



RESEARCH GUIDELINES RELATED TO COVID-19

The following guidelines address some of the key concerns related to ongoing research activities. These guidelines are adapted from the University of British Columbia, the University of Winnipeg, and Ryerson University.

These guidelines will be updated frequently as information from the Tri-Agencies and other sources is made available. For the latest information from the University and general health recommendations, visit msvu.ca/coronavirus.

IT&S offers several tools to enable you to work remotely. Learn more about [working from home](#).

Ongoing Research Activities

1. Ongoing research projects involving in-person contact **must** be discontinued to reduce unnecessary physical contact and may not resume until the appropriate approvals are in place. Please contact ethics@msvu.ca if you require in-person contact with participants (more information is here → [Resumption of Human Research \(msvu.ca\)](#)).
2. If applicable, create a communications plan for your research team and your participants. Send a copy of this plan to the [Associate Vice-President Research](#).
3. Back up research data and records so that they may be accessed remotely. If you have questions about best practices in data storage, contact IT&S.
4. Ensure precautions to access email/voicemail/network drives/web conferencing remotely and in compliance with information security standards.
5. To mitigate the potential absence of individual members with specific skills and/or knowledge, consider cross-training and sharing information across your research team,

Research Assistants and Support Staff

1. Ensure that your entire team determines works remotely, unless designated in your communications plan (See #2 above).
2. Encourage research assistants, project managers, postdoctoral fellows, and other research-related personnel to work remotely.
3. Ensure all contacts for your research team are up-to-date.

Internal Grants

1. All international travel has been suspended, including for research purposes.
2. Any internal grant or travel awarded for an interrupted conference can be held if the event is rescheduled.
3. All Committee on Research and Publications activities are progressing in a virtual format. Please keep an eye on your e-mail inbox for updates from the CRP in the Research Bulletin.



External Grants and Funding

1. Research grant and contract reviews will continue, pending staff availability. Please note that timelines may be impacted.
2. Grant and grant application extensions are being considered at the Federal level.
3. Peer review activities may be impacted and/or moved to a virtual format.
4. For updates to external grants and funding, please consult the individual Tri-Agency program.

Contract-Based Research

1. It is the responsibility of the PI on a research contract to connect with the funder directly to request an extension or modification.
2. It is important to note that some changes may require contract amendments, so notify [Jessica Long](#) in the Research Office as soon as possible.
3. Based on type of funding, work that is outstanding, or needs to be done or moved forward, faculty are encouraged to develop revised work plans and/or timelines for external funders.

Research Involving Human Participants

1. The Research Ethics Board continues to accept new applications.
 - a. New research related to, or arising from, the COVID-19 pandemic that is submitted for ethical review shall be given priority for review.
2. Should the University experience a complete closure to all non-essential personnel, all current research with human participants will immediately be placed on hold. An announcement to that effect will be sent electronically from the Research Office.
3. In the interests of public safety and minimizing personal contact, ongoing research must be moved online other remote measures.
 - a. Modifications to this effect ([REB.FORM.002](#)) is required.
 - b. If in-person research with human participants **cannot** be postponed, please review the requirements on-line → [Resumption of Human Research \(msvu.ca\)](#) and/or contact the REB at ethics@msvu.ca and provide details. In-person research with human participants cannot begin or continue without additional clearances as outlined in [Resumption of Human Research \(msvu.ca\)](#).
4. Researchers should be aware that any data collected in this pandemic environment may alter, skew or contaminate your results, unless your focus includes COVID 19 questions. Further, researchers may need to address/disclose this in publications and other knowledge dissemination activities when documenting method and timeframe of data collection.
5. Researchers with questions or concerns are encouraged to contact the Research Ethics Board via email at ethics@msvu.ca.



Research Involving Animals

1. Please Refer to CCAC for updates: <https://www.ccac.ca/en/news-and-events/news/2020headlines/crisis-management-and-covid-19.html> or contact our Joint Animal Care Committee at Saint Mary's University via email at animalcare@smu.ca
2. Please connect with your Dean, the AVPR, and the Director of Facilities to determine access considerations.

Guidelines for Researchers with On-Campus Labs/ Facilities

Principal investigators must develop a research plan that adheres to changes in access to campus and other protocols for slowing the spread of Covid-19. These changes will include disruption to research activities both on campus and in the field. For the latest information from the University and general health recommendations, visit msvu.ca/coronavirus.

General Guidelines for On-Campus Research Labs

1. Please contact the AVPR if ongoing research is considered essential.
2. Access to Labs/Research units on campus require additional review and clearance by the lab access committee.
 - a. Please contact ethics@msvu.ca with questions or to obtain criteria and forms.
3. Limit access and reduce unnecessary activities.
4. Consider the use of virtual meetings for research teams.
5. Protocols for disinfecting surfaces to reduce the risk of surface transmission must be strictly followed and repeated; this would include, but is not limited to, lab benches, fume hoods, instrumentation panels, taps, etc.
6. Designate a secondary contact (preferably staff) for entry into the lab.
7. Maintain and accurate emergency call tree and ensure that the research office, facilities, and security receive a copy.

Research Plan Requirements for On-Campus Research and Research Labs are available by contacting ethics@msvu.ca

Research Materials/Supplies for On-Campus Labs

1. Shipping and receiving functions may be limited at this time. Please ensure you connect with Facilities and/or suppliers or others if you expect there to be interruptions.
2. Please notify Facilities if there are any special circumstances with respect to shipments and delivery locations.
3. All efforts should be made to limit non-essential deliveries.



Please direct your question to one of the contacts below:

Dr. Derek Fisher, Interim Associate Vice-President Research

derek.fisher@msvu.ca

Research Development

New Scholars

Contract, MOU/MOA Review

Professional Development

Responsible Conduct of Research

**Contact jessica.long1@msvu.ca to make an appointment with Dr. Derek Fisher*

Brenda Gagné, Research Ethics Coordinator

brenda.gagne@msvu.ca

Research Ethics

Data Management

Indigenous Research

Animal Care

LimeSurvey Access

Veronica Bacher, Research Grants Coordinator

veronica.bacher@msvu.ca

Grant Funding

Internal Grants

External Grants

Release of Funds

Letters of Support

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Jessica Long, Research Capacity Liaison

jessica.long1@msvu.ca

Research Communications

General Inquires

Website Administration

Events