

UVic Human Research Ethics COVID-19 Bulletin #7 **Guidance for In-person Research with Human Participants**

Date: April 21, 2022
To: Faculty, Student, and Staff Researchers
From: Sandra Gibbons, Chair, Human Research Ethics Board
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The requirements and guidance in this Bulletin supersede those included in previous UVic COVID-19 Bulletins and guidelines. This guidance is subject to change if conditions warrant, such as updated orders from the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) and direction from the UVic offices.

The University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) coordinates their COVID guidance with direction from:

- [UVic Occupational Health, Safety and Environment](#) (OHSE)
- [Associate Vice-President Research Operations](#)

While public health restrictions are easing in BC - and in transition globally - researchers should continue to consider ways to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission within research teams, with participants and in communities.

Researchers planning in-person activities during the pandemic must be prepared for a sudden shut down in the event of new health directives and advisories from the BC government, WorkSafe BC, public health, Indigenous nations and regional, national, international directives as situations might impact your specific study.

Intended start date/re-start of in-person research and the geographical location(s) of the study are of prime importance in research ethics applications.

In-person Research Involving Human Participants

This Bulletin applies to indoor and outdoor activities at:

- UVic campus facilities, classrooms and spaces (**on-campus**)
- Community locales - locally, nationally, and internationally (**off-campus**)
- **Course-based Applications, Standard Applications, Amendments**

UVic's [Communicable Disease \(CD\) Plan](#) is overarching - covering research, teaching, and services.

1. Researchers will confirm in their ethics application or amendment that they have read and will adopt the UVic CD Plan **as a minimum** safety standard set out in this Bulletin.
2. Researchers proposing to conduct **off campus community research** in a location where it is difficult to summon help, and separated by significant time or distance from emergency or medical assistance are advised to contact Occupational Health, Safety and Environment about a [Field Safety Plan](#) (See OHSE details at end of this document.)

How the Board will apply these requirements when reviewing your application

Some of the requirements in this document could exceed those in the UVic CD Plan when a study has one or more of these features:

- Involving medically vulnerable participants (susceptible to increased risks due to COVID-19 illness);
- Using special data collection procedures/equipment;
- Involving travel to geographical locales where COVID-19 infection rates and public health directives may differ from that of BC;
- Involving permission from Indigenous nations/communities to enter or visit;
- Involving host organizations to operate in their venue.

“If applicable” sections are noted throughout the document.

When completing your application please consider whether “if applicable” is relevant to your specific study.

How does the Bulletin apply to approved studies and new studies?:

*Bulletin #7 applies to new and already approved studies submitted in UVic-RAIS, and in the **Provincial Research Ethics Platform (PREP)** for BC harmonized review.¹*

A research ethics amendment is required to:

- Resume all previously approved in-person research that has been on hold (or granted “*Deferred Approval*”) during the pandemic;
- Convert approved virtual studies to in-person research or to add in-person options.
- Convert approved in-person study or Course-based approval to a fully virtual study.

- Reduce your COVID-19 health and safety procedures **below** the UVic CD Plan level for in-person activities in approved ethics applications. *Human ethics does not anticipate that researchers will propose to reduce their procedures below the CD Plan level unless there are special circumstances. Please contact ethics@uvic.ca*

If your study has been approved for in-person activities during COVID-19 (under previous UVic bulletins) we assume researchers are continuing to adopt the UVic CD Plan. Barring no other modifications to the study, you are NOT required to submit an amendment.

Section I: On-Campus Research

On-campus research activities include but are not limited to:

- Inviting participants to a campus space - *indoor* (e.g., classroom, office, lab, library, CARSA) or *outdoor* (e.g., venues, green spaces) to be screened for study eligibility, data collection activities etc.
- Recruiting individuals in a face-to-face manner on campus and/or to collect data from them during the interaction
- In-person research undertaken as part of coursework in in-person courses or course-based research
- Non-UVic researcher conducting research in a campus facility or space (indoor or outdoor)

The following chart refers to applications submitted on the UVic RAIS platform (both standard and **course-based applications**) and **Provincial Research Ethics Platform (PREP)** for those studies harmonized with other BC post-secondary institutions and/or BC health authorities.

¹ UVic researchers must use the Provincial Research Ethics Platform for harmonized review when their study involves ethical review from another BC post-secondary institution and/or a BC health authority (e.g. recruitment from other BC universities or health authority staff and/or your team members are located at other BC universities or at a health authority).

https://www.uvic.ca/research-services/assets/docs/Ethics/uvic_instructions_for_using_prep.pdf

Please contact us about BC harmonized review and/or which platform to use ethics@uvic.ca

Please provide the following directly in the research ethics application form specified sections:

Application Form & Section	On-Campus: What's needed & details
<p>Section G.1- Researchers' Qualifications</p> <p>Provincial Platform (PREP) (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section 1.3B</p>	<p>In G.1 confirm that you have read and will adopt the UVic Communicable Disease Plan (CD plan) for in-person research activities proposed the ethics application or amendment.</p> <p><i>If your in-person study involves both campus and off-campus (community) components please follow instructions in "Section II Off-campus in-person community research"</i></p> <p>Course-based Application: In C.1 add that you will mention the UVic CD Plan and this Bulletin to students in reference to their assignment(s).</p>
<p>Section K - Recruitment</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized ethics) New studies & amendments Section 5.4.A</p>	<p>In K.2.b:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If using a hybrid of in-person and virtual recruitment activities specify which of the activities will be conducted in-person and virtually • If applicable, include relevant and special health safety procedures above and beyond the UVic Communicable Disease Plan (CD plan) to reflect your study's participant inclusion criteria, medically vulnerable participants (e.g., masking, hand sanitizing, physical distancing) when recruiting participants. <p>Course-based Application: <i>In C.3.a. & b, add that students will adhere to the CD Plan if using in-person recruitment.</i></p>
<p>Section L -Data Collection</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized ethics) New studies & amendments Section 5.6</p>	<p>If applicable, in Section L.1.B:</p> <p>Include relevant and special health safety procedures <i>above and beyond the UVic Communicable Disease Plan (CD plan)</i>. These procedures are specific to the participants (e.g., health status, vulnerable circumstances, etc.), geographical location of the research, nature of the data collection activities, uses & types of equipment, duration of in-person interactions</p> <p>Course-based Application: <i>In C.3.a. & b. (if applicable) please address relevant and special safety procedures above and beyond the CD Plan (as described above).</i></p>
<p>Section M - Risks</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section 6.3</p>	<p>If applicable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In M.5a: Identify that health risks for specific participants (e.g., medically vulnerable) are associated with possible exposure to COVID-19.

	<p>2. In M.5b if applicable, include any additional relevant and special health risks above and beyond the UVic Communicable Disease Plan (CD plan).</p> <p><i>Course-based Application: In C.3.a. & b, add that students will adhere to the CD Plan if using in-person recruitment. Advise students to include a COVID-19 statement of risk and description of CD information in the consent form.</i></p>
<p>Section S: Appendices Consent Form(s)</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized ethics) New studies & amendments Section Page 9</p>	<p>Add statement to consent forms for Standard Application and Course-based Application:</p> <p>Participants will be advised if they have or may have come into contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. Contact information for participants will be stored in a separate file from research data in the event that follow up is needed.</p>

Section II: Community (Off-campus) Research

Community (off-campus) in-person research applies to research involving human participants conducted in locations, sites, or spaces (indoor and outdoor) other than, or in addition to, the UVic campus.

Community (off-campus) research includes but is not limited to research conducted in the following settings and locations with research participants:

- One or more geographical locations in a city, region or country
- Public outdoor spaces (parks, streets, town squares)
- Private indoor and outdoor settings (homes, properties, offices, businesses)
- Facilities or spaces under the jurisdiction or authority of an organization or entity (e.g., schools, community centers, non-governmental organizations, other post-secondary institutions, government offices, ocean vessels, etc.)
- Health facilities and clinics under the authority of a health authority, hospital, health region, private practitioner/clinician
- Lands and facilities under the authority of an Indigenous nation(s) or community

The HREB will not approve activities that do not adhere to the minimum standards imposed by the public health order for the locales (regions, countries) and organizations where research is taking place.

The following chart refers to applications submitted on the UVic RAIS platform (both standard and **course-based applications**) and **Provincial Research Ethics Platform (PREP)**² for those studies harmonized with other BC post-secondary institutions and/or BC health authorities.

² See footnote 1

Please provide the following directly in the research ethics application form specified sections:

Application Form & Section	Off-Campus & Community: What's needed and details
<p>Section G.1- Researchers' Qualifications</p> <p>Provincial Platform (PREP) (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section 1.3B</p>	<p>1. In G. 1 confirm that you/your research team have read and will adopt the UVic Communicable Disease Plan (CD plan) for in-person research activities proposed in the ethics application or amendment.</p> <p>2. If applicable: Studies outside of BC and Canada: In G.1 confirm that you have reviewed at least one of the following health websites relevant to the research location(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Agency of Canada (Prevention and Risks) • World Health Organization (Situation dash board for countries) <p>Course-based Application: In C.1 add that you will mention the UVic CD Plan and this Bulletin to students in reference to their assignment(s) and if applicable, relevant public health websites for student assignments outside BC and Canada</p>
<p>Section G.1- Researchers' Qualifications</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section 4.2.C</p>	<p>If applicable: Research involving regional, national or international travel.</p> <p>In G1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If member(s) of the research team will travel (regionally, nationally or internationally) identify who will travel, and where they will travel to and from. 2. International research: If the researcher or members of the team are currently located in the country/countries where the study will be conducted, please include this information as well. <p>Course-based Application: Add the above information to section C.7.</p>
<p>Section J- Research Description</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section: 5.1.B</p>	<p>In J.1.c enter the month and year you intend to begin or re-start the in-person research activities.</p> <p>If applicable:</p> <p>If in-person research activities (recruitment, data collection) will occur on the premises of a host/partner organization (e.g., school district, non-governmental organization, private company etc.), confirm in J.1c that the host organization(s) have agreed to use of their site/space.</p> <p>Course-based Application: In C.1 enter anticipated start or re-start of students' in-person assignments.</p>

<p>Section K - Recruitment</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section 5.4. A</p>	<p>In K.2.b:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If using a hybrid of virtual and in-person recruitment activities, specify which activities will be conducted virtually and in-person. 2. If applicable, include relevant and special health safety procedures above and beyond the UVic Communicable Disease Plan (CD plan) to reflect participants who are medically vulnerable status (e.g., masking, hand sanitizing, physical distancing, outdoors) when recruiting participants. <p>Course-based Application: Please address the above in C.4. Please add that students will adhere to the CD Plan if using in-person recruitment if applicable.</p>
<p>Section L -Data Collection</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section 5.6</p>	<p>If applicable In Section L.1b:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If any in-person data collection <u>occurs outside of BC</u>, please add a link to the relevant health and safety website with the most recent health snapshot for the geographical region or country where in-person research will occur (e.g., infection rates/cases, hospitalizations, vaccination). <p>If applicable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Include relevant and special health safety procedures <i>above and beyond the UVic Communicable Disease Plan (CD plan)</i>. These procedures are specific to the participants (e.g., health status, vulnerable circumstances, etc.), geographical location of the research, nature of the data collection activities, uses & types of equipment, duration of in-person interactions. <p>Course-based Application: If the above are applicable, please address in C.5.</p>
<p>Section M - Risks</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section 6.3</p>	<p>If applicable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In M.5a: Identify that health risks for specific participants (e.g., medically vulnerable) are associated with possible exposure to COVID-19. 2. In M.5b include any additional relevant and special health risks above and beyond the UVic Communicable Disease Plan (CD plan).

Appendices	Off-campus & Community: What's Needed
<p>Section S: Consent Form(s)</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section Page 9</p>	<p>Add statement to consent forms for Standard Application and Course-based Application:</p> <p>Participants will be advised if they have or may have come into contact with an individual who has been infected with COVID-19. Contact information for participants will be stored in a separate file from research data in the event that follow up is needed.</p>
<p>Section S: Email or letter from Indigenous nation/community</p> <p>Provincial Platform (Harmonized) New studies and amendments Section Page 9</p>	<p>If applicable:</p> <p>If research consultation, recruitment or data collection will occur in an Indigenous nation/community or organization:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upload an email/letter from the nation/community or organization agreeing to the in-person research activities. 2. Attach the nation/community's safety document, communicable disease plan or equivalent. <p>Course-based Application: If the above are applicable, upload in appendix</p> <p>Resource: The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) in partnership with Research Ethics BC (REBC), part of the BC Academic Health Science Network, have created a Culturally Safe and Trauma-Informed Practices document for researchers to read and use as a resource when working with First Nations. Please read this document prior to engagement with communities.</p>

Section III: UVic Resources for Community in-person Research

1. International travel

For updates during the pandemic the University continues to advise students, their supervisors, faculty and staff to check the [Global Engagement website](#)

2. Occupational Health Safety and Environment (OHSE)

Please contact OHSE for:

- Research fieldwork or field schools/trips, carried out by faculty, staff or students in the natural environment or community, away from the normal support networks of the university.
- Remote off-campus activities carried out in a location where it is difficult to summon help, and is separated by significant time or distance from emergency or medical assistance. Examples

include: working more than 10km from a facility with telephone or radio communications; emergency or medical assistance is more than 1 hour away; or areas with limited traffic, open waters, dense vegetation, and/or other topographic features, which makes it difficult to obtain assistance.

OHSE may request a [Field Safety Plan](#) and will provide assistance. There may be circumstances where a field safety plan is not required if the nature of the fieldtrip or fieldwork, its activities or the travel does not introduce elevated safety risks as noted in the above two points.

Please contact [OHSE](#) or [Risk Management](#) for guidance.