



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER  
EL PASO

Office of the Vice President for Research

June 23, 2020

Dear TTUHSC El Paso Community,

We trust everyone is staying safe and well. The purpose of this letter is to update you on next steps for the Return to Campus Plan for Research.

Since June 1<sup>st</sup>, research has been operating at the Phase III level. The limited on-campus activities have permitted laboratories and research programs to move forward with projects, while taking precautions to maintain a safe work environment. The precautions include limiting building and laboratory occupancy to 25% by working in shifts or alternating days, screening those entering the buildings with online attestations and temperature checks, utilizing face coverings, practicing social distancing and avoiding in-person meetings, including lunch and social gatherings. Work that can be done remotely is continuing in that capacity. This plan has been working well.

In El Paso, the COVID-19 numbers are showing signs of stabilization and improvement. **Therefore, we are preparing to move into Phase II research operations starting Monday, July 6.** The principles and precautions are similar to those currently in place. For Phase II:

- Lab, floor and building occupancy will be targeted to 50%.
- Individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms should not report to campus, but contact their supervisors and follow university COVID-19 reporting requirements.
- Entrance screening for research buildings will be discontinued. However, everyone should continue to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and report them per requirements.
- Continue to wear face coverings and practice social distancing in laboratories and common areas.
- Avoid in-person gatherings, especially lunch and social gatherings, and continue to utilize technology to conduct meetings remotely, when possible.
- Implement a gradual return of research employees, students and trainees to campus, at the discretion of supervisors. Research volunteers should not report to campus during Phase II.
- Supervisors should coordinate the phased return of employees with research IT staff.
- Human subjects research can resume in-person visits, using the precautions outlined above.

Thank you for your continued vigilance and adherence to these important safety measures. By doing so, we can forge ahead with our vital mission of advancing science, health care and health promotion.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David P. Cistola'.

David P. Cistola, M.D., Ph.D.

Interim Vice President for Research

Professor and Director, Center of Emphasis in Diabetes & Metabolism

P.S., Many thanks to the Research Return to Campus Taskforce, which includes Drs. Kiran Shokar, Myriam Casillas, Rajkumar Lakshmanaswamy and Mr. Bob Shehan.