

COVID-19: Important notice from the Research Ethics Board

Dear Research Community:

In December, the REB, due to both provincial and institutional guidance, was required to temporarily suspend all research studies involving in-person participation with human participants. We are glad to see that currently the pandemic situation appears to be improving and in light of the rapidly changing circumstances, and the Province's release of their re-opening plan, the REB would like to inform the research community that we are working diligently, with the university operations task force, to develop plans for reinstating in-person studies with human participants in a graduated approach. This graduated reopening will commence once the province reaches stage 2.

The REB is aware of the mounting pressure that researchers feel to resume in-person research, and to that end, the REB has been vigilantly monitoring the current situation and collaborating with other university REBs to ensure the application of best practices and safety of research participants in an ongoing basis. The REB is working with the operations task force to concomitantly finalize a more robust in-person decision making matrix with clear guidance. This is intended to help researchers anticipate any changes to in-person research status in a transparent manner on an ongoing basis.

The REB will continue to communicate with the research community as information becomes available. Ultimately, the decision to resume in-person research on human participants needs to align with the principles of the federal Tri-Council Policy Statement 2, provincial and institutional guidance in the interest to reduce the study participant's attributable risks to in-person research at this time.

We greatly appreciate it if you can share this information with all impacted individuals. We will continue to monitor the situation and will communicate any updates. Please see the [FAQs](#) for more details and you can find our SOPs with respect to declared emergencies on the [REB's homepage](#). Alternatively, 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.

Please stay safe and healthy,

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