

You Ask, We Answer

The CON Office of Research will be answering any research-related questions we receive in a 3-times/week email communication. Please send your research questions to Dr. Pinto, Lisa Spruill, or me and we will compile the answers in a faculty email blast each Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, as needed. Please see below for answers to questions we have received thus far.

Q: Are grant applications (SAM, USCeRA, etc.) being processed?

A: As of yesterday, the SAM office is open and staff are working remotely. Grant applications are being processed.

Q: How are funding agencies handling their deadlines for applications?

A: 1) NIH - COVID-19 Flexibilities for Applicants and Recipients

NIH Guide Notice: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-086.html>

FAQ's: <https://grants.nih.gov/faqs#/covid-19.htm>

2) NSF - NSF has developed a new website for the research community with detailed guidance on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). This includes guidance for awardee organizations, researchers and reviewers of NSF proposals. Please note that this website will be updated as new developments arise.

Q: Should we suspend all research activities?

A: As much as possible, restrict in person meetings and use virtual meetings/phone calls, etc. See VPR's memo for information relevant to all units on campus. You can reach out to your community partners/organizations if they are "open for business."

Also, as discussed in the Dean's huddle yesterday, PRISMA Health will not be allowing research personnel to conduct research. Effective immediately, contact with research participants should be limited to physicians, APPs, nurses, medical assistants and critical research staff with appropriate screening & training. Until further notice, elective research protocols should no longer involve direct patient or participant contact. Participant and patient interactions (e.g., study visit, care coordination) can continue virtually (including text, phone and web-based as appropriate). For PRISMA's full statement and a late-breaking update, see the PRISMA attachments.

SCOA Site Visits – Cancelled

For the safety and well-being of our patients and staff, we have implemented a safety protocol at the front doors of our clinic. We will be taking the temperatures of everyone who attempts to enter the building and anyone with a fever will be triaged and sent home or to the ER. At this time, we are closing the building to all visitors until the end of March. I will let you know if there are any changes, but our executive committee believes this is the best decision at this time and we are sorry for any inconvenience.

Q: Should I reach out to my funding agency and ask about deadlines?

A: You can do so or Lisa Spruill can reach out to them on your behalf. If you reach out, cc Lisa Spruill so that the OR is in the loop.

Q: A question was raised at the Dean's huddle yesterday about "liability" as related to research.

A: Dr. Pinto has reached out to Tommy Coggins and this is his response (following discussion with Lisa Johnson, IRB): The advice of the IRB is to adhere to CDC and University guidance regarding social distancing. If research can be conducted via phone and/or on-line methods, that is preferred. If personal contact is necessary, researchers should follow the recommendations of our public health authorities. Research that involves visiting nursing homes, or similar, likely will have restrictions imposed by the facility (i.e. researchers will not be allowed in the facility). Of course, consent of the subject also is necessary.