Essential Research Activities during the COVID-19 Outbreak

The only research activities that should continue to be conducted in University at Albany research facilities/labs on campus are those that are deemed essential/critical research.

Non-essential/non-critical research should be paused, and no new experiments can be started.

Essential/critical research is defined as experiments aimed at understanding, treating, or preventing COVID-19 viral infection, or research activities that involve:

- Preservation of unique reagents and other unique or expensive materials, and
- Maintaining equipment (e.g., liquid nitrogen and liquid helium systems, and shared computational clusters) that cannot be maintained remotely or shut down without significant cost or consequences to the research effort.
- Research necessary to meet proposal deadlines is not considered essential. Activities necessary to prepare proposals are only permissible if they can be done remotely.
- Essential care for animals, plants and unique or expensive cell cultures or biological specimens that would otherwise be lost.

Special considerations for animal research:

✓ Care for animals includes continuing treatments, research manipulations, or special feeding that is necessary to maintain critical animal models, which can be carried out with minimal contact with other researchers and appropriate precautions for biosafety.
✓ Essential activities must be planned to be staggered so that minimal laboratory personnel are present at any one time. The Plan must be developed and filed with the Laboratory Animal Facilities Manager, and approved by IACUC.
✓ Preparing new animals for ongoing or new experiments must stop now.

If you are performing animal research and have not shared your list of essential personnel or animal care Plan with the Office of Regulatory and Research Compliance, Lab Animal Resources, do so now by email to LAR@albany.edu and refer to Research Guidance FAQs.

See also, Office of Environmental Health and Safety’s (EHS) Emergencies that may Impact Research Laboratories and Laboratory Ramp-Down Checklist.

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