

Return to Research and Creativity

Protocols to Minimize Exposure to SARS-CoV2 in NMSU Laboratories and Research/Creative Sites

Responsible Official: Vice President for Research

Effective Date: January 4, 2021

To minimize COVID exposures in research operations, laboratories, and other NMSU locations for creative activities, an online tool was developed by the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) in conjunction with EHS&RM staff to generate customized COVID Health/Safety Plans. The electronic tool, accessed at <https://research.nmsu.edu/ReturntoResearch.html>, walks the Principal Investigator (PI) through a series of questions and prompts them to select combinations of common COVID safety controls that will work for their operations. The controls that can be selected include common techniques and controls used to minimize exposures in work settings:

1. Staff Reduction / Area Occupancy Limits
2. Staggered Work Schedules
3. Social Distancing
4. Work flow / process modification (i.e. work from home, when possible)
5. Personal Protective Equipment
6. Barriers, spacing of work stations and other work area modifications
7. Enhanced cleaning and decontamination procedures
8. Additional COVID Safety Training
9. Other custom or specialized controls

The plan also includes a brief description of the operations, location (building/rooms accessed), authorized personnel list, dates of operation (if temporary) and a PI certification statement.

Once generated, the custom plan is automatically routed through department heads and Deans for review / approval then to the OVPR for final approval.

The RTRC health and safety plan elements are reviewed by the OVPR safety team to verify completion of the required training by all persons listed in the research plan, and for inclusion of health and safety plan components. After approval, the plan can be updated to add/remove personnel upon request.

Personnel on approved plans use additional electronic tools such as the daily health check and on-campus location reporting, and have access to health services to manage suspected exposures, testing, and follow-up guidance.