

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans and Associate Deans Research

FROM: Dr. Frank Harvey, Provost and Vice-President Academic (Acting)  
Dr. Alice B. Aiken, Vice-President Research and Innovation

DATE: 22 September 2020

RE: Return to Research Phase II: Updated capacity guidelines

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As we continue to work through Phase II of our Return to Campus planning, our priority remains the safety of our community and the important continuation of mission-critical teaching, research and student support.

We know there is great interest among our research community in further expanding on-campus campus research activity. It is important that any additional research activity follow in the model of our safe, controlled Return to Campus process.

Working with our Environmental Health and Safety team, we have developed a **density-based model for Phase II that will hopefully allow more research activity to occur safely** (both in previously-opened spaces and in new spaces), beyond the initial 25% threshold that was set. The safe occupancy of research spaces depends on various factors, including physical space, room layout, room usage, ventilation rate, and available cleaning and disinfection support.

Additional Return to Research activity on campus will now be considered in cases where the following three conditions can **all** be met:

- Room occupancy and functional use can support **one person per 175-200 square feet of space**.
- The buildings/workspaces have **modern ventilation systems designed for laboratory applications**.
- **Required safety measures** (including enhanced cleaning) can be implemented:
  - [Dalhousie COVID-19 safety requirements](#) shall still be observed including physical distancing, barriers and PPE as necessary.
  - Shared equipment/furniture in the space may require additional frequency of disinfection.
  - Flow / movement of personnel and room layout shall be considered in the assessment.
  - Common high touch areas including hallways, washrooms, stairwells, elevators, etc. shall be assessed if additional cleaning is required.
  - The impacts of the change shall be monitored, and protocols should be put in place to rectify any observed issues and capacity reduced as necessary.

**The process for re-opening research spaces under this density-based model, or modifying current plans to accommodate changes, follows the same procedures outlined in the [August 17 memo regarding Phase II of Return to Research](#), with PIs working through Deans and/or Associate Deans Research. Deans are asked to please note the following at this time:**

- Applications from PIs who are women, as well as PIs who are primary caregivers, should be prioritized;
- Pending applications already awaiting review in the ROMEO Researcher Portal should be prioritized;
- If on-campus activity with human subjects is to be included in the research, detailed processes to protect their safety and control their flow within buildings must be outlined in the approved Safety Plan.

Thank you for your continued efforts as we work together across our research community to ensure a safe, supportive Return to Research at Dalhousie.