

## MIT Campus Guidance When Working on the Same Project or Sharing the Same Equipment or Tools

This document is provided to assist MIT campus lab/research groups and work groups with implementing best practices when employees are working on the same project and/or sharing the same tools and equipment. It concurs with the information the [United States Department of Labor – Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#) has released on reducing the risk for COVID-19 in workplaces as well as [MIT Medical](#) and [Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) guidance. This guidance is applicable for those lower risk conditions where contact is not required with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2 and where employees are not in frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the general public. MIT lab/research and work groups should check with their Principal Investigator (PI) or supervisor for additional guidance specific to their Department, Lab or Center (DLC).

All efforts should be made to avoid any close interactions required for a project or task. In an effort to maintain a six-foot distance, it's recommended that specific work activities first be evaluated to assess the available means and methods and the number of employees required to complete a task. Specific tasks requiring multiple staff should then be broken down into individual sub-tasks and sequenced to maintain a 6-foot spacing. Where and when possible, staff should coordinate individual work activities with one another by using radios, mobile phones, and video chat technologies to ensure six-foot spacing while maintaining general safety. The decision to proceed with the work is made by the lab/research group or work group and their respective PI or supervisor; routine work activities that are not considered critical should be deferred to a later date.

Specifically, all personnel, shall implement the following safety steps to reduce the risk of working together on the same project and/or sharing the same tools and equipment. These specific steps are based on the principle of 'ALARA', or managing the risk to **As Low As Reasonably Achievable**. PIs and supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance with the steps below:

- **Each individual must complete the COVID Pass Attestation prior to reporting to campus. If you feel unwell or have a fever, cough, or shortness of breath DO NOT risk compromising others and DO NOT report to work.**
- **If anyone is developing/exhibiting symptoms, while at work, PI/Supervisor should follow [MIT Medical guidance](#) and send the employee home sick.** While on-site, no person can be exhibiting any symptoms (coughing, fever, shortness of breath). Employees who are exhibiting possible symptoms or have traveled out of state are required to remain home and self-isolate [per MIT directive](#) and the [MIT Travel Policy](#). This also applies if an employee's close contacts test positive for COVID-19. Any person exhibiting symptoms after reporting to work will be asked to leave immediately.
- **Plan work carefully to limit close interaction as much as feasible.** Planning should include a review of means and methods, using the smallest number of team members,

sequencing tasks to allow separation and using communication technologies. A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) should be completed when appropriate to ensure the appropriate PPE is used.

- **Limit sharing of tools and equipment. When sharing is necessary, disinfectant tools before and after use.** Use >70% isopropyl alcohol or see [this list](#) for updated commercial products for disinfecting (*Caution, isopropyl alcohol is flammable!*) . Apply disinfectant to a test area first to ensure the cleaning does not damage the work or equipment surface. If surfaces are dirty, clean them: use soap and water or other cleaner on dirty surfaces prior to disinfection.
- **Prohibit sharing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including lab coats, gowns and safety glasses.** When applicable, as in cleanrooms, persons must have assigned gear. Visitor gear should only be used once before being laundered (if washable) or put in trash (if disposable).
- **Provide ample opportunities for workers to wash hands before and after handling equipment throughout their day and ensure access to disinfecting wipes / hand sanitizer. Wash hands immediately upon completion of project.**
- **Utilize all required personal protective gear including face shields, safety glasses, and gloves for the activity being conducted.**
- **Monitor public health communications about COVID-19 recommendations and ensure that workers have access to that information. Frequently check the [CDC COVID-19 website](#).**

For personnel questions or concerns regarding compliance by a supervisor or PI, please contact [MIT Ombuds Office](#).

For EHS-related questions, call 617-452-3477 or email [environment@mit.edu](mailto:environment@mit.edu).

*The main transmission mode for the virus is contact with droplets from an active infected person. Transmission from contact with viable virus left on a surface, and then touching your eyes/nose/mouth, is a secondary mode. It is possible for someone without major symptoms to cough on their hands, touch something, someone else touches it before the virus dries out, and then touches their eyes/nose/mouth, to transmit the virus. This guidance is designed to reduce that risk to an acceptable level.*