



To: All faculty
From: Charmaine B. Dean, Vice-President, Research & International
cc: Bruce Muirhead, Associate Vice-President, Research Oversight & Analysis
Date: Tuesday, December 22, 2020
Subject: Implications of provincial shutdown measures on research
Note: This email is for information and action

Key Messages

- Province-wide shutdown measures come into effect December 26th
- Face-to-face research with human participants will be suspended (with some exceptions)
- Travel for off-campus research and field work will be suspended
- All **other on-campus research**, under approved safety plans, **may continue**.

The Government of Ontario has announced a province-wide shutdown effective 12:01 am Saturday, December 26th, 2020. This will impact Waterloo Region, and is expected to be in place for a minimum of 28 days. This critical measure, to limit the transmission of COVID-19 in our region and across the province, directly impacts the University of Waterloo campus.

Lab research

On campus lab research (except human participant research – see below) is not affected by these measures at this time. Faculty members, postdocs, graduate students and research staff may continue ongoing lab research that is compliant with the approved safety plans and the planned university holiday closures.

In the event that further direction on scaling back lab activities is given in the future, all departments are expected to have in place a plan for such scaling back of lab research activities.

Off campus field research

Off campus field research is not permitted at this time.

Human participant research

Effective 12:01 am Saturday, December 26th, 2020, all in-person (face-to-face) research involving human participants that is being conducted on University of Waterloo campus or an off-campus location in Ontario is to be suspended until further notice, including ongoing research and studies that have recently received REB clearance. This includes research with approved safety plans, as well as studies that recently received approval of a safety plan. Exceptions are noted below.

Under the shutdown, University of Waterloo researchers may not travel at this time to conduct research (including human participant research). Scheduled visits with participants must be postponed.

Office of Research Ethics will continue to review applications, but the REBs will not issue clearance to new protocols or amendments that involve in-person human participant research until further notice. If additional study visits are needed to preserve the safety and well-being of the participants, contact researchqueries@uwaterloo.ca. Amendments to shift to online or virtual methods will be prioritized for review. Renewals will continue to be reviewed and approved to ensure studies remain in good standing.

Exceptions for some human participant research/human participant contact

The following may continue:

- Research specifically focused on COVID-19
- Treatments being delivered to clients may continue (e.g. clients receiving optometry or mental health treatment)
- Research without any in-person contact (e.g., online, virtual, phone-based studies).

If you are unsure whether your research falls into one of these categories, or if you have further queries, please contact researchqueries@uwaterloo.ca for confirmation.

Research using animals

Animal care is an essential service; the highest level of care and husbandry within our current staffing levels will be maintained. Researchers who work with animals are asked to postpone initiating new studies and shipments of incoming animals for new studies. Active studies may continue. If you are unsure whether your research may continue, contact researchqueries@uwaterloo.ca for confirmation.

Please note that although the University community is on a break, the researchqueries@uwaterloo.ca account is being actively monitored over the holiday period.