel density;
- 5) A description of situations or conditions where individuals will need to be in close proximity to perform work, operate equipment, travel, etc. and what steps will be taken to minimize contact time and lessen transmission risk.
- 6) A description of any barriers, partitions, or other methods to physically separate people that will be used.
- 7) A description of any special PPE requirements beyond required cloth face coverings that will be required.

- 8) A description of any work that cannot be done while wearing PPE or a cloth face covering and steps that will be taken to minimize the potential for viral spread.
- 9) Other area/location specific steps or considerations

### 1. OCCUPANCY AND VISITORS

- Occupancy is limited to BIRC staff, researchers (during study procedures or essential use of the data processing room), and visitors. **Visitors** include scheduled research participants and patients, as well as a minimal number of caregivers that are essential for the participants' visit (typically 1 max).
- Occupancy of each work area is **limited to the minimum number of personnel needed**, nominally 1 researcher, 1 technologist, and 1 participant for MRI procedures; 1 technologist, 2 researchers, and 1 participant for MRI training procedures; 2 researchers and 1 participant for TMS procedures; 1 researcher and 1 participant for other areas. If a caregiver is essential, then he/she is allowed to stay as minimally required for the participants' functionality.

### 2. BEFORE ARRIVAL

- Space usage will continue to be coordinated using an **online reservation system** that restricts simultaneous usage of each work area. PCSB 142 (Data Processing Room) is newly added to the scheduler. 30-minute gap periods will be added between reservations to allow additional time for cleaning and air circulation. Exceptions that do not require a 30-minute gap include: (1) between clinical MRI patients, and (2) when individuals from the same household (i.e., they live together) participate in research.
- Researchers should prescreen their participants using the provided symptom checklist and assess themselves for possible COVID-19 symptoms, positive COVID-19 test result, quarantine requirements, and COVID-19 contact immediately **24 hours prior to their visit** to minimize last minute cancellations.
- All participants must be instructed to meet the investigator at the **BIRC entrance**. Location information is available at <https://birc.uconn.edu/directions-parking-2>.

### 3. UPON ENTRY

- All staff, researchers and visitors must be screened for possible COVID-19 symptoms, positive COVID-19 test result, quarantine requirements, and COVID-19 contact immediately PRIOR TO entering BIRC outside of the entrance. Please use the attached **Checklist** to confirm that all personnel entering the building have been symptom free for at least 14 days. Note: BIRC is waiving short notice (<24 hour) cancellation fees until further notice.
- Clinical patients will be screened for fever immediately prior to entering BIRC using an infrared thermometer. A thermometer will be available at BIRC for researchers to incorporate into their protocols.
- All investigators must be present to greet the participant and should immediately escort him/her/them to the appropriate testing area. Participants should not gather in the waiting area.
- All and each researcher and staff entering BIRC will complete the **On Premises Personnel Log** regardless of whether they are at BIRC for research. Researchers will complete on behalf of the research participant using their research ID, and for carers, the participant ID and their relationship. The log can be found at the entrance. Please keep documentation of participants

and any accompanied visitors that are required for the participants' visit such as caregivers. **Exit time** must also be logged on departure of each individual.

#### **4. PPE & DISINFECTION PROCEDURE**

- All research personnel and participants must wear **masks** at all times while at BIRC EXCEPT FOR the participant in the MRI scanner (where they will be by themselves in most cases), or other procedures that are essential to take off their masks (e.g. testing for speech articulation, communicating with a deaf individual). Cloth masks are acceptable. If your participant does not have a mask or an appropriate mask, a mask will be provided, and can be found at the employee entrance. If the participant is allowed/required to take off their mask for more than a brief period other than being the only occupant of the MRI, researchers and/or staff present in the same room must wear an **N95 mask**.
- All staff and research personnel who will be in close proximity to the participant or each other within 6ft will be required to wear a **face shield** including MRI and TMS procedures. During behavioral assessment and interview procedures the researcher may use a **standing acrylic sneeze guard** INSTEAD OF a face shield provided by BIRC. Researchers are required to bring their own disinfected/new face shields for each participant.
- All research personnel who will be performing EEG procedure will be required to wear disinfected/new gloves (not available at BIRC) and a gown (not available at BIRC) or scrubs (scrubs available at BIRC) in addition to face masks and face shields. Researchers are required to bring their own disinfected/new face shields, gloves and gown (if not using BIRC's scrubs) for each participant.
- All personnel should wash their hands frequently and before and after participant or equipment contact, or when using the bathroom.
- Details of the disinfection procedure is described below.

#### **5. ROOM-SPECIFIC PROCEDURES**

Doors should not be propped open.

##### **Areas that are Accessible**

- PCSB 137/137A (behavioral testing rooms, 75/106 ft<sup>2</sup>) will be available. These rooms are configured for face-to-face interviews and interactions across a 4.0ft table. Researchers who will be within 6ft to the participants will wear a mask at all times with either a face shield or use a standing acrylic sneeze guard. Maximize distance between individuals and limit to two individuals per room. Researchers must include project-specific protocols for using PPE and minimizing close contact during behavioral protocols (e.g. consent, interviews, assessment) in their own COVID-19 safety plans.
- PCSB 137B/C (EEG room, 102ft<sup>2</sup>) will be available. Preparation of the participant for EEG recording should be performed in a room separate from the EEG room. Because of the close proximity required during EEG cap setup, masks, disinfected/new gloves, gowns and face shields must be worn by researchers. Participants must wear a mask whenever possible. Researchers must include project-specific protocols for using PPE and minimizing close contact during EEG protocols in their own COVID-19 safety plans.

- PCSB 138B (Family waiting room, 71ft<sup>2</sup>): Maximize distance between individuals and limit to two individuals per room. This room is configured with a laminate table and plastic chair.
- PCSB 138C (MRI simulator room, 176/75 ft<sup>2</sup>). This is an equipment room consisting of a mock MRI table and bore for the participant and a workstation for the researcher. Mock MRI procedures involve brief close contact (~1-5 minutes) while positioning a participant on the table. Maximize distance between individuals and limit to two individuals.
- PCSB 139 (TMS room 249 ft<sup>2</sup>) will be available for TMS studies that can avoid prolonged close contact between individuals that is within 6ft. This room contains shared equipment for human subject research, primarily a participant procedure chair and two workstations for researchers. TMS procedures involve close contact while setting up neuronavigation, attaching electrodes to the participant's hand or other muscles, and holding a TMS coil on a participant's head. Occupancy is limited to two investigators (required for safety) and one participant. All parties in the room are required to wear a mask. Researchers who will be within 6ft to the participant will be required to wear a face shield or use a standing acrylic sneeze guard. Researchers must include project-specific protocols for minimizing close contact in their COVID-19 safety plans.
- PCSB 140/140A (MRI suite, 204/646ft<sup>2</sup>): areas.
  - All participants must change into scrubs provided by BIRC. Personal clothing items will not be permitted in the scanner.
  - **Zone 3** - There is a two-person maximum in Zone 3 (three-person maximum for training procedures). The investigator and the scanner operator in Zone 3 must wear masks. If needed, a participant may be accompanied by a research assistant or lab member. This person must also wear a mask.
  - **Zone 4** - There is a three-person maximum in Zone 4. Participants must wear a mask into Zone 4 but can remove it prior to beginning the study. If needed, a participant may be accompanied by a research assistant or lab member. This person must also wear a mask.
- PCSB 141 (conference room/kitchen area, 244ft<sup>2</sup>) is configured as a conference room. The room will be available for meal preparation and consumption by BIRC staff. Individuals may remove their masks while in the room. The door will remain closed. When essential for research, participants may use the room for meals. Occupancy is limited to a single staff member, or a single participant, or a group of related participants within the same household.
- PCSB 142 (data processing room, 265 ft<sup>2</sup>) will be added to the scheduler to limit the number of people in the area. This room is configured as a shared computing workspace. Occupancy limited to two.

**Areas that are Not Accessible**

- PCSB L1B (lobby, 157ft<sup>2</sup>): not in use. Researchers/staff must escort visitors to the appropriate procedure room on arrival.

### BIRC Patient Health Checklist (CLINICAL)

In the last 14 days, have you had:

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Fever >100.0 °F  | YES | NO |
| 2. Cough  | YES | NO |
| 3. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing  | YES | NO |
| 4. Chills   | YES | NO |
| 5. Body Aches   | YES | NO |
| 6. Muscle Aches   | YES | NO |
| 7. Sore throat  | YES | NO |
| 8. Loss of taste or smell   | YES | NO |
| 9. Have you been in contact with a known or presumed COVID patient in the last 14 days? | YES | NO |
| 10. Temperature _____ °F. >100.0 °F   | YES | NO |

**If you answer YES to any of these questions, please DO NOT come to BIRC**

Name of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### BIRC Participant Health Checklist (RESEARCH)

In the last 14 days, have you had:

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Fever >100.0 F   | YES | NO |
| 2. Cough  | YES | NO |
| 3. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing  | YES | NO |
| 4. Chills   | YES | NO |
| 5. Body Aches   | YES | NO |
| 6. Muscle Aches   | YES | NO |
| 7. Headache   | YES | NO |
| 8. Sore throat  | YES | NO |
| 9. Congestion or runny nose   | YES | NO |
| 10. Loss of taste or smell  | YES | NO |
| 11. Nausea or vomiting  | YES | NO |
| 12. Diarrhea  | YES | NO |
| 13. Have you had a positive COVID-19 test result in the last 14 days?   | YES | NO |
| 14. Are you subject to a travel or other quarantine order?<br><a href="https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/travel">https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/travel</a> | YES | NO |
| 15. Have you been in contact with a known or presumed COVID patient in the last 14 days?  | YES | NO |

**If you answer YES to any of these questions, please DO NOT come to BIRC**

Name of investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**All research participants must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure before taking part in study interventions or interactions. Describe the process that will be used to conduct screening, when in relation to study interventions and interactions the screening will be conducted, and who will be responsible for screening.**

See above "Before Arrival" and "Upon Entry".

**Facial coverings/PPE are required. Select which of the below will apply to your research project:**

- A cloth facial covering or procedure mask must be worn by study personnel and by participants during face-to-face interactions and interventions:
  - The participants must respond NO to COVID-19 Screening AND
  - The participants are expected to be located in or from an area or facility with no or only isolated cases AND
  - The interventions are not aerosol generation procedures AND
  - At least six feet of physical distancing will be maintained at all times
- Study personnel must wear a procedure mask and face shield during face-to-face interactions and interventions with participants:
  - The participants must respond NO to COVID-19 Screening AND
  - The participants are expected to be located in or from an area or facility with no or only isolated cases AND
  - The interventions are not aerosol generation procedures AND
  - At least six feet of physical distancing will **NOT** be maintained at all times
- Study personnel must wear an N95, procedure mask, face shield, and gown during face-to-face interactions and interventions with participants:
  - The participant will be known or suspected to have COVID-19 OR
  - The participants are likely to be located in or from an area or facility with known or a high likelihood of cases and/or transmission OR
  - Study procedures will not allow the participant to wear a mask or face covering for an extended period of time OR
  - The interventions are aerosol generation procedures

Other, describe:

**You must follow CDC and state guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting common touch points and equipment that will not be cleaned by Housekeeping for office and research areas where there are no research participant interventions or interactions.** The minimum standard that must be used by all areas is to at least daily clean/disinfected using an [EPA-registered cleaning product](#) or a 70% alcohol solution. Examples of common touch points and include:

- Benchtops, desktops, and other work surfaces;
- Equipment handles and latches;
- Equipment controls and touchpads;
- Drawer and cabinet handles;
- Sashes of chemical safety hoods and biosafety cabinets;
- Bin and water incubator lids;
- Hand tools, micropipettors;
- Faucet handles and sprayer grips;
- Chemical bottles and lids, including chemical waste collection vessels and areas;
- Chair backs and armrests (fabric furniture that cannot be decontaminated should not be used);
- Doorknobs and light switches;
- Keyboards, touchpads, and mice;
- Remote controls.

**Describe any equipment or areas that cannot be disinfected daily using an [EPA-registered cleaning product](#) or a 70% alcohol solution steps that will be used to prevent transmission. For example, an electron microscope that cannot be sprayed with an alcohol solution but will be covered with plastic that is changed with each new user.**

- PCSB 137B (EEG room): EEG caps and pipettes will be disinfected using standard protocol (10-minute contact time in Control III disinfectant [dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride .078%; ethylbenzyl ammonium chloride .078%]).
- PCSB 138A (changing room): BIRC staff will empty soiled scrubs into the washing machine at the end of each day. We will wash scrubs in hot water and fully dry before they are returned to the changing room.
- PCSB 138C (MRI simulator room): USERS will cover the table in fresh linens and provide a fresh headband for each participant.
- PCSB 139 (TMS room): USERS will cover pillows in fresh linen before use.
- PCSB 141 (conference room): Cloth-backed chairs will be covered in clean linens prior to use.
- Researchers must include protocols for disinfecting assessment materials or other researcher-provided equipment used in these rooms when developing their COVID-19 safety plans.

**You must clean and disinfect research procedure areas, data collection areas, and using an [EPA-registered cleaning product](#) or a 70% alcohol solution prior to and following use by participants or study personnel.** This will include a regular wipe down of shared research equipment and spaces (e.g., desktops) after each participant visit plus a wipe down of shared research equipment and spaces at the end of the day. If participants wish to also wipe down apparatus, they must be provided with disinfectant wipes and encouraged to wear gloves when using them. Please note that any cleaning done

by participants does not substitute for the required cleaning by study personnel. If participants are using keyboards, study personnel should put a smooth covering over them. Participants using a shared piece of equipment should also be offered hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol and gloves for optional use during the visit. Participants who choose to wear gloves should be provided with [instructions on how to remove and dispose of gloves safely](#). Hand sanitizer should be available to participants throughout their study visit.

**Describe any additional steps that will be taken to clean and disinfect research procedure areas, data collection areas, and equipment.**

- PCSB 142 (data processing room): USERS will disinfect desktop, chair, computer keyboards, mice, power switches BEFORE and AFTER each use using Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time. Existing cloth chairs will be removed and replaced by a plastic upholstered chair.
- PCSB 141 (conference room): USERS will CLEAN and disinfect counters, table, cabinet/drawer handles, faucet handles, water dispenser, kettle, Keurig and microwave controls and handles AFTER each use using Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time.. Cloth-backed chairs will be covered in clean linens prior to use.
- PCSB 137B (EEG room): USERS will disinfect desktop surfaces, chair, computer keyboards, mice, power switches, control buttons, button boxes, door handles, faucets, BEFORE and AFTER each use using Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time.. EEG caps and pipettes will be disinfected using standard protocol (10-minute contact time in Control III disinfectant [dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride .078%; ethylbenzyl ammonium chloride .078%]).
- PCSB 139 (TMS room): USERS will disinfect desktop/cart surfaces, chairs, headrest, computer keyboards, mice, power switches, control buttons, TMS coils, Localite instruments, Localite case, and electrode connector blocks BEFORE and AFTER each use using Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time.. USERS will cover pillows in fresh linen before use.
- PCSB 138C (MRI simulator room): USERS will disinfect desktop surfaces, chair, computer keyboards, mice, power switches, control buttons, button boxes, head coil, table surface, and motion tracker BEFORE and AFTER each use using Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time.. USERS will cover the table in fresh linens and provide a fresh headband for each participant.
- PCSB 137/137A (behavioral rooms): USERS will disinfect desktop surfaces and chairs BEFORE and AFTER each use using Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time.. Researchers must include protocols for disinfecting assessment materials or other researcher-provided equipment used in these rooms when developing their COVID-19 safety plans.
- PCSB 138B (Family waiting room, 77ft<sup>2</sup>): Desktop surfaces and chair will be disinfected BEFORE and AFTER each use using Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time.. When used by a carer accompanying a research participant, USERS will be responsible for

disinfection. When used by a carer accompanying a patient, STAFF will be responsible for disinfection.

- Researchers must include protocols for disinfecting assessment materials or other researcher-provided equipment used in these rooms when developing their COVID-19 safety plans.
- PCSB 140/140A (MRI suite):
  - **Zone 4** - BIRC staff will disinfect the head coil, mirror, response device(s), table, emergency squeeze ball, and Avotec system with Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time. BIRC staff will disinfect the scanner bore with Lysol Hydrogen Peroxide Multi-Purpose Cleaner (EPA 777-126) with a 10 minute dry time. This will be done after every participant.
  - **Zone 3** - BIRC staff will disinfect desktop surfaces, computer keyboards, mice, Avotec controls, plastic chairs, and door handles with Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time.. This will be done after every study.
- PCSB 138A (changing room): USERS will disinfect doorknobs, locker handles, and locker interiors with Super Sani-Cloth Germicidal Disposable wipes (EPA 9480-4) with 2-minute contact time or Windex® Disinfectant Cleaner (EPA 4822-593) with 5-minute contact time. BIRC staff will empty soiled scrubs into the washing machine at the end of each day. We will wash scrubs in hot water and fully dry before they are returned to the changing room.
- All areas: Facilities will perform twice daily disinfection of doorknobs, light switches, cabinet handles, doorbell/intercom buttons.

**Describe the process that will be used to monitor compliance with this COVID-19 Safety Plan, as well as CDC, state, and University requirements related to COVID-19 in the workplace, including personal health monitoring prior to coming to work.**

When research is carried out at BIRC, BIRC staff (Medeiros for MRI or Hancock for other procedures) will be on site and monitor compliance. On Premises Personnel Log will be checked by BIRC Director (Hoeft) at least weekly to ensure health monitoring is performed on all individuals (staff, researcher or visitor (research participant, caregiver) prior to entering BIRC. PIs are responsible for ensuring that all members of their research groups follow these procedures.

**Specify who will be responsible for monitoring CDC, state, and University requirements related to COVID-19 in the workplace, updating this plan as required, and communicating changes to personnel.**

Director of BIRC

**Specify who will be responsible for ensuring each individual signing below has completed initial and any subsequent required COVID-19 training.**

Director of BIRC

## Resources

[Center for Disease Control](#)

[State of Connecticut](#)

[UConn Storrs and Regional Campuses](#)

[UConn Health](#)

**Human Resources Related Questions**

[UConn Storrs and Regional Campuses Human Resources](#)

[UConn Health Human Resources](#)