



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

MEMORANDUM

Office of the Vice President for
Research and Economic Development

DATE: April 1, 2020

TO: Deans and Vice Presidents

FROM: Lynne Chronister
Vice President for Research and Economic Development

SUBJECT: COVID -19 UPDATES

The COVID-19 pandemic has rapidly changed our business practices all across campus. I wanted to give you all an update on what is happening in the Office of Research and Economic Development. This link provides you with all of the Guidance communications that have been sent out to campus and the hospitals as well as specific agency information.

<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/research/spa/spa-covid19-info.html>.

Today, we are sending out the Guidance on donating PPE items that are allowable under NIH guidance and potentially reimbursable under the CARES Act. Tomorrow, you will receive Guidance on working remotely on digital projects and an extensive document on *Essential* laboratory operations and a checklist for Laboratory Closures and Ramp-downs.

We are also in process of scheduling an on-line “Town Hall” meeting next week to focus on research and grant-related activities.

Common questions that are being raised deal with salaries and wages during this pandemic period. In order to continue to cover salaries and wages paid on grants and contracts, the University must have a policy in place related to University employees. In order to be reimbursed on federal grants, the policy must state that we are continuing to pay employee salaries. HR is developing this policy so we will be in good standing.

Two weeks ago, we began collecting plans for researchers/scholars who are continuing to carry out work while the campus is closed. The guidance we are receiving is that these plans will be especially important to document activity for our sponsors. So, if any of your faculty has not submitted plans, please encourage them to do so. I am happy to resend the log of activity that you received last week if it is helpful.

Thank you all for all of your support and encouragement during this really challenging time.

SALARIES AND WAGES ON GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

1. NSF and NIH have provided policies that if, in written policy, the University is maintaining faculty and staff on the University Payroll, they will cover, at least for the immediate future, current salaries and wages. Also, especially with NIH and NSF, there is the intent that if salaries are paid that there is some work being done to achieve the deliverables.
2. DoD has provided some guidance to date, but it is not definitive, so the Program Officers need to approve in advance, if possible.
3. Other agencies, e.g. Department of Education and Department of Energy, are expected to announce policies and we will post them when they arrive so it is necessary to contact the program officer at this time.
4. No guidance has been provided by other agencies or the State of Alabama.
5. With private sponsors, we will need to get guidance from the individual sponsors on charging salaries.
6. As of April 1st, there is no guidance on summer salaries.

Please do not hesitate to contact Gina Hedberg ghedberg@southalabama.edu , Julie Schwindt jschwindt@southalabama.edu , or Lynne Chronister lchronister@southalabama.edu if you have additional questions or to discuss getting approvals on salaries.

LC/bu