

RCUH ADVISORY FOR PROJECT PIs DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

This advisory provides a guiding framework for principal investigators (PIs) during the COVID-19 pandemic. RCUH will continue its finance and personnel services to assist PIs in successfully managing their research and training projects and protecting the health and safety of their staff. Some of the items below will be immediately applicable, while others provide information that will be useful at a later date. All of the advisories presented under the subheadings RCUH Financial Transactions and RCUH Personnel Transactions can be implemented immediately, which RCUH recommends. However, because there is a wide variety of projects served by RCUH, the timing of when to implement these actions is left to the PI's best judgement. Note that increasing numbers of governmental agencies and private businesses are suspending operations, requiring employees to work remotely, and/or functioning only with essential workers. RCUH is closely monitoring the rapidly evolving COVID-19 outbreak and will issue advisory updates as necessary.

GENERAL ADVISORY	
Contingency plan	<p>PIs should develop a contingency plan as to how to continue project operations and activities should disruptions occur (e.g., worksite closure, employee diagnosed with COVID-19, higher-than-usual absenteeism). The plan should do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate an alternate work location if the current site is closed. • Identify which jobs/employees can work from home/remote locations. • Identify how essential functions will be performed if key staff are absent. • Delineate communication procedures, including establishing contact information for each employee, designating the individuals who are assigned communication responsibilities, and gathering other pertinent information. • Be shared with project staff. <p>PIs should also meet with employees to discuss expectations regarding their new work and other responsibilities.</p>
Resources	<p>The following websites provide updated information on the coronavirus which PIs will find helpful in managing their projects and employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Hawai'i UH COVID-19 web page: https://www.hawaii.edu/emergency/important-health-information-novel-coronavirus/ • University of Hawai'i VPRI: Research Continuity and Planning for COVID web page: https://www.hawaii.edu/research/research-continuity-and-planning-for-covid-19/ • Hawai'i Department of Health: Issues and Advisories page: https://health.hawaii.gov/docd/advisories/novel-coronavirus-2019/ • Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) COVID-19 advisories page: https://www.cogr.edu/institutional-and-agency-responses-covid-19-and-additional-resources
Travel	<p>PIs with grant-funded or extramurally-funded travel should check with their program/contracts officer and follow the directives issued by their sponsor agency. PIs whose projects are located on University of Hawai'i campuses should also consult the UH's FAQs regarding travel during the coronavirus outbreak (https://www.hawaii.edu/emergency/important-health-information-novel-coronavirus/travel-faq/). If the travel is banned but is extremely urgent and necessary, PIs should request a waiver from their sponsor agency and the appropriate UH administrator. In all cases, the value of the travel in relation to the health and safety of the traveler, project staff, and community should be considered in the decision.</p>
Mail	<p>Mail drop-off and pick-up at the RCUH office at the East-West Center Burns Hall is temporarily suspended. RCUH mail can be dropped off and picked up at the Mānoa Innovation Center, 2800 Woodlawn Drive, Suite 200.</p>
RCUH FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS	
For questions/information, contact Glenn Yee (gyee@rcuh.com; phone 988-8320).	
Deposits	<p>Drop off checks and cash to RCUH at the Mānoa Innovation Center, 2800 Woodlawn Drive, Suite 200.</p>

Financial system online transactions	The RCUH financial portal will continue to be available for online transaction processing.
Foreign/manual payments, clear advance requests, & wire transfers	Initiate requests remotely via email or UH File Drop. Use UH File Drop or hand-deliver when document contains sensitive information.
<p>RCUH PERSONNEL TRANSACTIONS</p> <p>The East-West Center has restricted access to Burns Hall. All front doors will be locked, and visitors must be met at the side door and escorted to the RCUH office. Visitors will be asked if they have traveled to a CDC level-3 country in the last 14 days and if so, building entry will be denied. If possible, make alternative arrangements or postpone visits to Burns Hall.</p> <p>For questions/information, contact Nelson Sakamoto (nsakamoto@rcuh.com; phone 956-6965).</p>	
Deadlines	Normal payroll deadlines and schedules will be adhered to.
Employee safety	<p>PIs should do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have project staff adopt good hygiene procedures and minimize exposures. • Distribute a copy of Stop the Spread of Germs at Work (see attachment) to all employees and post one on project’s bulletin board. • Instruct employees not feeling well to stay at home and allow them to remain at home until they are well. • Treat all employee health and illness information as confidential. • Treat all employees the same to avoid complaints of unfair treatment.
Employees who are sick	<p>Employees who are ill should not report to work and contact their PI, then contact their primary care physician (PCP) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees with an HMSA medical plan Sick employees should contact their PCP or access HMSA’s online care (https://hmsa.com/well-being/online-care/). Those who do not have a PCP should go to Find a Doctor on HMSA’s website (https://hmsa.com/search/providers/). • Employees with a Kaiser medical plan Sick employees should contact their PCP or review their online care options on Kaiser’s website (https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/hawaii).
Employees who are NOT sick	Employees requesting to work from home or a remote location who are not sick must have the permission of their PI. The RCUH HR director Nelson Sakamoto (nsakamoto@rcuh.com) is available to assist the PI in making an informed decision in these and other personnel situations.
Workplace exposure to COVID-19	<p>If an employee believes his/her illness was caused by workplace exposure to the coronavirus, this must be reported immediately to the PI. The PI must then do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct the employee to contact his/her PCP for medical advice and care; • Request the employee to provide details as to where/when/how he or she was exposed to the virus; • Complete the RCUH Supervisor’s Report of Industrial Injury form and immediately submit the form to the RCUH HR Benefits section (rcuh_benefits@rcuh.com). To follow up on the incident, the employee will be contacted by RCUH HR or its workers’ compensation insurance carrier.
Use of sick leave by regular-status employees (50–100% FTE) (continued on p.3)	<p>For information regarding sick leave by regular-status employees, PIs can take these actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult Policy 3.640 RCUH Sick Leave. RCUH will be temporarily suspending the requirement for a doctor’s note after five (5) consecutive work days of illness. • Find sick leave balance on the Employee Self-Service (ESS) Payroll and Compensation> View Pay Statement, lower left corner OR in the eTimesheet employment information box.

<p>Use of sick leave by regular-status employees (50–100% FTE)</p>	<p>Employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can utilize accrued sick leave if ill and unable to report to work. • Must contact their PI if unable to report to work due to illness. • Must be placed on leave without pay if they lack sick leave. <p><u>Policy 3.660 RCUH Family Leave</u></p> <p>An employee may apply for family medical leave benefits due to his/her own personal serious health condition or to care for a sick family member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees with a serious health condition must complete the B-11a form (https://www.rcuh.com/document-library/3-000/benefits/rcuh-family-leave-application-form-b-11a/). • Employees caring for a family member must complete the B-11 form (https://www.rcuh.com/document-library/3-000/benefits/family-leave-request-form/). • Submit the completed B-11 or B-11a form to the RCUH Benefits section (rcuh_benefits@rcuh.com). The RCUH Benefits staff will contact the employee and provide him/her with copies of the WH-380E (care for self) or WH-380F (care for family member) form and provide the employee with additional guidance as needed. A determination will be made on the request. If the employee does not qualify for family medical leave, then all time off will be charged to the employee’s sick leave, followed by vacation leave. Upon exhaustion of vacation leave, the employee will be placed on leave without pay. <p>Advanced Sick Leave</p> <p>Employees who exhaust all their available sick leave may apply for advanced sick leave. They should contact the RCUH HR director to determine whether they are qualified for this benefit. If they are not qualified for advanced sick leave, the employees must use their available vacation leave and then go on a leave of absence without pay.</p>
<p>Work at home or other remote locations</p>	<p>PIs should consult Policy 3.262 RCUH Work Schedule, Work Week, and Work Hours for employees who engage in telework away from normal work offices/locations. Telework options can be offered to project staff at the PIs’ discretion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIs may allow an employee to work from home, but only if he/she can perform measurable and productive work from that location. If that is not possible, PIs should place the employee on vacation leave or, if the employee’s accrued vacation leave is exhausted, leave without pay. • PIs should place employees on telework status on a standard Monday through Friday schedule of 8 hours per day. • PIs must remind employees of time-reporting requirements: (a) paper timesheets: scan/ email timesheets to project’s timekeeper or the PI, and comply with project/RCUH payroll deadlines; (b) eTimesheet: submit eTimesheet to comply with the project/RCUH payroll deadlines. PIs who would like to put their project on the eTimesheet system should contact the RCUH HR director at least two pay periods prior to placing their employees on the system.
<p>Unemployment benefits</p>	<p>Employees who do not have work due to a temporary shutdown of project operations, exhausted their vacation leave, and placed on a leave without pay, can apply for unemployment insurance benefits. Employees should go to https://huiclaims.hawaii.gov/#/ to file an online application for unemployment insurance.</p>
<p>I-9 forms and new-hire processing</p>	<p>I-9 forms must be completed as required by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). New-hire transactions will continue under new procedures: RCUH HR will contact the PI and new hire to arrange for any in-person processing at the EWC Burns Hall.</p>
<p>RCUH training portal</p>	<p>PIs are encouraged to instruct their staff to utilize the RCUH training portal (https://rcuh.litmos.com/account/Login), which has a library of more than 350 brief sessions. Some of the sessions are required for all RCUH employees (e.g., EEO/sexual harassment prevention, workplace violence prevention, and others). Other sessions can be used for project in-service training or for staff professional development.</p>

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS AT WORK



- **COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE WHEN YOU SNEEZE OR COUGH.**

Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away; use your arm or sleeve to cover if you do not have a tissue.

- **CLEAN YOUR HANDS OFTEN.**

Wash your hands with soap and water, vigorously rubbing together front and back for 20 seconds. Or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers, rubbing hands until they are dry.



- **CLEAN SHARED SURFACES AND EQUIPMENT OFTEN.**

Use disinfectants to clean commonly touched items such as doorknobs, faucet handles, copy machines, coffee pot handles, desktops, handrails, microwave buttons, keyboards, and elevator buttons. Germs travel fast with multiple hands touching shared surfaces.

- **AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE OR MOUTH.**

Germs need an entry point, and the average adult touches his or her face once every three or four minutes. Keep hand sanitizer at your desk to use after meetings or before grabbing one of those doughnuts from the breakroom.



- **STAY HOME WHEN YOU ARE SICK AND CHECK WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER WHEN NEEDED.**

When you are sick or have flu symptoms, stay home, get plenty of rest and check with a health care provider as needed.