

April 24, 2020

Dear Members of the Manne Research Institute community,

You are now aware that the COVID-19 pandemic has created financial challenges for our organization that are not different from our peers. The situation can be corrected but will require an “all in” approach to mitigate the challenges and get our missions back on track. We write to provide guidance in support of your research activities during this dynamic time.

We are grateful and energized that in many cases our research work continues during COVID-19 despite the various disruptions from the pandemic and appreciate the many adjustments you have made in support of these efforts. We cannot stop our drive for new knowledge, and our research programs are critical in our overall vision of a healthier future for all children.

Our shared response to the financial impact of COVID-19 within the research enterprise, a critical part of the Medical Center mission and workforce, is in alignment with our overall organizational guidance and actions. As within the clinical, educational, and advocacy areas of our institution, we are taking steps to stabilize our finances in support of mission critical activities. Our research mission has shared and distinct challenges with the rest of the organization. Our guidance, therefore, keeps both in mind. In addition to the guiding principles that Dr. Shanley communicated last Friday, we are using the following principles to guide our next steps in the Manne Research Institute:

- Sustain our research mission to the greatest extent possible acknowledging that these are unprecedented times
- Be careful and thoughtful stewards of our extramural and intramural funding to maximize its impact for research teams and the institution while minimizing the negative impact on the financial health of the organization.
- Coordinate and collaborate in our response with Northwestern University and continue to make the necessary adjustments required during on-site restrictions.

As communicated earlier, we must pursue a multi-pronged approach to support our research activities in this challenging environment:

Research Studies:

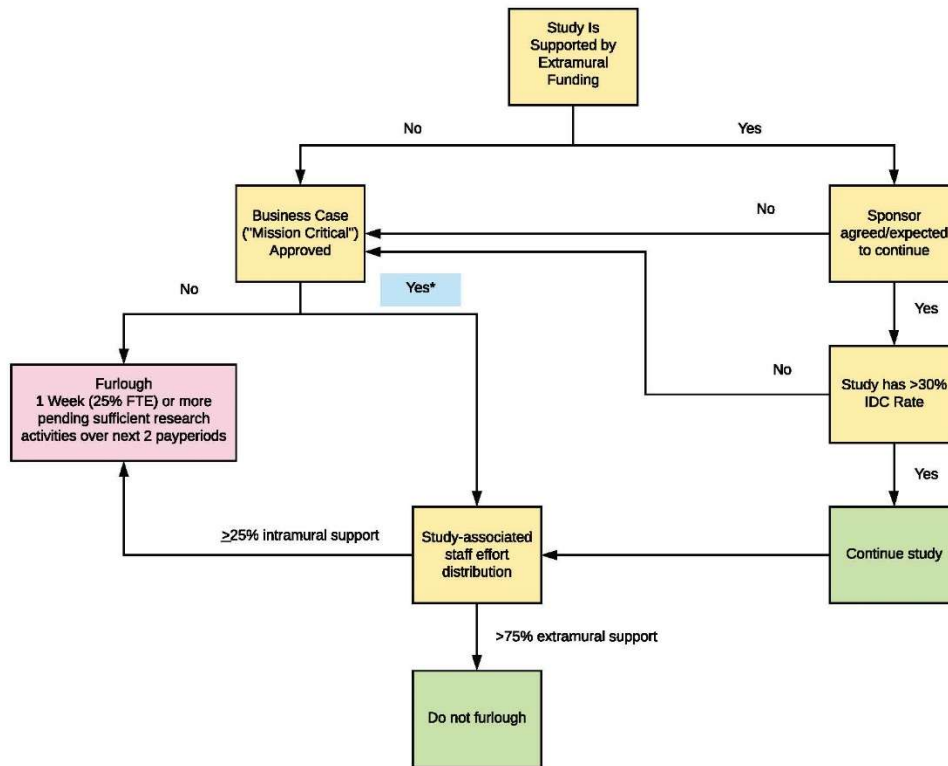
All of our research programs are vital components of the research enterprise and our goal of advancing scientific knowledge and generating new innovations. Our guidance for essential and non-essential research activities remains unchanged. All non-essential research activities must be conducted remotely. Essential research functions must be reviewed and approved. In addition, given the financial challenges we face, we will be reviewing all research studies to ensure alignment with our organizational focus on Mission Critical, Business Needs during this COVID-19 period. Mission Critical research may include, but will not be limited to, research with

expected near-term sustained extramural funding potential, extramurally funded research or research with committed deliverables with <30% IDC, recruitment-committed research, donor-specified research, and career development research.

- a. Federal and Non-Federal Grants - whenever possible, we encourage federal and non-federal grant studies to continue. We recognize that under the current research restrictions, much of non-essential research has been moved remotely and some research has been paused due to limitations of functions that cannot be accomplished off-site. We will continue to assess research restrictions along with state and local policy and will provide further updates around increased on-site activities when appropriate. Extramurally-funded studies with matching or supplementary intramural support will require additional leadership review for their continuation through the Mission Critical Research Review process outlined below.
- b. Industry - as with our other extramurally-funded research, we encourage industry-sponsored research studies to continue as either approved on-site essential research or off-site as non-essential research studies have moved remotely. Where remote activities are not possible, non-essential research studies should continue to be paused unless previously approved as essential research.
- c. Program-Directed Philanthropy - studies supported entirely or partially by program-directed philanthropy that can practically continue during current essential research restrictions will be reviewed for approval and continuation through the Mission Critical Research Review process outlined below. Studies with this mechanism of support that cannot practically continue will be paused.
- d. Internally Funded Research - research projects that can be practically continued during current restrictions *and* are funded partially or completely by internal funds, including those funded by start-up, philanthropic, and discretionary accounts, will be reviewed individually.

Research Personnel:

We are cognizant of the unique and complex funding arrangements we have for our research teams, including funding that spans the Institute and Departments/Divisions, staff positions supported by multiple funding sources, and commitments and obligations we have to our extramural sponsors. As outlined above, our goal is to continue our research programs as possible in this dynamic environment. To this end, below please find a decision-tree to aid in determinations of unpaid furloughs for research staff under the larger institutional guidance:



The leading principle for staff furlough decisions should follow the Medical Center guidance on staffing to meet business needs (i.e., research study needs) and sharing the burden of reduced compensation as equitably as possible while mitigating the burden for as many of our coworkers as possible.

Requests for Business Case (“Mission Critical”) research should be submitted at: [Mission-Critical Research Review under COVID-19](#) (form).

a. Research Staff on Visas

Faculty/PIs with research staff on visas should contact Cassandra Lucas to discuss.

b. New and Replacement Staff

All new and replacement staff positions are on hold regardless of funding. Requests for mission-critical exceptions should be sent to Pat Seed and Cassandra Lucas. The requests will be reviewed with Senior Leadership at the Research Institute and Medical Center.

c. Trainees

All graduate students may continue their research training. Residents and fellows paid by their medical training programs may also continue participating in research activities. Research-paid residents and fellows will follow other research staff guidance.

d. Students and Interns

All currently paid students will follow other research staff guidance. All unpaid students and interns should be paused. All summer students and interns, paid and unpaid, are on hold and will be reassessed in mid-May. Investigators should not individually solicit or accept summer trainees without leadership approval. Applications for previously solicited institutionally-sponsored summer internships (such as the Katz Program) will still be considered and decisions rendered with the anticipation that a training experience may occur during some part of the summer.

Discretionary Spending:

The following uses of discretionary spending for research-related activities are paused immediately:

- Travel
- Conferences and meetings
- Catering
- Group Retreats

Research supplies, services (i.e., Core work, contracted services, etc.), publication costs, software, and other expenses directly related to a specific research project are allowed. These expenditures will be reviewed monthly and allowable expenses may be adjusted as needed.

Capital:

All capital projects and purchases are on hold, including new and continuing construction and renovation, and equipment purchases. Requests for mission-critical exceptions should be sent to Pat and Cassandra and will be reviewed with Senior Leadership at the Research Institute and Medical Center. Additionally, service contracts associated with current equipment will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

FAQs:

Immediately questions regarding research staff funding sources and percentages, study or award timeframes, or study indirect rates should be sent to:

RBMFinancialProjection@luriechildrens.org.

All other questions should be sent to:

researchguidance@luriechildrens.org.

A link to FAQs will also be forthcoming.

We regret the new challenges these steps may have on your research programs but believe that aggressive action now will pay long-term dividends. Nevertheless, we recognize that these adjustments will be difficult for everyone. Despite the challenges put on our research community, we know that you all are creative and resilient and are confident that you and your team will continue to be productive. In turn, we will work to mitigate the long-term impact on research programs as much as possible and will continue to provide updates on how and when we will start to ramp up on-site research activities to return fully to our enduring mission to improve children's health.

Please reach out to one of us with questions regarding this communication. We are grateful to have each of you in our research community

Kind Regards

Matt, Pat & Cassandra

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