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Subject: Process for Requesting an Exception for Phase 1 Research Ramp Up
Date: June 5, 2020 at 1:15 PM
To: Peter Fisher fisherp@mit.edu

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Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Maria T. Zuber, Vice President for Research

Dear Department Heads and Lab Directors,

I ask you to inform your PIs that based upon the feedback we have received; we are initiating a process to consider a small number of exceptions to the research ramp-up guidelines developed by the Research Ramp Up Lightning Committee.

In Research Ramp Up Phase 1, all research that can be performed remotely will continue to be performed remotely. Research that requires access to campus will be limited to 25% of full capacity, where full capacity is defined as 50 hours/week multiplied by the number of members in the group at steady state, including the PI.

This Phase 1 cap that the Lightning Committee adopted (and which I fully endorse), limiting the total level of research activity in a campus lab and in a building to 25% of capacity, was derived from extensive discussion with MIT's Campus Space Contingency Working Group and our Medical Outreach Office. This Phase 1 target is intended to achieve these goals:

1. Start with a limited number of people returning to campus, so as to adapt to the new conditions and to learn;
2. Keep the number of people on campus at a given time to a low number, so as to reduce the risk of infection;
3. Reduce the overall burden on MIT central services and core facilities at the beginning of the ramp-up; and
4. Be attentive to legal, ethical, and equity issues.

These four goals will be the basis for considering exceptions. In particular, I note that requests which meet social distancing requirements (as laid out in Planning Exercise A)

requests which meet social distancing requirements (as laid out in Planning Exercise A), but which exceed the capacity guideline (as defined in Planning Exercise B), are inconsistent with Goal 3. Such approvals would therefore be granted only in unusual circumstances.

The guidelines for the Phase 1 ramp-up are based on public health guidance and best practices for our community. This means that as we enter Phase 1, previously approved “critical research” conducted on campus during the stay-at-home advisory must now follow the same guidelines as all other campus research. If a PI is conducting previously approved COVID-19-related work that could help resolve the current public health crisis, they will need to decide how to adapt their allotted hours and space to manage that work in the context of any additional work that they may wish to ramp up.

The process for requesting an exception is as follows:

- PIs should complete Planning Exercises A and B that meet guidelines by Phase 1 deadlines and submit them to their DLC head for review.
- PIs who wish to be considered for an exemption should submit the justification to their DLC head. In the spirit of cooperation, groups on the same floor/wing/building are encouraged to develop collaborative proposals that coordinate resources and maintain gradual ramp-up guidelines.
- Each DLC head should consider requests with respect to the above goals, and should prioritize the requests if there is more than one that meets the goals; request(s) that are advanced should all be submitted to the VPR in a single folder to ramp-up-exceptions@mit.edu and the submission(s) should include Planning Exercises A and B. Also, please **direct any questions about the process to ramp-up-exceptions@mit.edu**
- My office will request reviews with (1) the Campus Space Contingency Working Group, to assess campus impact, and (2) the Legal, Ethical and Equity Committee, to address Goal 4. I will take their assessments into consideration before making decisions on any requests for exceptions.

Thanks for your cooperation,

Maria

This email was sent to fisherp@mit.edu

This email is being sent to you because you have been identified as a key participant in the MIT Research Ramp Up process. If you believe that you have received this email in error, please contact spettit@mit.edu.

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