Department of Mathematics
Covid-19 protection guidelines
May 2020

The safety and well-being of our students, staff and faculty is our top priority. Given the current COVID-19 crisis, successful restart of on-campus research operations can only be done with precautionary measures in place at our facilities to keep everybody working on-site safe and informed. These measures include personal exposure and reporting guidance, physical distancing guidance and enhanced research space cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

The return to research activities is a privilege that can be revoked at any time.

The return to on-campus research activities is focused on research personnel for whom campus access is essential to their research, and to fulfill the obligations of graduate training and research grant activities (grant funding, thesis completion, etc.).

- Every PI who decides to reinstate research personnel on-campus must be prepared for a sudden shut down following University or government directives or should other circumstances arise that would limit activities (e.g., a reported case of a COVID infection in a research space/group).
- Every PI must take responsibility for not only adhering to safety protocols but must ensure that such protocols are adhered to by personnel under their supervision or guidance.
- All PIs and personnel who are granted permission to pursue research have a duty of care for themselves and others to protect all from the transmission or exposure to the virus.

General precaution rules:

- Maintain the recommended distance of 2 meters at any time (in research spaces, offices, hallways).
- Regularly clean with disinfectant wipes or 70% ethanol any used surfaces (workstations, desk surfaces, door knobs, etc.).
- Board work should be conducted with individual markers or pieces of chalk and distancing maintained.
- If you feel sick or experience any symptoms (including seasonal allergies) - stay home and inform your supervisor as soon as possible.
Common areas

We note that Mathematics does not have common work stations. Students have individually assigned desks for example.

All common areas that can be enclosed such as lunch rooms, graduate student/staff lounges remain closed. Lunch/coffee breaks should be taken individually outside of the building and any gathering of groups must be avoided.

Common areas that can't be enclosed (CECM lounge area, TASC II lunch area) are not to be used.

The seminar room (SSCK 9509) may be used to a limited extent for small group research discussions that need board work. However distancing must be maintained (valid positions to be marked). The room needs to be booked. It must be wiped down between uses by the users. Bookings will be limited.

Stairwells and elevators

Most stairwells will be designated for one-way traffic. You may need to take a detour to reach your designation. When encountering others, walk at the right side and do not stop.

Elevators should only be used if materials/supplies need to be transferred with carts or if large volumes of supplies need to be transported.

- Take stairs instead of elevators if possible.
- One person at a time in elevators.
- Use your elbow or a pen or tissue to punch elevator buttons rather than your finger.
- Exiting elevator: If someone is in the hallway, allow them to pass before entering hallway.

K10,000 entrance

At this writing this is still under construction and locked.

Research spaces

Given the current COVID-19 prevention procedures, all research activities in the labs regardless of their nature should be done following these protocols. As such:

- Hands must be washed for at least 20 seconds prior to entry and upon leaving the research space.
- Prior to use wipe down the workstation using disinfectant wipes or a 70+% alcohol solution.
- When work is complete or the users stop work for >30 minutes, the workstation should be wiped down again.
• Masks are not required, and optional for use. If masks are used, use proper technique for removal and procedure for disposal.

• Following work day and at intervals following use of common surfaces, thoroughly wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or utilize an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 70-95% alcohol.

Research spaces can only reopen if the supervisors can ensure that at any time physical distancing of minimum 2 meters is followed between the workstations as well as between the sitting desks inside the labs. Closed and open workstations will be marked in work areas and signage will indicate closed areas.

• For larger groups - supervisors may implement shift schedules in order to implement physical distancing. For example, shifts may be based on a day on/day off schedule or a morning vs afternoon schedule.

• Equipment and other surfaces touched (door handles, chairs etc) should be disinfected at the end of each shift.

• If working alone, the guidelines of Policy GP 39 (Working alone or in isolation) must be followed.

• Supervisors should use their best judgement in deciding who of their personnel (graduate students) can continue working from home. Undergraduate students or volunteers will not be allowed in the research spaces at this time.

• The maximum occupancy of the research space will be defined by the number of workstations meeting physical distancing guidelines. Do not exceed this number of people.

• Upon exiting any research space, including offices, if someone is in the hallway, allow them to pass to maintain safe distancing.

Waste disposal

In order to reduce the presence of janitorial staff inside the research space, regular organic waste, recycling or garbage can be deposited to designated corridor containers.

Shared facilities

Rooms with shared equipment such as the mail / photocopy room can be used following these rules:

• Only one person will be allowed to enter the room unless distancing can safely be maintained.

• Disinfectant wipes or spray bottles containing 70% ethanol will be located in each of the shared rooms.
• Prior to, and after, each use of shared equipment use disinfectant wipe or a paper towel with 70% ethanol to wipe down any instrument parts that you have touched - knobs, controls, displays, keyboards.
• Keep use of shared copiers and scanners to a minimum.

**Surrey campus**

In addition to the above, to maintain minimum distance guidelines, students may be scheduled and assigned to work stations on alternate days.

The safe return to research activities can only be successful with everybody’s participation and taking personal responsibility. When in doubt, err on the side of safety. Bullying and harassment towards students, staff or faculty members who are following the safety rules will not be tolerated.