

Principles Guiding the Resumption of Research Operations (R2Ops)

Updated May 17, 2020

Goal: Protect the health and safety of the UAB research workforce and study participants, while increasing research activity through an incremental approach.

Purpose: This document provides overall institutional guidance and the principles underlying resumption of research activities. Unit-level (defined by the School/College) and PI labs will develop and implement operational plans in alignment with these principles and guidelines before transitioning between codes, as noted below. The R2Ops principles align with UAB's five guiding principles for returning to campus.

R2Ops Principle 1: Follow UAB, UA System, local, state, and national public health authority (PHA) directives.

R2Ops Principle 2: Protect the health & safety of the research workforce and study participants, considering emotional as well as physical health.

R2Ops Principle 3: Consider ALL personnel and study participants as COVID-19 positive until screened and/or tested negative.

The active color code will be determined based upon state, local or UA System restrictions and conditions. Changes in the prevailing code will be announced by UAB leadership in response to the changing circumstances. Each level defines a different set of work criteria rules, regulations, and operational plans. Each operational unit and PI must be compliant with these codes and the guidelines.

-  Red – Access Severely Limited (maintenance only, no research)
-  Orange – Limited Business Operations (0% - 25% capacity)
-  Yellow – Modified Business Operations (26% - 74% capacity)
-  Green – Full Access; limited public health restrictions (75% - 100% capacity)

Table 1 provides details of the conditions for each color-coded phase and the allowable research operations. Note that the campus may move back and forth between color-coded phases.

The COVID19 pandemic presents a complex and dynamic environment. This document provides the best information and guidance to date but is subject to change and conditions warrant.

CODE	ALLOWABLE RESEARCH OPERATIONS (Personnel to Complete uab.HelpBeatCovid19.org Symptom Tracker)
RED Severely Limited Operations	<p>No research on campus permitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access restricted to specific individuals for daily safety inspections only. • No symptomatic personnel may access buildings. • Personnel entering the buildings are required to wear masks and appropriate PPE.
ORANGE Limited Business Operations	<p>Research facilities and field stations closed except for “Essential Research” (<25% capacity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All buildings on badge access only. • All personnel must register on the COVID-19 Assessment Tool, a symptom and exposure tracker. • No symptomatic personnel may access buildings. • In-person, human subjects COVID-19 research with potential to mitigate the pandemic is permitted. • In-person, human subjects research that MUST be conducted for participants’ health and well-being is permitted (determined by PI, participant, study sponsor, and participants’ healthcare providers). • On campus, laboratory studies requiring timely and regular attention to maintain critical laboratory infrastructure and experimental conditions are permitted. These may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Essential care for animals, plants, and unique or expensive cell cultures or specimens that would be lost. ○ Preservation of unique reagents and unique or expensive research materials. ○ Maintaining instruments and equipment that cannot be maintained remotely or shut down without significant cost or consequences to the research effort. ○ Studies in progress that must be completed to avoid catastrophic data loss. • On-campus laboratory studies that do not require interventions or interactions with human subjects and are needed for a thesis or dissertation defense during the 2020 Summer term or completion of studies for postdoctoral fellows within three months of end of an appointment or fellowship funding (with approval). • Must ensure that non-UAB individuals are absent from campus except for deliveries and as study participants.
YELLOW Modified Business Operations	<p>Research is allowed with the following limitations/considerations (26% - 74% capacity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All buildings on badge access only. • All personnel must register on the COVID-19 Assessment Tool, a symptom and exposure tracker. • No symptomatic personnel may access buildings. • All research capable of being conducted remotely should continue off-site. • Operational plan for roles, responsibilities, and interactions must be developed and approved. • Essential research constraints removed for non-human subjects research, including new studies. • Human subjects research that involves participant contact (or < 6-foot social distancing) may be re-started or initiated, with careful plans for safety consistent with R2Ops Human Subjects Research Guidelines. • Personnel and trainees, including researchers at post-doctoral and graduate/pre-doctoral levels, may continue studies on site and/or perform experiments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Other trainees engaged in research (undergraduates and volunteers), can only conduct on-campus research with specific approval of their program director. • Masks must be worn. PPE appropriate for research conditions must be available. If PPE is not required for experimental research conditions, universal masking still required (for study personnel and participants). • Must demonstrate ability to practice 6-foot social distancing, frequently wash hands, frequently disinfect equipment/workspaces, and minimally move across floors/building/campus (with no loitering in hallways or breakrooms). • If conducting research on site, PI must be informed of research staff planned arrival/departures. • Must ensure that non-UAB individuals are not needed on campus except for deliveries and as study participants. • No minors allowed in research areas, with the exception of minors participating in research studies and those with approval.
GREEN Full Operations	<p>Normal research operations (75-100% capacity).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No symptomatic personnel may access buildings.

Go to [R2Ops Allowable Activities](#) for additional information and details regarding these guidelines.