1. Q: What type of research with human subjects can continue?

A: All research conducted remotely can continue.

- Any face-to-face research with human subject must be temporarily suspended, effective immediately. Where possible, transition in-person interactions for all studies to remote interactions to limit potential exposure. All other studies must cease.

- Complete the Modification Application (HRP-203) prior to implementing any changes to your protocol, including this methodological change.

- You should especially consider altering methods to continue to support trainees and students whose academic credit and progress is dependent upon carrying out research activities. As the current situation returns to safe status, the Office of Research Integrity will work with you to make sure that your protocols are ready for re-activation.

2. Q: How can I transfer my study to be conducted remotely?

A: Specific options for conducting your study remotely include:

- Study interactions such as interviews or simple study follow-up visits may be completed by phone or video.

- If your study requires signed informed consent, consider whether you can modify study procedures by requesting a waiver of documentation of consent so that consent may be obtained without requiring a signature. To be approved to waive documentation of consent, the study must present no more than minimal risk of harm to participants and involve no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside the research context. Contact irb@utsa.edu to ask about this potential modification.

- If you have a multi-site study, contact study sponsors to ask about procedures for modifying protocol schedules. Be sure all changes are implemented consistently across all sites.

3. Q: What changes need to be approved by the IRB?
A: Any planned **modifications** to study procedures, such as a shift from in-person to remote interactions, should be submitted to the IRB using the **Modification Application (HRP-203)**, unless the study is approved as exempt. Indicate on the modification form that the change is being implemented as a COVID-19 safety precaution to help the IRB prioritize the submission.

- Any changes to study procedures made to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to research participants, including those to reduce potential exposure to SARS-CoV-2, or to continue to provide medically necessary study care to participants who have been placed in isolation **do not** need prior approval by the IRB. All such changes should be reported to the IRB using the **Promptly Reportable Information (HRP-204)** within 5 days as an unanticipated event involving risk to subjects or others.

- If you need to change your consent procedures to waive the requirement for a signature so that consent can be done remotely, submit a study **Modification Application (HRP-203)** requesting to waive documentation of consent if your study is: (1) no greater than minimal risk and (2) meets the criteria for qualifying for a waiver of documentation of consent. Guidance can be found [here](#).

Questions? Email irb@utsa.edu.
**Contacts:** [Marcia Isaacs 210-458-6179](#) or [Tammy Lopez 210-458-6473](#)

4. **Q:** How can I minimize exposure among my research team?

A: Consider the following measures to minimize exposure if you must gather in person to access equipment, analyses, etc.

- Ensure that hand sanitizer and hand washing facilities are readily available and encouraged.

- Implement research team member screening to minimize exposure risk. See below for possible screening questions.

- Establish rigorous disinfecting protocols for any equipment, manipulatives, or other study equipment that were used with participants. Contact the Lab Safety Division if you need guidance on appropriate disinfection.

5. **Q:** How might I conduct a pre-screen of my research team as it relates to COVID-19?
A: All team members should be vigilant in self-monitoring of potential exposure and symptoms. Implement extra precautions or only meet remotely especially if any team members fall into a high-risk category:

- Underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, and diabetes
- Weakened immune system
- Pregnant
- Over 60 years of age

**Team member screening questions** might include the following:

1. Have you had any of the following symptoms in the past 2 weeks, even if they were mild?
   
   I. Fever
   II. Cough
   III. Shortness of breath
   IV. Sore throat

2. Have you had close contact with a person who is under investigation for possible COVID-19?

   Close contact is defined by the CDC as:
   (a) being within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time. Close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a health care waiting area or room or being close in an enclosed area with a COVID-19 case or
   
   (b) having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed or sneezed on).

3. In the past 3 weeks, have you visited a country with sustained (ongoing) occurrence of COVID-19, such as:

   I. China
   II. Iran
   III. Europe
   IV. Japan
   V. South Korea

/END