

## **Fralin Biomedical Research Institute Reopening Guidelines and Procedures**

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Updated July 29, 2020

### **Message from the Executive Director**

We are enthusiastic to welcome people back to on-site locations and to continue maintaining the productivity of a high powered academic medical center research and education environment. But this must be done with everyone's health and safety paramount. As a biomedical research and education enterprise, we not only have a responsibility to our colleagues and co-workers but also to visitors, research subjects and to the greater community. Thus, everyone is expected to strictly follow the protocols outlined in this document. If you encounter any violations of these protocols, please ask the person involved to adhere. If that does not result in a satisfactory outcome, please bring to the attention of building security or institute leadership.

We are ALL in this together. Please follow the protocols, encourage your colleagues to do so, remain vigilant and use common sense if you find yourself in a situation that makes you feel uncomfortable. Be respectful of others and report your concerns. The institute leadership is here to support you, to provide the safest environment that we can with reasonable mitigation strategies and to facilitate the great work on behalf of the health of the public that you are all doing together.

Thank you for your dedication to our mission and values and for all you do to make this enterprise so impactful!

Sincerely,

Mike Friedlander  
Executive Director, Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC  
Vice President for Health Sciences and Technology, Virginia Tech

### **General Information**

**Telework vs. onsite work:** People who have been working on-site at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute should already be on the approved list. For those who have been teleworking and who after discussions with their supervisor are planning to return to onsite work, please notify the FBRI Humand Resources. With permission from one's supervisor,

employees may continue to either telework, work onsite or incorporate a hybrid model with some times spent in either mode. It remains important that regardless of the work model that the employee performs all of the necessary assigned duties in a timely fashion. These policies are subject to change and will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

**Computer equipment:** For those who have taken computer equipment home to telework and who will be working onsite going into the next phase of modified operations, please place tickets with the FBRI IT staff for assistance in getting systems back up and running.

**Daily health check:** Every person that enters FBRI spaces (including Riverside building #1, #2 or #4) must first complete the daily online health check attestation and receive a green e-pass based on all four questions. The health check attestation tool (aka Daily COVID\_19 Self-Assessment Screening) can be found on the FBRI Help Center (<https://help.vtc.vt.edu>) or accessed directly via <https://fralinbiomed.info/screening>. If a red e-block is received, they should contact the HR manager for a plan of action.

**Masks/face coverings:** All persons must wear an appropriate mask/face covering that is covering their mouth and nose at all times when in any public space in the buildings (including in shared spaces with the school of medicine) including hallways, stairwells, restrooms, open administration areas, elevators, class/conference rooms, bullpens, shared offices, atrium, café, and research laboratories etc. If someone has a health-related reason or religious beliefs reason that they cannot wear a mask/face covering, please discuss with your supervisor and the HR manager to determine whether an alternative can be identified such as face shields or different work assignments that would not place them nearby others. When masks are removed for eating or drinking, that should be done in a manner that does not create exposure to others such as in one's closed office, outside the building at an appropriate social distance, in a large enough room/kitchen area that allows for appropriate social distancing from any others of at least six feet. Conference and classrooms should not be used for eating/drinking.

**Distancing:** Social distancing must be maintained at all times, including staying at least six feet from any other persons, including in labs. Where more than one person must work in close proximity (less than six feet) for any period of time over 15 minutes, N95 masks must be worn by all (except the animal care staff when in their work area). In general, only one person should ride an elevator at a time unless it is a small group such as a family.

**Meetings:** All meeting, conference and classrooms must be reserved, and include a 30 minute buffer on both ends of the meeting. Each group that meets in such rooms must have a designated person who will wipe down all surfaces and clean the room of any trash before their meeting and after their meeting. Signage and supplies will be provided at conference/class rooms for cleaning. Whenever possible and weather permits, utilization of outdoor spaces for meetings is encouraged. When meetings can be satisfactorily held by Zoom including by having individuals working at their desks in offices on-site, that is encouraged.

**Sanitizing:** Everyone should make frequent and regular use of hand washing, hand sanitizers and surface wipes.

## **Q&As**

### **Is the Research Institute open to the public?**

The front doors of the Riverside 2 building will be open during normal business hours. Guests entering must also wear masks, keep appropriate distance, sign in at the reception desk, fill out the health survey, and have their temperature scanned. The Riverside 4 building will remain on restricted access.

### **Do I have to come to work if I am concerned about catching COVID or can I continue to telework indefinitely?**

That is a decision that will be made in consultation with your supervisor that takes into account your personal circumstances and job duties. This policy is subject to change as circumstances evolve.

### **What if my job duties require all/some presence at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute and my situation is such that I cannot or prefer not to come to the FBRI to work?**

Discuss the situation with your supervisor and they will work with you to try to identify a solution. Please note that there are some jobs or aspects of certain jobs that require some/all on-site work presence.

### **Do I have to wear a mask when I am at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute?**

Masks should be worn at all times except when in a private closed room, while eating/drinking in a designated space, if you are an animal care worker while in designated spaces, or if you have health or religious reasons that prevent wearing a mask, in which case, your supervisor will work out an alternative work plan with you.

### **Do the mask rules apply across all buildings on the Health Sciences and Technology campus as well as in common spaces and at the School of Medicine?**

Yes

### **Can I work in close proximity to another person (less than 6 feet for greater than 15 minutes)?**

Yes, but only if you and the others in that situation are all wearing fitted N95 masks.

### **Do I have to complete the online [Daily COVID-19 Self-Assessment Screening](#) every day that I will be at the FBRI?**

Yes, and you must receive a green pass to work in the building that day – if you receive a red “no go,” do not enter the building and discuss plans with your supervisor and HR.

### **If I am a graduate student, is it necessary that I be on-site?**

Depending on the circumstances, it may be. Please discuss the details with your supervisor and/or graduate program director. For GRAs and GTAs, there are certain duties (research,

teaching) that may require your physical presence while others may be accomplished through teleworking. For graduate programs, there may be circumstances that require your presence in a classroom or lab – please discuss with your graduate program director. In all cases where on-site activities occur, the strict health safety guidelines including social distancing, wearing of masks, cleaning of areas, passing the daily online attestation and other health and safety mitigation policies will be in place.