

Clarification of March 20, 2020 VPR Research Directive

Kerkhof, Alison

Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 8:21 AM

Message sent on behalf of Nick Kates, Chair, and Margaret McKinnon, Associate Chair, Research, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences

Dear all,

We hope that this email finds you well during this challenging time. Our thoughts are with each of you and your families.

We understand some questions have arisen out the March 20th VPR Research Directive announcing the suspension of non-essential research effective at 5 pm Tuesday, March 24.

<https://research.mcmaster.ca/update-from-the-vpr-covid-19-march-20-2020/>

It is important to note that, as clarified by our Dean Paul O'Bryne yesterday, this directive applies only to research that requires research staff to be on campus, or people in laboratories, or to be in group settings, or to be face-to-face with study participants.

Thus, non-essential research may continue if it can be conducted remotely, such as online interviews, and follows all social/ physical distancing guidelines. There is no need to apply for as special dispensation to continue this research. Please check with Nick or Margaret if you have any concerns about whether your research meets these criteria; we are happy to discuss.

You will, however, need to complete a form to be signed and approved by Nick as the Department Chair, Jonathan Bramson as the Associate Dean, Research, and Karen Mossman as the Vice President Research if you plan to carry on with any of the research activities below:

- Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic – this includes related research in areas across the university
- Involves clinical trials or intervention studies with patients who need to be monitored
- Must be maintained for health and safety reasons
- Must be continued for ethical reasons, such as some animal studies

In addition, you **must** use this form to seek approval/ oversight to continue activities that the University has deemed as essential. Tracy Arabaski, Director of Health Research Services, indicates that completion of this form is necessary to know who is on campus/ at hospital and that the appropriate directives have been put in place for these activities, which include:

- Core facilities that support research outlined above
- Critical equipment monitoring or servicing
- Cleaning and maintenance that support the essential research programs
- The care of fish, animals or plants, in coordination with the Central Animal Facility

If your work is being completed in SJHH, please cc Gail Martin (gmartin@stjoes.ca), Executive Director of Research St. Joe's on your request, which will also require hospital approval. If your work is being completed at HHS, please cc Katie Porter (porter_k@HHSC.CA), Director of Research Administration, for hospital approval. For all other hospitals, please contact the Research Office for assistance in identifying the appropriate administrative lead for research.

Margaret and Nick

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