**Contact Information**

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# Overview

A -80 degree C freezer is located on level B4 of the Northwest Building. Researchers need to access the freezer to store biological samples as part of their research.

This SOP addresses how researchers should interact with the freezer while adhering to procedural modifications due to COVID-19. The procedures were developed within the framework of the Harvard University Research Laboratory Re-Entry Plan, the CDC’s Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting, and the standards enacted by the Harvard Committee on Microbiological Safety (COMS).

# Accessing the Freezer Area

# From the B4 elevators, researchers should enter the building area that contains the freezer through the ‘back’ corridor immediate to the left off the elevators, rather than by traveling through the CBS Neuroimaging suite, unless they are already in the CBS Neuroimaging suite as part of a scheduled booking.

All doors to the freezer (along either route) have kim-wipe stations installed so that the researcher can use a wipe as a physical barrier between their hand and the doorknob. Researchers should wear two sets of gloves while handling specimens at the freezer (standard sterile gloves required for handling saliva, along with a special pair of gloves over top that are required to interact with the -80 freezer), along with Harvard issued surgical masks.

If researchers encounter other people in the corridor, they should move so as to maintain 6 feet of distance whenever possible. Only one researcher should visit the freezer at a time. The only exception to the one-researcher rule is in the unusual event a new trainee needs to be shown where the freezer is for the first time; in that case, two researchers may go together.

Accessing the freezer area (from either route) requires ID swipe access, which is the same access granted to use the CBS Neuroimaging suite. Any researcher who needs access to the freezer only should contact Tammy Moran to set up access once their protocol has been approved and the researcher has undergone all necessary trainings.

# Accessing the Freezer

# Typically, researchers visit the freezer to deposit samples. For this procedure, when researchers reach the freezer, they should:

# Use hand sanitizer that is next to the freezer on their gloved hands.

# Use a disinfecting wipe to wipe down the freezer door handle.

# Put on the freezer gloves (while continuing to wear sterile gloves).

# Open the freezer and place samples.

# Close the freezer.

# Remove freezer gloves.

# Use a disinfecting wipe to wipe down the freezer door handle.

# Remove rubber gloves.

# Use hand sanitizer on un-gloved hands.

1. Leave area, using kimwipes on any doorhandle encountered on the way out.
2. Wash hands with soap and water immediately after exiting corridors.

If researchers are going to the freezer to remove samples, they should continue to wear their rubber gloves until they deposit the samples in their final locations. Once sample are placed, they should remove their gloves and wash their hands with soap and water at the first sink they have access to.

Biosafety Approvals

The Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) for Harvard is the Committee on Microbiological Safety (COMS). COMS requires researchers to register all in vivo and in vitro research involving biological materials. Any use of the freezer will require researchers to seek approval of handling the biosamples in a way that adheres to COVID-19 regulations. Research reopening applications proposing use of the freezer for biosample storage should include evidence that IBC/COMS has approved of individual project plans to handle biosamples (<https://www.ehs.harvard.edu/programs/biological-project-registration>).

Adherence

This SOP document will be distributed to and reviewed by all researchers who use the freezer. Failure to adhere to the guidelines provided in the SOP will result in the immediate suspension of access to the freezer and neuroimaging core facilities and mock scanner facilities.

Emergency Shutdown Procedure

If an individual user of the mock scan room should test positive for COVID-19, they will immediately contact Harvard University Health Services (HUHS) who will determine further actions to be taken.