NDSU & SNRS Related Procedures Modified by COVID-19
Compilation last edited 5/5/2020

This document’s intent is to create an organized and up-to-date list of all the procedures relating to summer research (and beyond) that have been modified due to COVID-19. This includes new and modified procedures. The most recent version of this form as well as other relevant forms will be available on the SNRS Resources page (https://www.ndsu.edu/snrs/resources/)

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Research Technicians and Other Hourly Employees
CRUCIAL DISTINCTION: Are new hourly employees “In-State” meaning they are currently living/working within North Dakota (or a city neighboring ND, like Moorhead, MN), or are they coming from out of state?

Hiring In-State Employees
- Please inform Jacinda of all new hires at least one week before the employee’s anticipated first date. As part of this, Jacinda will require a completed SNRS Hire form (available at https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/snrs/Files/SNRS_Hire_Form_2020.pdf).
  - Please indicate on the SNRS Hire form if the employee will be traveling to MN, SD, or MT as part of their employment. This will help make sure the new employee can receive a letter indicating that they are allowed to travel. However, please note that this is in addition to requesting approval for every trip to be taken out of state (see Out of State Travel below).
- Before the employee’s first day, s/he should visit the NDSU HR office.
  - HR office is still open Monday-Friday 8am-5pm.
  - At the HR office s/he must show acceptable identification documents (https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/snrs/Files/I-9_documents__rev_10-21-19_.pdf), and will fill out an I-9 form. When that form is filled out the employee will receive a yellow approval sheet.
Please note that identification forms can be shown and I-9 form completed at most REC offices. If the employee is working at an REC, s/he can complete the form there, even if s/he is being paid through a PI on main campus.

- The yellow approval sheet and a completed employee information form (available [here](https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/snrs/Files/HR-EmploymentInfo.pdf)) should both be emailed to Jacinda at jacinda.wollan@ndsu.edu
  - Scanned copies work best for emailing forms that are not electronic.
  - Make sure that Jacinda has the appropriate email address for the employee for all remaining onboarding emails and other communications.

### Hiring Out of State Employees - QUARANTINE REQUIRED

- Please inform Jacinda of all new hires at least one week before the employee’s anticipated first date. As part of this, Jacinda will require a completed SNRS Hire form (available at [here](https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/snrs/Files/SNRS_Hire_Form_2020.pdf)).
  - Please indicate on the SNRS Hire form if the employee will be traveling to MN, SD, or MT as part of their employment. This will help make sure the new employee can receive a letter indicating that they are allowed to travel. However, please note that this is in addition to requesting every trip that to be taken out of state (see Out of State Travel below).

- Student and seasonal workers coming to North Dakota from international locations or from other states must undergo a 14-day quarantine.
  - More information on how to safely undergo quarantine can be found on the ND Department of Health web site: ([here](https://www.health.nd.gov/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/travel-quarantine-orders)).
  - All quarantine plans must be approved ahead of time.
    - To get approval, email plans to Dr. Casey, who will work with Dr. Lardy to reach a final decision.
    - Quarantine plans should include:
      - Where, when, and how the quarantine will take place.
      - If the employee will be paid during this quarantine what activities s/he will undergo.
      - Plan for communication with employee.
    - Example: “I am hiring a seasonal beginning 6 April. The employee has already completed her HR paperwork and has been on-boarded through Jacinda. She is currently under a shelter-in-place order in Moorhead and has self-quarantined for two week prior to today. Her position will begin by conducting literature reviews and article summaries and is set to work from home. We will coordinate phone and video meetings to help her through the initial startup, but for the medium-term (weeks to a few months) she is prepared to work from home. Once we get the all clear to
work at research stations, I will again review her activities and make sure she has been quarantined for two weeks prior to field work."

● In order to be paid and start their employment, workers should initiate their onboarding processes on the day they arrive in ND and start their quarantine.
  ○ HR can help start the process remotely. Workers should work directly with Sara Oestrich in the HR office (sara.oestrich@ndsu.edu / 701.231.8961) and submit documents to her electronically.
    ■ 1) Employees should complete and submit section one of the I-9 form (https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/snrs/Files/I-9__rev_10-21-2019_.pdf)
    ■ 2) Employees will also need to submit electronic copies (photos or scans) of acceptable identification documents (https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/snrs/Files/I-9_documents__rev_10-21-19_.pdf)
  ○ As soon as the quarantine is completed, employees will need to go in person to the HR office and show the original forms of identification.
    ○ Make sure that Jacinda (jacinda.wollan@ndsu.edu) knows that HR has been contacted about the forms and send her a completed employee information form (available at: https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/vpfa/forms/HR-EmploymentInfo.pdf)
      ■ Also make sure that Jacinda has the appropriate email address for the employee for all remaining onboarding emails and other communications.
  ○ Please note that identification forms can be shown and I-9 form completed at most REC offices.
    ■ Normally, an employee that is working at an REC can complete the form there, even if they are being paid through a main campus PI.
    ■ An employee who will be working at an REC but must start quarantine when they arrive should call his/her REC office and ask whether they should start paperwork through the REC or HR.

Visits

● If there is a strong research-related reason, short-term visits to campus or other areas by non-NDSU personnel are possible, even from out of state visitors.
  ○ Examples may include someone coming to install or fix an important piece of research equipment.
  ○ Such visits should include absolute minimum contact with all personnel, and even then, face masks and proper distancing should be maintained.
● In addition, where the visitor worked should be kept empty for at least 24 hours.
● Authorization for each such visit should be requested from Dr. Casey. Such request should include:
  ○ Reason for the visit
- Plan for minimizing exposure to the visitor
- Plan for informing all relevant personnel to help them avoid contact with the visitor.

**Required Trainings**

- **New Hourly Employees**
  - Baseline Safety (on-line) – complete within 7 days after date of hire
  - Equal Opportunity / Title IX – complete within 30 days after hire date
    - On-line training is sufficient for seasonal employees
    - Permanent, full-time employees should take the live remote training that fulfills the in-person training
  - If the employee will be working in a lab, workshop space, or anyplace chemicals might be used, additional trainings are required.
    - All such employees must complete *Laboratory Safety Course Module 1: Employee Right to Know* before they are allowed access to the workspace.
    - If activities might include the generation of any hazardous or universal waste (i.e. chemicals, used fluorescent lamps, used batteries, or used oil) they must also complete *Lab and Chem In-Person Module 2 (Waste Handling)* before they are allowed access.

**Hourly Employees - Time Slips**

- As part of their onboarding, new hourly employees will be given the procedure for regularly turning in time slips.
- Given work from home restrictions, follow these steps for every time slip.
  - Employee should scan or take a picture of the completed time slip and email this to their supervisor.
  - The supervisor should indicate their approval and forward the attachment to Jacinda (*jacinda.wollan@ndsu.edu*).
    - If the supervisor does not approve or there is a problem with the time slip, s/he should resolve the situation with the employee.

**Travel Guidelines and Restrictions - ALL EMPLOYEES**

- **Short Distance Travel**
  - Short distance travel is defined as being within a 5 minute drive, for example from a campus building or REC headquarters building to a nearby field or plot location.
  - For these trips, it is not necessary for personnel to travel in separate vehicles. Multiple people can ride in the same vehicle.
However, personnel in vehicles with multiple occupants should wear masks during these short duration trips.

**Longer Travel within North Dakota**

- Any and all other in-state travel for Extension or AES purposes must be approved by Dr. Casey. He will review requests and determine whether or not to grant you an authorization for the trip. For these in-state travel requests, this is the final approval.
  - Requests for travel should include
    - Dates
    - Locations
    - Purposes
    - Number of people in cars
    - Assurance that travelers will be taking proper precautions, including avoiding areas with high community spread, behavior at travel location, etc.
  - Example: “This travel on 5/4/20 is to visit a field site in Richland, ND to collect soil samples as part of a specialty crops project with PI’s Dr. Jones and Smith. Employee one will travel in separate vehicles and will not stop or contact others along the way. The second employee, a PhD student, is traveling in a separate vehicle and will maintain at least 6 ft separation while in the field.”
  - Each and every travel must be submitted and approved. However, it is acceptable to submit a group of requests in one batch, for example all the travel that would take place for all lab personnel over the course of one week.
- Only one individual is allowed per car for this travel
  - The only exceptions are individuals who live and work in close proximity to each other, referred to as being in the same “circle of friends”. For employees to be in the same circle of friends they must know and understand each other’s comings and goings and whether they have maintained social distancing during off hours. It also implies a major level of trust that the other person has maintained adequate social behaviors that would limit exposure to COVID-19.
    - Examples include spouses, roommates, those housed together at a field station, or other partners that might not live together but socialize almost exclusively.
    - Even under these exceptions, best practices should be applied, including wearing face masks within the vehicle and self-distancing wherever possible.
As long as everyone involved is in the same circle of friends, there is no limit to the number of people who can be in the car at the same time.

- Individuals who are co-workers, but are not in the same circle of friends are not exempted. In such cases, all individuals must travel in separate vehicles.
- If an employee is ever uncomfortable with the travel arrangements they should speak to their supervisor and/or Dr. Casey.

**Out-of-State Travel**

- All out-of-state travel, including travel in neighboring states (MN, SD, MT) now requires approval by the President of NDSU. Please continue to fill out the online form (https://apps.ndsu.edu/busforms/) as you have in the past to request approval. Approval will not be automatic.
  - When submitting the online travel forms, please add more details (3-4 sentences) about the project and why travel is necessary. The more explicit you can be on the travel request, the better.
  - Each and every out-of-state approval request must ultimately receive approval by the President of NDSU.
  - No batch requests are possible for out-of-state travel. A separate approval must be submitted for every trip.
  - There are no longer blanket out-of-state travel authorizations, and all previously approved blanket authorizations are no longer valid. Each out-of-state trip requires a separate authorization. When requesting authorization to travel, clearly indicate in the purpose section why the travel is essential and how you will practice physical distancing during the travel.
  - For those traveling to Montana, South Dakota, or Minnesota for agricultural research activities, work with Dr. Casey and Jacinda to get an official letter from Human Resources to carry during travel. Get this letter the first time you seek authorization for a trip to a neighboring state. You do not need a separate letter from HR each time you travel, but you do need authorization from the President for each out-of-state travel.

**Greenhouse and Laboratory Procedures**

- New greenhouse procedures are in effect for all NDSU and NDAES greenhouses (https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/snrs/Files/Greenhouse_Guidance_with_Signature.pdf)
  - Please make sure all greenhouse employees have read and signed the new policies, and that they follow the procedures throughout their work.
  - Coordination among workers is required because of the new guidelines, especially in shared spaces such as the Waldron greenhouse.
- An Outlook calendar exists for those who need to reserve time to work in Waldron greenhouse
- If a worker needs a chunk of time to work in Waldron greenhouse, s/he should find an empty time in the calendar and reserve the time they will need.
- Please talk with Dr. Tom DeSutter (thomas.desutter@ndsu.edu) for access and approval.

- Individuals working in laboratories or other NDSU facilities should follow all relevant rules and safety guidelines. In addition, social distancing should constantly be enforced.