

Reopening Training for Counter Culture Labs

Scope:

- To establish guidelines for safe use of CCL facilities for members during the Covid-19 outbreak in compliance with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD).
- To establish a regular cleaning and disinfection schedule for CCL facilities

COVID 19 information:

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). Less commonly, COVID-19 can be spread by airborne transmission of tiny droplets or particles that can linger in the air for hours within enclosed spaces, or through contact with contaminated surfaces.

What you need to know

- Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.
- Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.
- Covid-19 vaccines are safe, effective, and free. So protect yourself and others around you and [go get vaccinated!](#)

Watch for symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose

- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS, DO NOT COME INTO THE LAB!

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19 - see

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

When to seek emergency medical attention

Look for emergency warning signs* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, **seek emergency medical care immediately:**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

Risk Factor

Adults of any age with the following conditions are at **increased risk of severe illness** from the virus that causes COVID-19:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher but < 40 kg/m²)
- Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²)
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease
- Smoking
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Returning to the Lab after isolation/quarantine

The Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) has a blanket [Isolation/Quarantine Order](#) in place. This means that someone who is sick or testing positive for COVID-19 is required to **isolate**, meaning they **MUST** stay home and away from others for a period of at

least 10 days based on the [Isolation instructions](#). Stay home until at least 10 days have passed after you first became ill AND at least 1 day after you have recovered. Although 10 days is the general recommendation, staying home for 14 days after an exposure is the safest option.

If you have been in close contact (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or longer with someone known or suspected to have Covid-19, you should **quarantine** yourself at home for at least 14 days, since symptoms may take 2-14 days to appear. See [How Long Should I Stay in Quarantine?](#) If you are fully vaccinated (at least 2 weeks but not more than 3 months since your final dose), you do NOT need to quarantine, unless you develop symptoms.

The reason why you need to **quarantine without symptoms for 14 days, but isolate when you are sick for only 10 days** is due to the unusually long incubation window of Covid-19. It can take up to 14 days to find out you caught the disease, and more than half of the infections came from someone who was not yet showing symptoms. But once you show symptoms your viral load is typically already on the way down and most people don't remain infectious for very long after onset of symptoms.

COVID-19 prevention:

To prevent the spread of COVID 19, both knowing how it spreads and to perform preventative action:

Wash your hands often:

[Wash your hands](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

It's especially important to wash:

- Before eating or preparing food (no food or drink inside the Omni building!)
- Before touching your face
- After using the restroom
- After leaving a public place
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling your mask
- After changing a diaper (no children allowed inside the CCL lab!)
- After caring for someone sick
- After touching animals or pets (no animals allowed inside the CCL lab!)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

Wearing a mask:

COVID-19 [spreads](#) mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice (e.g., while shouting, chanting, or singing). These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. [Recent studies](#) show that a significant portion of individuals with COVID-19 lack symptoms (are “asymptomatic”) and that even those who eventually develop symptoms (are “pre-symptomatic”) can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings when around people outside of their household, especially when other [social distancing](#) measures are difficult to maintain.

Additionally, it is recommended to wash cloth masks after each daily use.

Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.

Social Distancing:

Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household.

To practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces.

Social distancing should be practiced in combination with other [everyday preventive actions](#) to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including [wearing masks](#), avoiding touching your face with unwashed hands, and frequently washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

NEW: At the June 16 Members’ Meeting, CCL members voted to **remove the social distancing requirement**, to allow member events with up to 12 people. We do still strongly encourage you to socially distance whenever possible.

Re-opening and Re-closing the Lab

While case numbers in California and the Bay Area are way down compared to last winter, and vaccination rates are ahead of the US average, this pandemic is far from over. Vaccination rates have not yet reached the numbers required for herd immunity, and some subpopulations still have very low vaccination rates and may experience local outbreaks. The CCL Safety team will keep tracking [State](#) and [County data](#) and look out for local cases, and may decide to impose further restrictions or reclose the lab if necessary.

Lab opening and closure will be a judgement call made by our safety team, and may include other factors not readily visible in the county statistics. If we do have to reclose the lab, we will attempt to give members as much advance notice as possible, to wrap up and secure ongoing experiments.

Coming to the lab

Masks and Vaccinations required!

Masks must be worn at all times inside the entire Omni building.

NEW: At the June 16 Members' Meeting, CCL members voted to **require vaccinations for access to CCL**. We won't be checking documentation - we trust our members not to lie to us about something that could potentially put the health of others at risk. Do let us know if you have a valid exemption that makes it impossible for you to be vaccinated.

Max Capacity:

NEW: At the June 16 Members' Meeting, CCL members voted to increase **CCL's max capacity to 12 members**

If there are 12 people already in the lab, people who signed the paper check-in sheet at CCL get priority over those who forgot to do so

Self Screening:

Members must screen themselves for Covid-19 symptoms before coming into the Omni, check their temperature at the entrance to CCL, and sign off on the paper check-in sheet that they do not have any symptoms.

Members must verify that they have not exhibited Covid-19 symptoms within the past 2 weeks, nor have they come into contact with any individuals who have exhibited Covid-19 symptoms.

If a member has developed Covid-19 symptoms 2 weeks since their last entry into the lab space, the member is required to notify the CCL board and leadership so any other members who may have been potentially exposed may be notified.

Free Testing Services can be found at the following locations for the county of Alameda:

<http://www.acphd.org/2019-ncov/testing.aspx>

Personal Protective Equipment:

Masks: When inside CCL, members must wear a mask compliant with CDPH guidelines. (See: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Guidance-for-Face-Coverings_06-18-2020.pdf).

Acceptable: Well-fitting cloth (preferably at least double-layered), “surgical” masks, or N95 masks which fully cover the nose and mouth at all times.

Masks with an exhaust valve, found on many commercial N95 and cloth masks, are NOT acceptable masks for use at CCL.

Masks may not have holes, tears, stretched out or damaged straps, or fitting that prevents the mask from fully covering the user’s mouth/nose at all times. Bandanas and “neck gaiter” type masks have been shown to be less effective and should not be used at CCL. Surgical masks will be available if your usual daily mask does not fit these criteria.



Gloves: should be located at the **front** of each lab bench. Use these while working, and throw out when finished. Do not reuse gloves.

Goggles: Although general use goggles are available, it is preferred that you buy your own general use lab goggles. If you do not have your own goggles, or must use UV goggles for the transilluminator, thoroughly spray down the goggles both **before and after** use with 70% isopropyl alcohol.

Working in the Lab:

Rules for hygiene at CCL:

Please wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water before and after entering the lab. This also includes bathroom use, or any breaks which require leaving the lab. **Hand soap will be available in the bathroom directly outside Counter Culture, on the right before entering the main entry hall, as well as at both lab sinks.**

70% Isopropyl alcohol spray bottles are available at the front of each Lab Bench. Spray **70% Isopropyl alcohol on your bench before and after use.** Wipe down with a paper towel, or allow alcohol to evaporate.

Do not use your phone in the lab unless you put it into a **disposable ziplock bag** when you enter the lab. Do not put your ziplocked bag in your pocket after handling it with gloves, just as you should not put your gloved hands in your pocket.

Why? Cell phones are a major source of bringing contamination into or out of the wetlab. However, we also encourage members to document their

experiments as they go along, and taking pictures through a bagged phone can be a very useful tool to do so. Remember to discard the ziplock bag when you leave the lab.

A touchless hand sanitizer station is located to the right of the doorway when entering CCL. While social distancing is no longer required at CCL, we do recommend that members stay 6 ft distance from anyone else whenever possible.

Wipe down commonly touched areas on the equipment (such as keypads or the glass of the biosafety cabinet) **before and after use with 70% isopropyl alcohol.**

Receiving materials: If you receive an order from a vendor in the lab when you have entered, you must wipe down any nonporous surfaces of the package with 70% isopropyl alcohol. Please remember to open all received packages immediately, because the required temperature for proper storage may not be listed on the outside of the box.

NO FOOD IN CCL!

Please note that eating food is no longer permitted inside CCL - **that includes at the tables near the large display screen.** We have turned almost all of CCL into a wetlab area - please treat it as such. The common tables near the large wall screen are considered outside the wetlab area. make sure you take off your gloves when you use these tables, and do not put any lab materials on them. Having a drink is allowed at these tables, but please stay 6ft apart from other lab members while drinking, and reapply your mask immediately.

Exiting the Lab:

Lab Bench: Return all of your materials to their assigned areas, spray down your lab bench with 70% isopropyl alcohol and spray down any pipettes or glassware used with 70% isopropyl alcohol. If necessary, refill glove boxes, alcohol spray bottle or bleach container so the bench is ready for the next person to use it. Notify the lab manager if any supplies are running low.

In order to comply with disinfection/cleaning protocols from Alameda County, each member is required to perform 1 weekly cleaning action item for each appointment they make in the lab each week and mark it as completed on the paper check-in/out sheet at the entrance to CCL before they leave.