

Returning to our work stations: Stage IV

As we continue our staggered approach to reopening the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, these subsequent stages are meant to ensure the health and safety of its employees and clients.

This plan has been created and updated in keeping with guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the UA Board of Trustees, along with guidance from administrators across the Division of Agriculture.

COVID-19 and its effects have evolved rapidly and our understanding of the behavior of this virus also changes rapidly. The Division's plans will be adjusted according to directives and recommendations from ADH, CDC, or any directives issued by the Arkansas governor. This plan can change with updated directives and recommendations from ADH, CDC or the Arkansas governor. The plan also takes into account individuals who require reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Administration will continually assess the situation and this plan, and its stages, and may take action to adjust the plan to fit the circumstances.

With every stage of this return-to-the-office plan, we want employees to be mindful of their health and that of their co-workers.

STAGE IV

All employees will be expected to return to their work stations on **June 1, 2021**, unless you have been granted an accommodation under the ADA, or have an approved formal telecommuting agreement with your department head and filed with the appropriate department (See [PMGS 17-02](#) or [PMGS 17-03](#)). If an employee believes they have a need to continue to work remotely under ADA, the employee needs to contact the Office of Inclusion, Access and Compliance to determine if a reasonable accommodation can be made pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act. The request will be addressed through the normal interactive process on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriate accommodation, if any.

Employees must continue to follow the [self-assessment](#) daily before reporting to the office. If you have any symptoms listed in the self-assessment, do not report to work. Contact your supervisor immediately.

Exposure to COVID-19 positive cases or testing positive to COVID-19 should be reported immediately [using this form](#).

Workspaces

In accordance with CDC guidelines, while masks are no longer required for vaccinated employees, the use of masks is recommended for all employees. Masks are especially recommended for employees while in common areas including hallways, break areas, restrooms, elevators, conference rooms, etc.

Meetings

Division-sponsored meetings may resume with the approval of the immediate supervisor and/or unit head. Attendees should follow CDC guidelines when attending Division-sponsored meetings.

Clients/Visitors

Visitors and guests should be asked to follow CDC guidelines when invited to Division-sponsored events.

Work-Related Travel

Faculty and staff may conduct in-state work-related travel. Mask use for vaccinated employees is recommended, but not required when traveling. Masks are highly recommended for non-vaccinated employees to provide protection for themselves and others. Vehicle fresh air should be maximized (e.g. ventilation not be set on recirculation) in all cases. Employees may travel with stakeholders at their own discretion.

Faculty and staff may conduct out of state travel utilizing the Workday travel approval process.

All International work-related should be approved by the vice president, senior associate vice presidents, or associate vice presidents.

Travel may be approved to destinations with a [travel advisory level](#) of 3 or 4 with justification and approval of the Vice President. All CDC guidance needs to be followed (e.g., testing prior to travel, quarantine and testing upon return) before and after travel. As guidance evolves, requirements for travel will continue to change. Check the latest [CDC guidance](#).

Research Activities

All types of research activities may resume. Stage IV research for on-campus faculty members corresponds to Level 3 of the campus [Research Continuity](#) plan.

For PIs with laboratories on the Fayetteville campus, specific guidance from campus administration needs to be followed if that guidance is more restrictive than that presented here.

Key Preventative Measures for Laboratory Work:

- Wearing a mask is recommended in the laboratory.
- Masks are recommended in all public areas.
- Frequent and thorough hand washing is highly recommended.
- Maintain the buddy system with the above caveats for lab work that involves potentially hazardous materials, equipment, or condition.

Laboratory Cleaning and Disinfection (New for Stage IV, recommendations on disinfection practices from Stage I still apply):

- Laboratories should be cleaned and disinfected as appropriate, but no less than once a week.
- For PIs conducting research requiring off-site travel, continue to follow the [Best Practices for Field Research](#). This document has been revised to reflect current recommended practices.

Resource Links: [Division](#) [CDC](#) [ADH](#) [State Department](#)