

## Graduate Students and Postdoc Trainees involvement in on-campus research (updated 9/10/20)

Graduate students and postdoc trainees can be physically present on campus in any of the University's [operational postures](#) to assist with research operations. The [University guidelines](#) outline trainee involvement in research during COVID-19 and the specific approach for Pitt Public Health trainees is described below.

Specific tasks that the trainee would be expected to perform in each operational posture should be documented and added as an appendix to the Conduct of Research Plans (formerly referred to as the Research Restart Plans). The following information should be documented and submitted to the Pitt Public Health Deans Office through the student's department administrator for review and approval.

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Trainee name:

Trainee research activities:

The frequency (days/week) and duration (average number of hours/days) of the trainees' time on campus in each operational posture (Guarded, Elevated, High Risk):

If the trainee will be involved in activities that are essential to the research, what is the backup plan if the trainee cannot perform these essential activities?

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Any trainees in the following categories: (1) trainees who have COVID-19 and are under isolation or those under quarantine due to exposure to COVID-19; (2) trainees who fit the definition of a vulnerable student\*; and (3) trainees requesting a courtesy accommodation\*\*, should not be required to be physically present on campus.

All personnel who will be physically present on campus should be directed to review the University's [Health Standards and Guidelines](#). In addition, all personnel who are physically present on campus must complete required COVID response training before their return to in-person operations.

Trainees who will be physically present on campus should be provided with information on whom to consult with concerns about these requests. For Pitt Public Health, the initial contact person is the

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or the [School Ombudsperson](#). They should also be told that they can appeal to the [Vice Provost for Graduate Studies](#). Additionally, anyone can complete an [anonymous feedback form](#) to share any concerns about this process including being designated to perform essential research activities. Responses will be read by the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and will be kept anonymous. In addition, trainees can express concerns with workplace safety via the [Environmental Health and Safety Concern Reporting Form](#) (phone: 412-624-9505), or via the [Pitt COVID Concern Connection](#).

\* The University considers vulnerable trainees to include those who (1) are age 65 or older; (2) have a medical condition identified in the CDC's COVID-19 guidelines; and/or (3) have a qualifying disability within the meaning of the ADA adversely impacted by COVID-19.

\*\* Modifications to in-person participation (known as "courtesy accommodations") may be provided to trainees who express a desire not to be physically present for the following reasons: (1) the trainee lives with a person fitting the CDC's explanation of people at increased risk; (2) although under age 65, the trainee believes that their age puts them at greater risk for complications of COVID-19; (3) the trainee has an unavoidable need to take public transportation to/from class and is concerned about the associated risk of contracting COVID-19, or (4) the trainee is unable to obtain child care due to a COVID-related school/care center closure.

**Note:** These guidelines also apply to undergraduates who may be employed in a PI-led research lab as student hourly workers (paid off grants or other sponsored research funds) or who may have a fixed fellowship stipend rather than an hourly wage.