

Face-to-Face/In-person Research Update

Dear Research Community:

The Provincial government has announced that we have entered **Step 2**. At this time, the Ontario Tech REB is resuming face-to-face in-person research in a graduated manner. For any studies which were suspended, a researcher must submit a change request to the REB inclusive of their current COVID-19 protocols reconfirming appropriate risk mitigations. In addition to the previous REB COVID-19 protocols, there is now an additional COVID-19 consent form addendum which researchers will need to add to their participant consent forms, consent form addendum is attached. This addendum is required for all studies involving face-to-face in-person research. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns and we would be happy to provide a consultation on these issues.

In step 2, the Ontario Tech REB and the University Operations Taskforce will allow face-to-face in-person research in a **graduated case-by-case approach** based on the COVID-19 resumption plan matrix that was circulated for consultation last week. Thank you to those who submitted comments on the draft matrix. The REB and Operations Task Force is working on a finalized matrix based on feedback received yesterday. The final matrix will be released next week on **July 7th, 2021**. This matrix is intended to inform researchers of steps moving forward.

Based on your **REB project status**, the table below outlines the **next steps**.

REB project status	Next steps
REB approval received, but paused in December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers to submit change requests to modify consent form with new COVID-19 clauses. <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers must include the new COVID-19 consent form addendum (see accompanying document). <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers should refer to section 5 of the REB's guidance document on Emerging Ethical Issues Related to Research Conduct During COVID-19 and the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (TCPS2) COVID-19 Interpretations to inform modifications to your application. <input type="checkbox"/> Re-connect with your Faculty On-campus Research Committee and the Operations Task Force to reinstate on-campus approval, if applicable.
REB approval pending, study is undergoing REB clarifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers to respond to REB clarification letter and modify consent form with the new COVID-19 clauses. <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers must include the new COVID-19 consent addendum form (see accompanying document). <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers should refer to section 5 of the REB's guidance document on Emerging Ethical Issues Related to Research Conduct During COVID-19 and the Tri-Council Policy

REB project status	Next steps
	<p>Statement 2 (TCPS2) COVID-19 Interpretations to inform modifications to your application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Re-connect with your Faculty On-campus Research Committee and Operations Task Force to reinstate on-campus approval, if applicable.
New submissions to the REB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete REB application in IRIS. <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers are encouraged to seek a consultation prior to submission to receive customized REB advice on the new requirements and ethical considerations. Contact researchethics@ontariotechu.ca to book a consultation. <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers must include the new COVID-19 consent addendum (see accompanying document). <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers should refer to section 5 of the REB's guidance document on Emerging Ethical Issues Related to Research Conduct During COVID-19 and the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (TCPS2) COVID-19 Interpretations. <input type="checkbox"/> Connect with your Faculty On-campus Research Committee and Operations Task Force to reinstate on-campus approval, if applicable.

We greatly appreciate it if you can share this information with your colleagues and students. We will continue to monitor the situation and will communicate any updates. Researchers can contact the Research Ethics Office at researchethics@ontariotechu.ca for any questions, or to book a consultation to plan for future submissions to the REB.

Sincerely,

Ruth Milman, REB Chair
Paul Yelder, REB Vice-Chair