

CSU/OSI: Scientific Boating and Diving Field Work
~Critical Operations Supplemental Guidelines~
Effective: 4-1-2020

COVID-19 CA Executive Order

Overview: The Campuses of the California State University, have adopted federal and state guidelines requiring individuals to stay home or at their place of residence, except as needed to maintain continuity of operation of the federal critical infrastructure sectors. This order remains in effect until further notice.

CSU Policy: <https://www2.calstate.edu/coronavirus>

CA State Guidance: <https://covid19.ca.gov/>

Research is an essential function of CSU/OSI and thus, scientific boating and diving project operations that campus leadership has identified as critical require that our program be defined as Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers. When possible Principle Investigators and Laboratory Managers should cease non-critical field work in accordance with ongoing system wide communications.

Purpose: Due to the nature of the work environment all critical CSU/OSI Scientific Boating and Diving operations will continue with appropriate procedures in place to ensure social distancing and the health and welfare of participants are protected as much as possible during this time.

Any proposed activities under CSU/OSI auspices must have special approval, on a case by case basis, with a proper endorsement from the CSU/OSI Diving Control Board, and Boating Safety Committee.

Some projects may also require specific endorsement from individual campus Environmental Health and Safety and/or Risk Management.

This document serves as supplemental guidelines for boating and diving projects seeking to preserve life, or service critical equipment and infrastructure that could result in significant loss.

Critical Research Considerations: Any scheduling of essential / critical operations must happen in a manner that considers all risk variables and the potential for exposure to COVID-19 for each individual person well in advance. Prior to scheduling and requesting a project endorsement supervisors and managers should first ensure that the work satisfies the following items.

- ❓ **Research that must be maintained for the health and safety of human subjects.**
- ❓ **Research for which discontinuation would generate data and sample loss that would be effectively irreplaceable.**
- ❓ **Maintenance of critical equipment and a safe standby mode of laboratories.**
- ❓ **Maintaining critical animal populations and/or that would impact the ethical conduct of research with animal subjects.**
- ❓ **COVID-19 research with a timeline relevant to the current pandemic.**

Reminder: All research requiring in-person social interaction must be conducted with social distancing in mind. If you are sick, you must remain home and monitor your symptoms; possibly up to 14 days. Return to work only after you have been completely free of symptoms for a full 24 hours.

Essential or Critical Operations: If it is determined that scientific boating or diving operations are essential or critical: teams must conduct an in-depth pre-mission risk assessment, GAR or equivalent, employ extra measures to ensure enhanced general health precautions, bio hazard protections and ensure that decontamination methods are employed.

Team health and fitness must be at the forefront of all decision making and shall consider the potential for infection.

If members of the team become infected before or during the mission how will that impact their families and greater community?

Team and personal considerations:

- ❓ How many team members are needed to safely and effectively accomplish the mission?
- ❓ What is the possibility that someone on the team may be infected due to their potential for exposure outside of the mission?
- ❓ Where are each of the boat crew / dive team for this mission coming from?
- ❓ What has been the potential exposure level for you and your family?
 - (Hot zones with high potential or A- symptomatic persons)
- ❓ How will you exercise protective measures to and from the lab or research site?
- ❓ Can you avoid potential contamination while interacting with coworkers in a confined area?
- ❓ What additional items can reduce risks during the mission?
 - (Protective gloves, eye protection, masks, regular cleaning of surfaces, soap & water, antibacterial sanitizers...)
- ❓ What are the ramifications if you become exposed and return home to your family/community?

Travel Considerations: CSU/OSI Boating and Diving research extends to nearly every county across the state of California and beyond our state and national borders. Each team must perform an additional risk assessment and implement critical protocols prior to travel and engaging in close quarters human contact. All travel must be approved and registered with through your individual campus travel system.

Cal State Travel System:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

It is very important to know where you are going and where your transit routes will take you. Check local COVID-19 State and County infection updates and legal requirements prior to traveling to any research sites; some counties require written permits from the county Health Department for any non-essential / critical activities.

CDC Updates: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>

USA State & County Updates: <https://usafacts.org/visualizations/coronavirus-covid-19-spread-map/>

Project Safety Plans: Individual safety plans should be updated and amended by PIs and Lab managers to include additional workplace precautions, new operational step procedures for bio- hazard PPE and to ensure social distancing when handling equipment. Also include any additional equipment that will be provided.

Further considerations: Should there be a boating or diving related emergency; will emergency care be available, will the emergency response further strain emergency services and personnel, or lead to potential exposure for members of the team?

Participation PPE Guidelines: It should be documented that team members are trained in the proper use of PPE; fit testing masks, respirators, special clothing, donning, removal and disposal, and are aware of their individual and collective responsibilities to prevent exposure and the contamination of others. Each team member / participant must communicate their understanding and acceptance and be offered the opportunity to not participate without any undue pressure or concern for reprisal.

Scientific Diving: **[NOTE]** *Additional diving guidelines and protocols will be provided by through the CSU/OSI Diving Safety Office.*

General Precautions: Should the mission be approved and take place it is important to employ all the measures with earnest.

- ❓ **All hands must wear gloves throughout the workplace, change and replace them frequently. Follow your campus guidelines.**
- ❓ **Soap and clean water, disinfectant spray and wipes must be provided and used regularly.**
- ❓ **Apply disinfectant to all interior and common surfaces / equipment before, during, and after the mission.**
- **Maintain 6'-10' social distancing, avoid sharing of items to all extent possible.**
- ❓ **Disinfect yourself and any items prior to engaging with others or transiting to another location and before returning home.**

Summary: It is understandable that these measures and precautions may appear to be difficult or extreme, but if followed and employed as necessary it will severely limit the transmission of the virus and rates of infection. Directives from community health managers, Medical First Responders, Emergency Room physicians, resident Epidemiologists, and county supervisors Emergency Operations Center briefings indicate that actions outside of the home should be conducted with caution and a necessary purpose. Small actions can make a big difference for better or worse.

Some of the general community have still not taken heed and it is expected that transmission and detection of the Covid-19 virus will increase during the weeks ahead. It is not safe to assume that others know how to employ general precautions and we don't know how others conduct themselves and who they have been in contact with prior to engaging with us.

A heightened sense of situational awareness with limited movements and interactions will continue to be essential for our health and well-being as well as that of the general public.

Safety Support: Please contact your supervisors, managers and your CSU/OSI Diving and Boating Safety Officer with any questions and for specific guidance to help maintain critical functions involving any boating and diving operations.