

Microbiology Covid Policies –V10 – June 14, 2021

These are the principles and procedures we will be following in the Department of Microbiology and School of MCB. Failure to comply with departmental and school requirements can result in discipline and loss of access to MCB facilities and working areas including research areas.

There is a link on the Microbiology web site where an individual can **anonymously raise any concerns** regarding safety and practices around research.

As per CDC, Illinois, and campus policy, fully vaccinated individuals can be in the laboratory without masks and can congregate with other vaccinated individuals.

We cannot demand that everyone be vaccinated, nor can we practically verify vaccination status. Rather, we highly recommend that everyone get vaccinated so that they can take advantage of the lessened restrictions. As we have been for the last year, we are expecting everyone to act in good faith and follow procedures according to their vaccination status.

If you are NOT vaccinated, you **MUST** continue to wear a mask when in the building and maintain social distancing.

TESTING

Our goal is to preclude infected individuals from being in the laboratory buildings. The testing protocols established on campus continue to be critical for achieving this goal and keeping everyone safe. Testing is easy and takes only a few minutes. Testing sites include the Illini Union and CRCE. Testing is free. You only need your ICard. Results are usually obtained in <24 hrs. All employees who are working in on-campus facilities are required to participate in the on-campus testing program. The “Safer Illinois” phone app is designed to facilitate compliance by providing testing notification and results. The app does NOT track or collect any smartphone data, including location.

1. All MCB personnel working in any of the buildings (RAL, CLSL, Morrill, MSB, or Burrill) **MUST** be tested regularly following campus recommendations.
2. Those visiting the campus only occasionally (for example, picking up something from their office) or upon returning from a trip will be required to have test results dated no more than four days prior to entering any university facility.
3. No one can enter the buildings if they have tested positive for COVID-19, if they have missed a mandatory test, or if they are currently awaiting a test result after notification of exposure.
4. We hope that if an employee tests positive, he/she would let their PI/supervisor know. Given privacy rules, this notification is NOT required, but it will facilitate any required follow up actions, such as shutting down the lab/workspace and initiate the process of safeguarding others who might have been exposed.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

The general policies to be followed in Microbiology are:

1. All individuals working in Microbiology laboratories must watch the COVID-19 training video available at <https://ovcrportal.research.illinois.edu/Training/Overview.aspx?TrainingId=295>. You will acknowledge completion of this training in an email to your advisor (see pt 2).

2. Do NOT come into the building if you have any symptoms consistent with Covid-19 or if you have been in contact with anyone who is infected. Symptoms include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell. Symptoms can be mild, and the range of symptoms associated with COVID-19 are constantly being updated as we learn more about the disease.

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>)

Get tested!

3. All researchers are to wear Personal Protective Equipment appropriate to the research being conducted (gloves, lab coats, goggles, etc.) at all times, just as you did in the past.

4. Everyone will wash their hands often with soap and water, including upon entering and before leaving the laboratory. In addition, hand sanitizer will be available in public areas.

5. Only authorized personnel are allowed in the building – no visitors.