

May 12, 2020

To: DAR Animal Facility Users

From: Lyndon J. Goodly, DVM, DAFLAM

Subject: Update on UIUC DAR Response Plan for Pandemic Disease Outbreak

Since March 23, 2020, our campus has been at Level 2 of the UIUC DAR Response Plan for Pandemic Disease Outbreak. We have followed the Governor's Executive Orders and adhered to University leadership's mandatory [guidance](#) that all research activities on campus, in the field, and at auxiliary sites be ramped down to conduct only essential activities.

On May 5, 2020, Governor Pritzker's office issued "Restore Illinois" which establishes a five-Phase approach to reopening the state's economy throughout the remainder of the pandemic. The plan does not provide any timetable or specific dates, but rather relies on public health data such as new case growth, hospital surge capacity, and testing/tracing ability. These factors will serve as the basis for moving forward, or reverting to an earlier phase of "Restore Illinois" as necessary. On May 6, 2020, Chancellor Jones sent a [mass email](#) entitled "Transitioning Back to Onsite Work". Consequently, DAR will modify our operations per Chancellor Jones's guidance: *in a gradual, disciplined manner that is guided by scientific evidence and the safety and well-being of our staff, researchers and university-owned animals.*

Beginning June 1, we anticipate the ability to transition to a modified Level 2 of the DAR Response Plan for Pandemic Disease Outbreak. These modifications allow some non-essential, animal-related research activities to resume and permit a limited amount of new studies/experiments. **Please note:** as reflected in *Restore Illinois*, the campus, each unit (including DAR) and each research lab may need to quickly pivot from one Phase to another, depending on daily COVID-19 impacts.

Preliminary Plans beginning June 1 (target dates are subject to change):

- All UIUC personnel (DAR, research staff, F&S) entering DAR facilities **must practice social distancing** whenever it is possible to do so. **Facial masks must be worn** by all when a minimum of six feet social distancing can't be maintained. Other public health recommendations or guidance for research personnel will be implemented and followed as new guidelines are issued.
- **DAR staff will provide only maintenance (feed, water, clean caging)** of animal colonies at DAR Animal Facilities. DAR staff will complete these colony maintenance activities by 1:45 p.m. each day. Routine husbandry procedures may be altered or postponed depending on staff availability.
- **PI and research staff will be granted access to the animal facilities at 2 p.m. each day.** This step is designed to minimize the number of in-person interactions with DAR and research staff, thereby enhancing our ability to maintain social distancing. Exceptions to this policy (e.g. nutritional studies) will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Request an exemption by contacting daradministrators@illinois.edu.

- **New or resumption of ongoing animal studies/experiments may begin**, provided the proposed studies have been **approved by your unit Executive Officer and the Attending Veterinarian** or designee. Each PI must submit a laboratory safety plan for approval by your unit Executive Officer when submitting the proposed animal work. The College of ACES Office of Research has developed an excellent approval process for essential animal work. A modified copy of their request form is attached and can be used for any departmental approval process.
- **Once approval is received, Animal Orders** to acquire additional animals for these approved studies **can be placed anytime for delivery the week of June 1, 2020, or after.**
- PIs may **resume breeding of rodents** for these new studies beginning **May 16, 2020.**
- Researchers responsible for **providing feed for their own animal colonies should continue** with these responsibilities. Request this service by emailing daradministrators@illinois.edu to document this change.
- Shipments from/to vendors or other collaborating institutions will be **resumed July 1, 2020**, provided the institutions can ship or receive animals.
- The Rodent Gnotobiotic Facility and ERML containment facility **will remain closed until July 15, 2020** at the earliest.

Note that this **modified Level 2 of the DAR Response Plan for Pandemic Disease Outbreak is anticipated to begin June 1, 2020.** This change is subject to public health concerns and/or additional guidance from the Governor or campus leadership. **Not all proposed new or additional work can or will be approved initially and some work may have to be staggered.** It is recommended that each PI determine the most critical research project that their lab needs to resume and submit it for **approval by your unit Executive Officer and the Attending Veterinarian** as soon as possible (an email will suffice). Please do not initiate any new work until approval has been granted.

Additional approval of projects beyond the most critical project will be considered after June 1. We want to be as fair as possible to everyone in allowing animal related studies to resume as quickly and as safely as possible. If your project requires the use of core facilities (e.g. Beckman imaging, etc.), be sure such facilities will be available prior to requesting approval of new studies.

Please complete and review your continuity plans as requested in my memorandum dated March 17, 2020. Continuity plans should address the potential of you and/or your staff becoming ill or unable to carry out your responsibilities. Review your contact information and update it if necessary, so that DAR staff may reach you in a timely fashion should questions arise.

Our goal is to ramp-up in an orderly manner as quickly as possible and while maintaining the flexibility to quickly ramp-down again or pivot as necessary. DAR has scheduled Zoom meetings for this week to address questions you might have. As before your health and safety, and that of your staff, our dedicated DAR staff, and the welfare of our research animals are foremost on my mind.

Feel free to contact me or the DAR Supervisors if you have questions or we can assist in anyway.

Stay safe and Godspeed.

