

Guidance on Essential Animal Research
University Research Animal Resources and the Office of Animal Care and Use
March 23, 2020

This guidance is based on the March 17 Update on Campus Operations*

This guidance is contingent upon the ability to provide husbandry and veterinary care for the animals.

The URAR Service Reduction Plan COVID-19 will take precedence regarding decisions about the capability to maintain research animals.

- 1. Researchers can breed colonies to maintain unique lines that are not commercially available**
Essential research to ensure the viability of living organisms includes maintaining unique genetically manipulated animal lines that are not commercially available.
 - a. Breeding of animals should only occur to preserve **unique** lines that are not available elsewhere. Breeding should not occur for lines that are commercially available.
 - b. All other breeding (to maintain non-unique lines, to produce experimental animals) must cease.

- 2. Researchers will not start any new animal experiments** (COVID-19 related research may be exempted; this exemption must be in writing from Dr. David Lee. See procedure in 3.a.i-ii. below.)
 - a. No new animals will be ordered without written approval of the research by Dr. Lee.
 - b. Breeding of standard, non-unique colonies must cease
 - c. No research procedures can be performed on naïve animals
 - d. No research procedures can be performed on non-naïve (previously manipulated) animals that are not part of an ongoing, active experiment.

- 3. All non-essential research was to stop as soon as possible, ideally by 5 pm Friday, March 20.**
 - a. For ongoing work that could not be completed without loss of data by 5pm March 20, the following criteria must be met in order for the work to continue beyond March 20:**
 - i. The principal investigator must receive endorsement from her/his department chair, then applicable college level administrator (e.g., Associate Dean of Research) that the research is essential.
 - ii. The college level administrator must request consideration from the Vice President of Research, Dr. David C. Lee (dclee@uga.edu), who has the final authority for the decision.
 - b. For research deemed essential by the Vice President for Research, the following criteria apply:**
 - i. The study must be completed as soon as possible; an earlier than previously planned study end must be used if feasible.
 - ii. The Principal Investigator must have adequate lab personnel to perform any required experimental activities as described in the IACUC protocol, including providing special water or food, treatments, and monitoring for humane endpoints and prompt euthanasia. These personnel must be on the IACUC protocol.
 - iii. Any samples collected must be stored for analysis at a later time if scientifically feasible.

- c. **Non-naïve animals that are not actively being used for experiments will be maintained, however, research procedures, including sample collections, must not be performed on these animals.** (e.g., long term infected animals that produce parasites)
 - i. Exemptions for collecting time dependent samples or other extenuating circumstances must follow the approval process described in 3.a.i.-ii.

4. Researchers will still have access to the animal facilities.

- a. Researchers should only enter the animal facilities if they are euthanizing animals to wind down projects, performing activities directly related to items #1-4 above, or partnering with URAR in providing animal husbandry as scheduled by the facility supervisor or her/his designee.
- b. **All lab personnel must maintain social distancing and follow standard safety precautions at all times while in the animal facility and in the laboratory. *Lack of compliance will lead to the personnel not being allowed into the animal facility.***

* "... all routine research not conducted remotely from UGA campuses should wind down and come to a stop as soon as possible, ideally by 5 pm Friday, March 20 (research on COVID-19 may be exempted; contact Vice President David Lee at dclee@uga.edu).

Only essential activities should continue beyond the deadline.

Essential activities include ensuring the viability of living organisms and maintaining unique reagents and essential equipment. Investigators should immediately develop plans to ramp down their research and communicate these plans to everyone on their research teams. In developing these plans, faculty and all other research personnel are encouraged to view the COVID-19: Research Operations at the University of Georgia FAQ, which is updated as new information becomes available."