**COVID-19 Safety Standard Operating Procedures for the Microscopy Suite, Imaging Technology Group, Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology**

The Microscopy Suite, on the basement level of the Beckman Institute, will be reopened to a limited extent on or after Monday, June 8, 2020, starting at an estimated ten to twenty percent capacity. Users who have already been trained on the instruments they will be operating must contact Suite Staff beforehand in order to be authorized to re-enter the building, to re-enter the Microscopy Suite, and to schedule time on the calendars. Users must also acknowledge that they have read and agreed to this document as well as the [Division of Research Safety COVID-19 Safety training](http://links.illinois.edu/f/a/4ZPdONGBqiBOUoxK_X7Wyw~~/AAMFlAA~/RgRgsnigP0QxaHR0cHM6Ly9kcnMuaWxsaW5vaXMuZWR1L1BhZ2UvQ09WSUQxOUNhbXB1c1NhZmV0eVcDc3BjQgoALKDzz140ccOJUhRzcm9sc29uQGlsbGlub2lzLmVkdVgEAAAABA~~).

Walk-Ins are not permitted. All activity in the Microscopy Suite at this time will require reservations and prior permission.

Training for new users is presently not supported. Microscopy Suite staff may agree to accept samples from untrained researchers and perform and provide the requisite sample preparation and imaging, spectral collection, or other analytic data collection for those researchers.

Users must wear gloves and facemasks at all times. We will provide them on the counter in the Wet Lab (B612), at the square green table just past the ESEM room (B606L), and on the counter in room B420B. Hand sanitizer and 70% ethanol or 70% isopropanol, with Kimwipes, will be provided.

Wet Lab users must be authorized by the Facility Manager to work with chemicals. Lab coats (in addition to nitrile and when appropriate, latex gloves, and face masks, as noted) are to be used when working with chemicals that require use of the fume hood in the Wet Lab (B612). We will not provide lab coats to users. Suite users may bring their own lab coats, packaged, and they must be repackaged before the users leave. Note that in the Wet Lab strong acids have already been disallowed. Work with chemicals will generally involve mixing and dispensing stains, fixatives, buffers, dehydrants, and embedding media for electron microscopy.

The Suite will provide tables or countertops in at least three locations, as noted above (square green table past B606L, B420B, B612), that will allow us or our users to lay out and cut plastic wrap (provided), which they must position over keyboards, computer mouses, joysticks, seating, and optical microscopes, ***including eyepieces***. Microscope stages will not be fully covered, and ***plastic wrap must be kept away from lamp housings or other hot surfaces***.Presently we are requiring our user base to cut plastic wrap to size over clean counter or table surfaces. When the racks for plastic wrap arrive, we will mount them on convenient walls at chest height so the plastic wrap can be more readily rolled out and cut to size.

Staff will not always be in the building. Suite users are required to ***wipe down work surfaces in the vicinity of the instrument they are using*** with provided disinfectants (70% ethanol or 70% isopropanol on Kimwipes, but ***never wet enough so that they drip liquids***) before starting and after finishing their work.

Some instrument rooms will have more specific sets of requirements/diagrams for proper instrument use posted on the walls.

For light microscopy, when slides or samples are placed on the stage, handlers of those slides/samples must spray 70% ethanol or 70% isopropanol on their gloves and wait 30+ seconds for it to evaporate before continuing their work. Other alcohols, bleach mixtures, or disinfectants must not be used in microscope rooms or on instrument surfaces in any other rooms. ***Disinfectant leaking into or dripping onto the optics, mechanical components, or electronics of microscopes can cause costly damage; thus no disinfectants, including 70% alcohol, should be sprayed onto or near any of the microscopes. Without confirmation or permission from a staff member, never wipe any parts of a microscope with disinfectant.***

Please note that ***many disinfectants (such as 70% ethanol) are flammable***. Take precautionary measures against fire risk from static discharge sparks (particularly important when working around an optical table in a carpeted room, such as the Stereology, Inspection Microscope, Deep-UV, Raman confocal, SteREO Discovery V20, or Microspectroscopy rooms). ***After disinfectant is applied, wait 30+ seconds until 1) effective disinfection occurs and 2) flammable substances dry out, then wave your hands around the area to remove any vapors that may be floating around.***

Because some rooms in the Microscopy Suite have multiple instruments in them, and most rooms are too small to allow six-foot separation between users, users must monitor calendars for potential overlaps; Microscopy Suite Staff will be routinely monitoring calendars for this purpose as well. Overlaps are possible in rooms B674 (NanoSight NS300, Accusizer FX, Anton Paar, and NICOMP 380ZLS particle sizers), B604 (MicroCT, Bio MicroCT, Nano 3DX, and CTLab GX130), B612 (sputter coaters, dual-metal evaporator, fume hood, plasma asher, glow discharge), B606E (Inspection Light Microscope, Stereology Workstation), B606I (SteREO Discovery V20 microscope, MicroSpectroscopy Workstation), and B650R (critical point dryers, carbon evaporator, ultramicrotomes, upright tensile stage, fiber puller/micropipette puller, argon plasma cleaner).

In rooms B604, B612, and B650G, it is possible to have as many as two users at once if it is feasible to communicate and agree to six-foot separation.

To reach or return from rooms B500E, B420B, B604, and B604B, researchers must walk on the right side of the hallway (coming and going) and wait for persons coming from the other direction to pass. Signs will be up to indicate this at both ends of the hallway; similarly, stairwells in the building will be marked for Up or Down travel.

With most of the Microscopy Suite positioned in the central area of the basement, the central/north stairwell (Stairwell D) has been designated for Up travel only. To enter the basement via the stairs (Down travel) it is necessary to walk downstairs from the northernmost of the two east stairwells.

The Vis Lab Studio B650G, part of the Vis Lab but housed within the Microscopy Suite, will be maintained at one person only.

 Please contact us (itg-ftstaff@beckman.illinois.edu) with any questions you might have.