

Appendix E: Reopening Research Plan

Introduction

The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has changed how organizations operate nationwide, including colleges and universities such as Medgar Evers College (MEC) and the City University of New York. As we prepare to reopen research activities on campus, the College administration has provisions that ensure the health and safety of all faculty, students, and staff who find it necessary to be on campus.

- The College would prioritize the health and safety of the community, implementing strategies that can reduce the risk of infection and transmission for the faculty, students, and staff.
- MEC administration will continue to monitor guidelines from State and Local health officials and the CUNY administration and respond accordingly.
- The College will ensure equal treatment for faculty as well as other essential personnel on campus.

The reopening plan would ensure the Medgar Evers College community is protected using the phased approach provided in the CUNY Office of Research Guidance in compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations CUNY policies. MEC Plan would be implemented with the full support of the Office of the President, Office of the Provost and SVP of Academic Affairs, and Office of the SVP of Administration and Finance.

The reopening research plan includes multiple measures to protect everyone's health and safety on campus to limit the risk of infection, including social distancing, restricted building access, occupancy limits, staggered work schedules, required PPE, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols. MEC will require that personnel coming to campus must disclose their health status relating to COVID-19 symptoms.

By following the CUNY policy, the campus will be prepared to revert to the previous phase if health metrics indicate at the first sign of the increased risk of infection or transmission and take corrective action to reduce the risk.

Summary of Medgar Evers College Reopening Research Plan

Higher Education Research is part of New York State Forward's Phase One of reopening for New York City, which began on June 8. Medgar Evers College's plan for resuming research activities adheres to state and CUNY guidelines and sets policies for screening, physical distancing, personal protective equipment, hygiene, cleaning, disinfecting, and communication. Also, Principal Investigators and Faculty Researchers have submitted Plans and Protocols to resume research activities that meet the College's requirements to reduce the risk of transmission and infections.

Screening

All faculty, staff, and visitors must submit a health questionnaire every day before entering the building. Only those who pass the daily screening will be admitted to the building. Employees must not report to any of the buildings on campus or leased space if any of the following conditions occurred:

- Individuals are experiencing any symptoms (even mild) of a respiratory infection or other COVID-19-related symptoms. Individuals must not return to the campus until they are symptom-free for at least 72 hours
- Individuals have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 14 days
- Individuals have had known contact with any person suspected of having, under investigation for, or who has a confirmed active case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days
- Individuals have traveled within the previous 14 days to/from a designated U.S.' hot spot' or a country where the CDC has issued a level 2 or 3 travel designation or has had known contact with any person who has traveled to these areas within 14 days.

In addition:

- Only approved and scheduled individuals will be allowed to access the buildings. All researchers working in labs with chemicals must hold a valid C-14 certification while building occupancy is limited.
- Non-touch forehead thermometers will be available on campus to check the individual's temperature.
- Entry into AB1 must be through the Bedford Avenue (East Entrance) and not the Parking Lot (West Entrance). Individuals must show the Public Safety officer confirmation of the daily health screening questionnaire on their phone or fill one out on-site.
- Individuals will be required to provide details on any significant contact with others while on campus daily.
- Should anyone develop symptoms consist of COVID-19, test positive, or come in contact with someone suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, they should reach out to Mohamed Bangura (mbangura@mec.cuny.edu). We will contact state and local health officials regarding any positive case.

Physical Distancing

- Importantly, returning to work during this time is also entirely voluntary for any non-essential personnel.
- Social distancing (a minimum 6-foot radial distance from each other) will be required at all times, unless essential for laboratory safety and only with the use of additional PPE for protection.
- We will also put other protective measures in place, including physical barriers like clear glass dividers (sneeze guard) between high traffic areas. We may also install in offices where appropriate.
- Occupancy limits have been established by phase at the building level to comply with

state guidelines. Restrictions include all personnel, contractors, and visitors. During Phase 2, occupancy will be limited to 20%, and this will increase after two weeks of steady or improving health metrics to 50% for Phase 3. CUNY and the state will determine the timing of further occupancy above 50% for Phase 4 and 5.

- Occupancy limits have also been defined for specific types of locations in the building, such as open-plan, shared lab and office space, enclosed lab and office space, and common areas (e.g., elevators, restrooms, conference rooms). Signs are posted throughout the building as a reminder of these limits and detail appropriate traffic patterns in corridors and stairwells to limit interactions further.
- Principal Investigators/Faculty Researchers (PIs/FRs) have established flexible and staggered work schedules for their students and staff, to limit the foot traffic on campus and potential exposure.
- PIs/FRs should limit individuals on campus by requiring only one person to be on-site if they can accomplish a task.
- Vendors and engineers will be permitted by appointment for essential renovations, repairs, and service, and these visitors must request and await approval for access before coming on-site.
- While there are occupancy limits, everyone should continue to do work from home that can be done there, and not come to work unless necessary.
- Meetings and events will be conducted virtually until further notice.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Personnel must review the proper way to put on, take off, clean, and discard required PPE (masks or face coverings).
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>
- Masks or face coverings must be worn inside all buildings at all times, except in closed-door private offices and for as little time as possible while eating, drinking, or changing mask/face coverings when needed.
- Suitable mask types include cloth, dust, and surgical unless the work requires a more PPE (e.g., N95, face shield).
- Face shields are not considered as an alternative to a mask or face covering but may provide additional protection if work requires people to be within 6 feet of each other for any period. Masks/face coverings must be worn in addition to a face shield.
- Disposable masks will be provided if individuals need one while on campus.
- Disposable masks worn inside laboratory spaces should be disposed of at the end of the day. Cloth masks should be cleaned daily by the wearer.
- Masks and face coverings must not be shared.
- Gloves will also be made available throughout the building. Wear gloves when, or wash

your hands before and after, using shared objects or frequently touched surfaces.

- PPE for COVID-19 safety should be worn in addition to any PPE required for research procedures or any other safety requirement.

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is strongly encouraged to reduce contact transmission.
- Individual must wash their hands before and after touching any shared objects or shared surfaces unless they wear clean gloves.
- Hand sanitizer will continue to be available throughout the building and in conference rooms. This solution is in addition to handwashing stations in each restroom.
- Personnel is required to clean surfaces, workstations, personal devices, several times throughout the day/shift, and at a minimum at the beginning and end of their shift/usage.
- Core facility managers are responsible for developing, posting, and monitoring for cleaning and disinfecting protocols for research equipment.
- High-touch surfaces, such as elevator buttons and door handles, common areas, and restrooms, will be cleaned regularly by MEC custodial staff, according to requirements from the CDC and Department of Health. Cleaning will be logged.
- No sharing of food or beverages is allowed.
- In the case of a confirmed COVID-19 case for an individual who has been in the building, Facilities Management will coordinate cleaning and disinfecting, including the areas accessed by the individual and high traffic common areas.

Communication

- The College community is kept apprised of current conditions via email, MEC website, and virtual conference call meetings.
- As part of the research faculty, core facility managers are in touch with PIs to provide additional updates.
- Signs are posted throughout the facility to remind personnel and visitors of proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of PPE, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
- Copies of the plan are located at Public Safety Stations in all the buildings.
- Questions can also be directed to mbangura@mec.cuny.edu

Compliance

- Personnel should say something when they see something. It is appropriate to let your colleagues know if they are not following social distancing, occupancy limits, PPE requirements, disinfecting protocols, or other precautions outlined in this guidance. We will be successful only if we hold ourselves and each other accountable.
- Personnel can report issues that they see to their supervisor, Public Safety, HR, or Mohamed Bangura.
- Personnel can also anonymously report any COVID-19 related safety concerns or incidents of unsafe conditions at the MEC to Public Safety.

Phased Increase in Research Activity

PHASE	DESCRIPTION	OCCUPANCY	TIMELINE
Phase 1	Essential Functions and preparations for Phase 2 only including Lab Inspections. Preparation of site safety plan. No on-site research.	Up to 10% of building capacity	Current phase
Phase 2	Ramp up of critical, time-sensitive externally funded MEC research. Preparations for Phase 3.	Up to 50% of building capacity	Upon CUNY approval
Phase 3	Gradual increase of on-site research personnel, including Faculty and Graduate students. Preparation for Phase 4.	Up to 85% of building capacity	Two weeks after the start of phase 2 or Guidance from CUNY
Phase 4	The continued gradual increase in administrative and research personnel. Include undergraduate research participation	Up to 100% of building capacity	Availability of vaccine, herd immunity or health advances

Detailed Policies for Increasing On-Site Research Activity

Guiding Principles

- 1. Faculty, student, and staff health and safety are our top priorities.**
 - a. Communicate regularly, disseminate, and follow federal, state, and city agency directives and CUNY policy.
 - b. Until Phase 4, personnel are encouraged to continue to conduct work from home whenever possible.
 - c. Until Phase 4, ensure those returning to work, even on a limited basis, are doing so voluntarily, and that they are only on-site when they need to for work that can only be done on-site.

- d. Until Phase 4, continue to hold meetings and events remotely.
- e. Provide multiple pathways for personnel to report unsafe working conditions, including anonymous online tools.
- f. Outline conditions when it is inappropriate or ill-advised for someone to work on-site. For instance, if:
 - 1. Individuals are experiencing any symptoms (even mild) of a respiratory infection or other COVID-19-related symptoms
 - 2. Individuals have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 14 days
 - 3. Individuals have had known contact within the last 14 days with any person suspected of having, being under investigation for, or who has a confirmed active case of COVID-19
 - 4. Individuals have traveled within the last 14 days to/from a designated U.S.' hot spot' or a country for which the CDC has issued a level 2 or 3 travel designation or have had known contact with any person who has traveled to these areas within 14 days
 - 5. Individuals are at high risk of developing severe symptoms if infected
 - 6. Individuals have to take public transportation to work.
- g. Provide a sanitary work environment, with access to sufficient cleaning supplies, and ensure that lab and PIs have approved and posted disinfection protocols.

2. Resuming research safely is possible and beneficial when a thoughtfully phased approach is put in place that includes multiple approaches to reduce the risk of infection, including:

- a. Social distancing (defined as a minimum 6-foot radial distance from all others) at all times.
- b. Occupancy limits that are specific to the location (e.g., size, ventilation), such as:
 - 1. Lab areas
 - 2. Core facilities
 - 3. Shared or open office areas
 - 4. Common areas.
- c. Staggered work schedules, limited personnel on-site, and no visitors or guests.
- d. PPE requirements, including wearing masks at all times and making gloves available.
- e. Other protective measures (e.g., clear glass barriers for desks in high traffic areas).
- f. Disinfecting and cleaning protocols that are posted and disseminated.
- g. Strict compliance with existing biological, chemical and other safety policies.
- h. Monitoring compliance and periodic reminders of these expectations.

3. Phased return to MEC should be gradual, anticipated, and based on monitoring of local health and safety.

- a. Principal Investigators/Faculty Researchers will be required to develop plans that address the above components and submit them to the Chair of the Campus Research Restart Committee for approval by the Committee.

These plans must be updated and approved for each Phase.

- b. Planning for future Phases should include adjusted personnel schedules, identification of and purchasing for new supply chain needs.
- c. We should be equally prepared to reduce access, lower risk, and halt some or all experiments, based on health and safety information; therefore, researchers should be cautious about starting long-term research experiments.
- d. The College would require personnel to report on symptoms, test results, and possible contact with COVID-19 positive/presumed positive individuals. This information will inform our decision-making.

4. Time-sensitive and high priority research that can be conducted with minimal personnel on-site should be identified and prioritized for each progressive phase.

- a. Seasonal research (e.g., season-specific sample collection requirements),
- b. Deadline driven (contract, grant deadline/ending, article resubmission),
- c. Externally funded research projects,
- d. Untenured, tenure-track faculty research programs,
- e. COVID-19 research.

5. Equity, fairness, and transparency are essential.

Considerations for Maintaining Health and Wellness

NYS DOH, NYC DOHMH, and CDC signage would be posted in all the buildings to remind occupants of the proper hygiene, social distancing, PPE, occupancy limits, cleaning and disinfection protocols, and all other precautions that are required, per this document. This information would also be available on the MEC website, and copies of this plan would be available at Public Safety Stations in all the buildings and leased space.

Reporting to Medgar Evers College

Individuals must not report to MEC in any of the following situations:

- Individuals are experiencing any symptoms (even mild) of a respiratory infection or other COVID-19-related symptoms. See CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- Individuals must not return to the MEC until they are symptom-free for at least 72 hours.
- Individuals have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
- Individuals have had known contact with any person suspected of having, being under investigation for, or who has a confirmed active case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
- Individuals have traveled within the last 14 days to/from a designated U.S.' hot spot' or a country for which the CDC has issued a level 2 or 3 travel designation or have had known contact with any person who has traveled to these areas within 14 days.

If any of those situations occur, you must report it to MEC administration by emailing the

Office of Human Resources (OHR) at OHR@mec.cuny.edu or Mohamed Bangura mbangura@mec.cuny.edu. We will immediately notify the appropriate state and local health department contacts of any positive case of COVID-19 and aid in their contact tracing efforts.

All entrants to campus buildings must wear a mask. Due to the possibility of asymptomatic exposures, MEC discourages site work by those considered at high risk of developing severe symptoms.

The College administration will provide a daily updated list of personnel scheduled to work on-site to public safety. The file will be based on personnel schedules provided by PIs/FRs and confirmed in advance to be compliant with the phase-specific occupancy limits, based on the percentage of the maximum certificate of occupancy (Phase 2: 50% occupancy; Phase 3: 85%; Phase 4: 100%). Researchers, construction workers, vendors, and contractors that have been approved by MEC leadership to access the building are included in the occupancy limits. They will be on the building access list. All personnel must enter through the designated entrance of each building and check in with public safety before proceeding. Public safety will verify that their name is on the approved access list for that day, that they are wearing a mask, and that they have completed the required daily health screening.

On the days when they intend to report to the campus, all faculty, staff, researchers, and pre-approved external users or contractors must submit a daily health certification prior to arriving at MEC or fill out one on site.

Authorization to access Medgar Evers College's buildings will be transmitted by email. No person should enter any building before receiving confirmation of access approval.

Temperature Screening

Forehead thermometers (non-touch) will be available throughout the building should anyone wish to check their temperature. If an individual test themselves and has a fever, s/he must notify their supervisor and then leave the MEC campus as soon as possible. If required, MEC can coordinate transportation and/or provide face covering.

Developing COVID-19 symptoms on site

Anyone beginning to display symptoms of COVID-19 on-site (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath), must immediately contact their supervisor, and then leave the campus as soon as possible. If required, MEC can coordinate transportation and/or provide face covering. Individuals developing symptoms on-site will be instructed to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing.

Tracking, Tracing, and Reporting COVID-19 at the MEC

To assist contact tracing and decontamination in the event of a confirmed or presumed COVID-19 case on-site, faculty, staff, and researchers reporting to MEC campus must submit a list of occupied spaces and persons with whom they interact with each day.

While maintaining confidentiality, the College administration will use the information supplied to make the best efforts to trace contacts to alert them of possible COVID-19 exposure and to assess areas for decontamination and/or restricted access. Summary information will be provided to the campus community where necessary.

Return to the MEC after confirmed/presumed COVID-19 infection or exposure

According to CDC and DOH guidance, faculty, staff, and researchers should not report to the work until mandatory quarantine or recommended self-isolation period has expired, and free of all COVID-19 symptoms for at least 72 hours. At least ten days of isolation have passed since they first developed symptoms (or at least ten days have passed since the first positive test result if they remain asymptomatic). If an employee has had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged time AND is not experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, the employee may return to work upon completing 14 days of self-quarantine. The College recommends consulting a medical provider before returning to work.

Compliance

- Employees should say something when they see something. It is appropriate to let your colleagues know if they are not following social distancing, occupancy limits, PPE requirements, disinfecting protocols, or other precautions outlined in this guidance. We will be successful only if we hold ourselves and each other accountable.
- Employees can report issues that they see to their Supervisor, Public Safety, or Mohamed Bangura Ext. 6216 or mbangura@mec.cuny.edu.
- Employees can also anonymously report any COVID-19 related safety concerns or incidents of unsafe conditions at MEC to Public Safety.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Employees must review the proper way to put on, take off, clean, and discard required PPE (masks and/or face coverings) using the New York State Department of Health flyer handed out with the distribution of the cloth face mask or using the following link
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>
- Masks and/or face coverings must be worn inside MEC buildings and leased spaces at all times.
 - Exceptions:

- For closed-door private offices when only one occupant is present, and that office will be vacant for at least two hours prior to the next occupant.
 - For as little time as possible while eating, drinking, or changing mask/face coverings as needed.
- Masks or face coverings must cover the nose and mouth. Suitable mask types include cloth, dust, and surgical masks unless the work requires stricter PPE (e.g., N95, face shield, etc.). Employees and contractors may use their own acceptable face coverings if they choose.
- Face shields are not considered as an alternative to a mask or face covering but may provide additional protection if work requires people to be within 6 feet of each other for any period of time. Masks/face coverings must be worn in addition to a face shield.
- Disposable masks will be provided by MEC when needed.
- Disposable masks worn inside laboratory spaces should be disposed of at the end of each day. Cloth masks should be cleaned daily by the wearer.
- Masks and face coverings should not be shared.
- Gloves will be made available as needed.
- PPE for COVID-19 safety should be worn in addition to any PPE required for research procedures or any other safety requirement.

Hand Hygiene

- Frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is strongly encouraged to reduce contact transmission.
- Hand sanitizer will continue to be available throughout the building and in conference rooms, as stock permits.
- Additional hand sanitizer dispensers for use at entrances, high traffic areas, and installation on all floors are on order.

Cleaning Protocols

- Occupants must perform hand hygiene before and after coming in contact with shared objects, such as tools, equipment, machinery, touchscreens, and vehicles, and touch shared surfaces.
- High-touch surfaces, including elevator buttons, door handles, restrooms, fixtures, lounge tables, and water fountains, will be cleaned multiple times per day and logged by MEC custodial staff. This cleaning will continue until Phase 4 implementation.
- We will continue to acquire and provide disinfecting wipes and/or 70% isopropyl solution (or other appropriate disinfecting solution) so that personnel can clean surfaces and objects, particularly those that are shared and/or frequently touched, before and after use.
- Staff/researchers should clean their workstations and personal devices repeatedly using disinfecting wipes or 70% isopropyl solution. Workstations must be cleaned at the end of the working hours.
- Staff/researchers should clean occupied laboratory benches and equipment used several times throughout their day. Laboratory benches and equipment must be cleaned at the

- beginning and end of each individual's working hours.
 - Clean lab benches using 70% isopropyl solution and/or another appropriate disinfecting solution.
 - Lab equipment must be cleaned per posted protocol.
- Shared research spaces, workspaces, instrumentation, core facilities must be cleaned before and after every use.
- Custodian of the equipment must develop protocols for cleaning laboratory instrumentation in consultation with the manufacturer, if required, and posted next to the instrumentation.
 - Microscopes, or other instrumentation with eyepieces, must have a cleaning protocol specifically for cleaning eyepieces before and after every use.
 - Workstations connected to instrumentation must be cleaned before and after every use.
- The use of appliances, water coolers, and the water fountain is at risk of use.
 - The College recommends that everyone clean down tools before and after use.
 - Water fountains and coolers should be used only to fill reusable bottles.
- Restrooms will be cleaned daily by custodial and are subject to occupancy limitations.
- In the case of a confirmed COVID-19 case for an individual who has been in the building, The College will coordinate cleaning and disinfecting with Facilities Management, which will include the areas accessed by the individual and high traffic common areas. The College will follow CDC Guidelines.

Social Distancing

- Any person on-site must limit the occupancy of any spaces/rooms to those essential to work performance.
- A 6 ft. radial distance between persons should be kept at all times in all areas. In some circumstances, it is more appropriate to maintain a greater distance. If work requires personnel to be within 6 feet of each other for any time, additional PPE may be needed, including a face shield.
- Elevators may be used by only the limit of the number of persons posted at the elevator. Stairs should be used as an alternative when appropriate to avoid massing line outside elevators.
- Stairwells
 - Academic Building 1 (AB1): B (East) and A (West) stairwells should have one-way traffic: Stairwell B (East) to travel up; Stairwell A (West) to go down.
 - AB1 Central stairway (Glass) can be used for either direction. Use should be limited to one person per flight in either direction at any one time.
 - In the event of a fire alarm, or other emergency requiring evacuation of the building, all stairwells must be used to travel down to building exits per emergency evacuation procedures.
- Corridor and vestibule can be used by more than one person moving in opposite directions.
More than one occupant can use all corridors in AB1.
- Occupants should keep to the right, travel in single file, and maintain a minimum of 6 ft. from the person in front.
- Common areas
 - Social distancing must be observed at all times.

Note: weather permitting, staff, and researchers are encouraged to use outdoor spaces for socially-distanced, person-to-person interactions, food consumption, and laptop use.

- MEC Dining Hall and Café are closed at this time during the transition between two food service vendors. Social distancing issues will be addressed when the new vendor start services, and this plan will be updated accordingly.
- Auditorium, seminar and conference rooms
 - Auditorium and seminar rooms are not available for use in any in-person events until further notice.
 - There will be strict occupancy and time limitations for any in-person events scheduled prior to Phase 4.
 - Conference rooms use for meetings are restricted to essential in-person meetings that cannot be held virtually, with conference room capacity limited to a maximum of three persons. Social distancing must be observed at all times, and meeting times should be kept to a minimum and meet Phase-specific time limitation. Hand-sanitizer and tissues will be made available in each conference room.
- Restroom suite occupancy is limited to one person. Please knock before entry and form a line outside of the restroom suite while maintaining social distancing.
- Until further notice, packages will continue to be held at the Stockroom for scheduled pick up and dropped off by appointment only to designated drop-off points to minimize person-to-person interactions. Packages to be shipped out of MEC will be picked up from the designated drop off locations on campus.

Scheduling

- Principal Investigators/Faculty Researchers will coordinate staff scheduling in all spaces during the implementation of Phases 2 and 3. These schedules should be coordinated with any other party that shares the space.
- Staggering work schedules are recommended to comply with capacity limitations.
- Supervisors should also limit individuals on-site by requiring only one person to be on-site if one person can accomplish a task. For example, mailroom staff at 50% capacity (1 person/shift) since the PAUSE was initiated and will continue to do so until further notice.
- Researchers should be grouped according to similar time requirements. When possible, each group should be assigned the same schedule to minimize 'social network' and ensure a break period of one hour between shifts.
- Researchers should be on-site for the minimum time possible and work remotely for all suitable tasks.
- If scheduling conflicts arise, supervisors may request alternative workstation locations and/or desk allocations to accommodate the need. Note: if a conference room, seminar room, or auditorium is used as an alternative workstation location, it cannot be used for any other purpose until it is no longer occupied for several hours.

- Special and common-sense considerations are appropriate when setting schedules. These include, but are not limited to, time-sensitive tasks and experiments that require an earlier than anticipated return to work.

Office Areas

- Individual offices can be occupied starting in Phase 2, but people are discouraged from working in their offices if the work can be performed at home.
- Shared, closed-door offices are limited to single occupancy until the implementation of Phase 4.
- Open-plan office area occupancy must follow the occupancy limits and social distancing guidelines established for each Phase below.
- Clear-glass screens will be available for high traffic desks where high-volume, short-term interactions are expected (e.g., admin coordinator desks). We will evaluate the need for additional barriers, and other barriers can be requested.

Research Laboratories

- PIs and/or faculty researchers are responsible for submitting a phased reopening plan for approval by MEC Committee prior to any on-site activity
- PIs and/or faculty researchers are responsible for enforcing social distancing in their respective occupied labs and office spaces. MEC EH&S staff will also monitor compliance through periodic walkthroughs.
- PIs and/or faculty researchers are responsible for creating relevant cleaning protocols, and enforcing completion before, during, and after occupancy, as required.
- Small rooms, defined as less than 250 sq. ft., or less than 10 ft. in width, can only be occupied by a single researcher at any given time until further notice.
- Re-open-plan laboratory occupancy must follow the occupancy limits and social distancing requirements set out in each phase. Supervisors should coordinate the schedule of occupants. The schedule should be clearly displayed, accessible, and kept up-to-date.
 - Researchers can sign-up for additional time in the space subject to availability and space occupancy limitations.
 - Researchers may also change schedule and/or release assigned hours with the permission of their supervisor.
- Shared workstations, benches, instrumentation, or facilities in the laboratories (e.g., fume hoods and Biosafety Cabinets) have a limit of one person at a time. A schedule should be posted at each station for researchers to sign-up. A one-hour break between users is required to ensure no overlap.
- Researchers or staff can anonymously report COVID-19 safety concerns or non-compliance with social distancing guidelines to the EH&S Officer.

Core Facilities and Shared Laboratory Facilities

- Core Facility Managers are responsible for submitting a phased reopening plan for approval by MEC Committee and administration prior to any on-site activity.
- Upon approval, Core Facility Managers must create and post signs with

reminders of the relevant policies in effect for users to see.

- Core Facility Managers must develop cleaning protocols before and/or after the use of instrumentation, workstations, and/or laboratory benches in their respective core facilities. These protocols must be shared with users.
- Core Facility Managers must coordinate all users and/or occupancy until the implementation of Phase 4. Booking and/or time restrictions are implemented with a one-hour break between bookings to ensure no overlap of users in any space or facility.
- The capacity of users, including core facility personnel, is limited and subject to occupancy restrictions outlined for research laboratories during each Phase.
- Core Facility Managers must review bookings to ensure that they comply with social distancing guidelines and laboratory occupancy limits.
- No new training should be provided to existing users until the implementation of Phase 4 unless training can be successfully fulfilled virtually and/or from a 6 ft.—distance with additional safety precautions taken to minimize risk.
- If the Core Facility Managers and/or other core facility staff typically perform experiments are willing to conduct experiments for their users, samples may be mailed or delivered to drop-boxes to minimize person-to-person interactions. CUNY policies on intellectual property and confidentiality continue to apply.
- Researchers must coordinate with the relevant Core Facility Manager before beginning any experiments (particularly time-dependent experiments) that require the use of a core facility or any of its instrumentation.

PPE for users that are owned and/or managed by the core facility must be laundered or replaced between every use.

- Core facility users must follow cleaning protocols regularly during assigned times in the facility. Users must complete the cleaning protocol at the end of each session.

Research involving in-person human subjects

- When possible, human subject research requiring face-to-face interactions should be avoided until Phase 4, especially research, including vulnerable individuals or minors.
- Research involving in-person human participants must be reviewed and approved by the MEC administration prior to any human subject arriving on-site until Phase 4. Only human participation in research that is deemed essential will be permitted.
- No human subject will be approved for access prior to Phase 3. Human research participants will count toward the building's phase-specific occupancy limits and must abide by the all distancing, PPE, and other requirements for personnel contained within this guidance.
- All appointments must be scheduled with reasonable breaks to avoid potential overlap between participants for approved human participate research.
- Time on campus should be limited to tasks requiring essential face-to-face contact, with all other tasks conducted remotely.

- Any modifications to protocols require IRB approval.

General Safety Requirements

- All on-site activities must follow MEC's Safety Plan, relevant federal, state, and local regulations and current MEC protocols and guidelines.
- All researchers working in laboratory spaces with chemicals should hold a valid C-14 certification or a Certificate of Fitness Holder must be on the floor at all times. If you are not a C-14 certificate holder, you should contact Mohamed Bangura (mbangura@mec.cuny.edu) to begin an application.
- Mandated training should take place virtually, where possible.
- Essential staff currently on campus have completed the New York State COVID-19 Response: Return to Work Training.
- Public Safety Officers and mid-level managers who will be taking temperatures have completed the New York State COVID-19 Response: Daily Screening Program Information for Screeners training.
- All faculty and staff will be required to complete the Return to Work training before they are allowed back on campus.
- Hazard Communication Standard and Laboratory Safety refresher trainings will be provided for staff and researchers as needed.
- In addition, Principal Investigators/Faculty Researchers are required to complete the CITI Program COVID-19: Back to Campus (Fall 2020) online training course.
- Undergraduate and high school student researchers are not permitted at Medgar Evers College until Phase 4.
- Sharing of food and beverages is strictly prohibited. Employees are encouraged to bring their lunch from home.

Meetings, Events, and Visitors

- Meetings must be held virtually until further notice.
 - In-person meetings that are essential must take place in conference rooms, and adhere to Phase-specific room occupancy and time limits and social distancing guidelines.
- Events and field trips are to be held virtually until further notice.
- Visitors and guests are not permitted on campus until further notice. Public safety will have a list of personnel allowed into the building. This list will be updated as conditions require, and Phased reopening plans are adjusted regularly.
- Vendors and engineers will only be permitted by appointment for essential renovations, repairs, and services during Phases, 2, 3, and 4.
- Large, in-person seminars and events may begin during Phase 4. Virtual participation should continue to be made available where possible.

Phased Reopening

Until the College enters Phase 4, to minimize risk to the entire community, any staff member/researcher reporting to the campus during any reopening phase should limit the number of spaces visited and the time spent within those spaces. Until then, we require staff and researchers to provide daily reports of areas visited and persons they interact with on campus in case contact tracing is required, or COVID-19 notifications need to be distributed to targeted individuals.

Phase 1 (current Phase, until approved by CUNY to enter Phase 2):

In addition to essential personnel reporting for critical tasks and/or urgent COVID-19 research, limited personnel may report on-site to prepare spaces for phased reopening. This Phase includes equipment preparation, supply checks, and/or performing purchasing requirements. Reporting staff and/or researchers must be authorized for access to MEC.

Phase 2 (will last 2 weeks, consistent with NYS inter-phase intervals):

Occupancy limitations (maximum):

- Building: approximately 10-50%
- Open-plan laboratories: 1 person per bench cluster or per 250 sq. of open floor space
- Interior laboratory rooms: 1 person
- Open-plan offices: 1 person per 4 desks cluster, with at least 8 ft. distance with any other occupied cubical;
- Shared, closed-door offices: 1 person.

To limit interactions, all space usage would be subject to staggered schedules. Open-plan office spaces are subject to occupancy time limits.

Researchers may begin to return on-site on a schedule coordinated with their supervisor according to plans approved by MEC administration. The most urgent and critical experiments should be prioritized, for example, research that is time-sensitive because of:

- a. Seasonality,
- b. Approaching deadline (contract, grant deadline/ending, article resubmission),
- c. Externally funded research.

Ideally, research should be carried out alone with minimal interaction with others. Laboratory bench assignments for researchers should be as physically as distant as possible. All researchers should continue to work remotely for tasks suitable for remote work.

Core Facilities' occupancy and usage will be open to MEC users. External users may mail samples for analysis or utilize a sample drop-off point for core facility staff to load samples for automated sampling, remote processing, and/or to perform experiments on the users' behalf if appropriate and/or schedule permits. Users external to MEC are not permitted to carry out research activities on-site during Phase 2 unless preauthorized by MEC administration.

The Core Facility Manager must coordinate access to a core facility. Occupancy limits

of core facilities follow laboratory occupancy limits. A minimum of 1 hour of unused time must be scheduled between users to ensure no overlap of users and facilitate completion of any cleaning requirements. Doors must remain closed. No new user onboarding or training sessions may take place.

Core facility staff and users should continue to work remotely during this period for all tasks suitable for remote work.

Administrative Staff should continue to work from home unless a job-related essential task must be completed on-site. If so, supervisory approval must be obtained, and the plan/schedule reported to Public Safety.

Visitors are not permitted during Phase 2. Engineers or vendors required on-site for critical maintenance of instrumentation or equipment are allowed by appointment only if the maintenance is required as:

- Part of safety and/or compliance requirements
- Essential to the ongoing operation of the instrument or equipment supported.

Phase 3: (will begin two weeks after Phase 2 and continue until NYS and CUNY approve occupancy above 85%) Occupancy limitations (maximum):

- Building: approximately 50-85%.
- Open-plan laboratory: 3 researchers per bench cluster.
- Interior laboratory rooms: 1 researcher.
- Open-plan office: 3 people per 4 desks, with at least 8 ft. distance from another occupied cubical.
- Shared, closed-door office.

To limit interaction, all space usage may be subject to time limits and staggered schedules.

Research activity on-site can increase. Graduate students and postdoctoral research associates should be prioritized for access. Bench assignments should remain as physically as distant as possible. All researchers must continue to be scheduled by their supervisor per scheduling guidance and work remotely for all tasks suitable for remote work.

Human Subject Research requiring face-to-face interactions that are deemed essential may begin following project approval by MEC Administration.

Core Facilities may begin accepting existing users external to MEC to carry out research activities on-site. MEC users and urgent and critical experiments with strategic partners should be prioritized, given the capacity and occupancy restrictions. Doors must remain closed. A minimum of 1 hour of unused time should be scheduled between users to ensure no overlap of users and allow time for any completed cleaning requirements. No new user onboarding or training sessions may take place.

Administrators can return on-site for functions that cannot be performed remotely.

Schedules must be coordinated with the supervisor in advance, except in cases of emergency.

All staff, researchers, and users should continue to work remotely for tasks suitable for remote working.

Conference rooms will be open for essential in-person meetings that cannot be held virtually. Social distancing and occupancy restrictions apply.

Phase 4 (when NYS and CUNY approve occupancy above 100%)

Phase 4:

Is to return to business as "normal" with full operations and building occupancy (up to 100%). In-person events can resume. Triggers to enter Phase 4 would include a widely available vaccine, mass immunity confirmed by anti-body testing, robust and publicly available accessible treatment for COVID-19, and/or by directive of the Governor, Mayor, CUNY Chancellor, and the college President.