

From: [Jordan Gaetz, Shanda](#)
To: [Med ML Senior Administrator Advisory Group](#); [Med ML Department Heads and School Directors](#); [Med ML Centres Administrators](#); [Med ML Centres Directors](#)
Cc: [Med ML Dean's Executive Team](#); [Neilly, Michelle](#); [Glynn, Andrew](#); [Liu, Sandy](#); [Wong, Michelle \(FoM\)](#); [Golinski, Jennifer](#); [Miletich, Lori](#)
Subject: Business Continuity Update
Date: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:35:17 AM

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you all for your messages, input and patience during the past few days as we work through how to best amend our business processes to accommodate social distancing protocols, and increased working from home.

Below is a summary of updates related to HR, IT, Finance, Research, and Office of the Dean. Apologies that this email is quite long and detailed. Please feel free to share with members of your team as required.

HR

Faculty Appointments

All paperwork will be routed through Workspace and email approvals will be used as signatures.

This applies to **faculty appointment-related forms and other requests only**; this new procedure **does not** apply to anything already handled online via ePAF (e.g. clinical faculty appointments and reappointments).

Each Department/School will soon receive an invitation to a Departmental **Workspace folder** from the Dean's Office. The folder will include sub-folders with the names of our team members and a Word document that provides specific instruction on how to upload the paperwork package and to which sub-folders.

Our team will download these files on a daily basis and the respective Faculty HR members will review and upload them onto the folder we have established with Faculty Relations.

PLEASE NOTE:

- We will **not** require original documents – please do not send them to us.
- This new process is effective immediately. Please do not send in any more paper forms. All forms that are already in transit prior to this email will be processed once they arrive. You do not need to upload these to Workspace.
- Any requests for **Clinical Promotions or Clinical Emeritus Nominations** should also be uploaded to Andie via Workspace. As there is no “form” required for such requests, you

will only need to upload one PDF file.

- **Postdocs and Research Associate** forms and documentation are to be routed via our office; please do not send appointment packages for these ranks directly to Faculty Relations. For ones needing the Dean's Office attention (ones that used to come to the Dean's Office first), please indicate your brief explanation in the comment section.

Staff Paperwork and Hourly Timesheets

We are still waiting for direction from HR Advisory Services and Payroll on the process for submitting staff paperwork that needs to be processed outside of HRMS and hourly timesheets. Once we have that information, we will pass it along as soon as possible.

Additional Resources

Visit the [UBC HR website](#) for additional information.

FINANCE

We have received confirmation from UBC Finance that during this period of working remotely they will be accepting email approvals for invoices and expenses, as well as accepting photos or scanned copies of supporting documentation (i.e., receipts).

Process for invoices and expenses & scanned or photo supporting documentation:

1. Complete the electronic form online (Qreq or TReq) and save. The forms are available at <https://finance.ubc.ca/forms> under QReq or TReq.
2. Scan or take a picture of all supporting documents. Convert the supporting documentation to PDF. (Instructions can be found at: <https://www.wikihow.com/Convert-JPG-to-PDF>).
3. **The original paper document will have to be retained by the department**, should it be required later for audit purposes.
4. Copy the completed requisition form (QReq or TReq) and supporting PDF documents into an email.
5. Route the email to the appropriate individual for approval(s)
6. **Ask each approver to give their authorization via email, with the following information clearly stated by the approver in their email (this will be required for Accounts Payable to process your request)**
 - State "OK to pay"
 - Payee name _____
 - Requisition or PO # _____
 - Total Transaction Amount (incl taxes) _____
7. Multiple transactions may be approved in one email as long as the above items are present and it is clear as to what has been approved. References to this key information (i.e. "per attached" or "see below") are unfortunately not sufficient.

8. The approved transaction can then be sent to either the finance staff within the department (for on-line units) or to Financial Operations at approved.invoices@ubc.ca.

This process will only be in place during the current pilot period. We anticipate the pilot period will be in effect until fiscal year end, however, due to COVID-19 may continue longer to accommodate people working from home. Upon expiration of that period, we will revert to our current processes and any transactions received for processing must have a physical signature as per standard UBC policy.

See the [UBC Finance website](#) for additional information.

Travel Reimbursements

The Tri-council agencies have already explicitly stated that cancellation fees are an eligible cost for Tri-council grants. UBC's own travel guidelines do not list cancellation fees as an ineligible cost, therefore cancellation fees can be charged to Operating funds and other research grants where cancellation fees are not expressly prohibited. Where airlines have issued flight credits in respect of travel paid for by UBC, those credits are required to be applied against future UBC travel and cannot be applied to personal travel.

IT

Cybersecurity

There are increased risks related to working off-site, including vulnerability to privacy breaches by cybercriminals. As such, UBC IT is working on a package of protective software to push out to UBC devices. In the meantime, please pay particular attention to:

- Emails from unknown sources or seemingly urgent emails from your boss.
- Links in emails or texts – do not click on links without first verifying they came from within UBC.
- Take the opportunity to do your PRISM-2 training at privacymatters.ubc.ca – but switch off VPN first!

Privacy

Privacy requirements are the same while working off-site. Please ensure you and your staff are following best practices, including:

- Only using data sharing data platforms that we know to be compliant with privacy laws - Workspace, Drive Mapping and SharePoint. Please do not use Dropbox, Google Docs, Drop etc.
- Password protecting files with personal data even on UBC email.
- Sending the password in a separate email or preferably via text.

Not sending personal data to external email addresses.

- Using Outlook email or FASmail are the most reliably secure email methods – do not use personal email for transferring data.

VPN

Our VPN capacity has been increased dramatically. However, we are dealing with a volume situation we have never experienced before. VPN is only needed for some of our applications (e.g., Peoplesoft, PAT, Workspace), so to ensure everyone can get access when needed, please:

- **Only use it when you need it and then disconnect** – If a UBC application is not working or lagging, close the program and VPN and try again.
- **Do not stream video or music while connected to the VPN** – When you are on VPN, **all** communications to/from your device go via UBC Vancouver Campus, using up VPN and network capacity.
- **Switch off VPN while videoconferencing.**

Virtual Meetings

We have also increased our videoconferencing capability, however, having a large number of individual participants on calls presents its own challenges. The following suggestions will facilitate more effective virtual meetings:

- **Mute your mic** unless you are speaking.
- If playback occurs, everyone needs to mute their mics and then only the person who was speaking should unmute.
- If you have separate voice and video connections to a call, make sure you mute both of them and **only unmute one** if you need to speak.
- Having poor audio/visual quality on VC? Switch off your camera – your home Wi-Fi maybe struggling, particularly if others in the vicinity are using the same router.
- Putting your hand up for attention may not work with a large number of participants as your image may not be visible to the moderator. Use the chat feature and designate someone to monitor it for the call.

Equipment

There have been delays in getting laptops recently – this is a global issue and outside the control of the University. UBC IT have pushed encryption software and VPN to our desktop devices so that they may be taken home. Screens may also be taken if they are needed.

- Please use the ‘working from home’ template or telecommuting agreement to track equipment that has been removed from the office.
- We strongly discourage people from buying work PCs themselves. We will be unable to

support them in the long term as they may not meet our minimum security and technical specs.

Unlocking Security Cables

Desktop engineers are onsite and available to unlock equipment for you if needed for staff to take home to work remotely. Please email medit.servicedesk@ubc.ca to submit a ticket. The engineer will be in contact to arrange a time with you in advance to avoid delays. To maintain social distancing, the engineer will unlock the device shortly before the agreed time and it will be ready to go for pick up.

IT Support

The helpdesk continues to operate and can be reached at **1.877.266.0666** (option 2 for VC support, option 3 for room booking support, and mainline for other IT issues) or medit.servicedesk@ubc.ca. Please be aware that phone lines may be overwhelmed, so emailing the service desk will be the quickest way to contact the resources you need.

Other instructions can be found in the [guide to working off campus](#). Additional details on IT services can be found on [MedNet](#) and on the [UBC IT website](#).

RESEARCH

To support remote work, physical and secure PDF signatures are not required during this period, provided that the completed RPIF and all email approvals from the faculty member, Department Head, Centre Director and ADR (as applicable) are sent as attachments in one email to the Office of Research Services or the University-Industry Liaison Office as applicable.

For all research grant applications (including [Research Project Information Forms](#)) normally sent to the Faculty of Medicine Dean's Office for the Dean's signature, we are encouraging all Departments, Schools, Centres and Institutes to send electronic submissions at this time as there may be delays in processing hard-copy submissions. More information regarding the submission of research applications can be found on [MedNet](#).

- **For the UBC Vancouver (Point Grey) office:** Please forward your research application packages to both bryan.wong@ubc.ca and hansen.chou@ubc.ca.
- **For Hospital Sites:** If you are located at one of our other hospital sites, please check with the [signature contact for your site](#).

For more information about research planning in relation to COVID-19, please visit the [UBC Research site](#) and [UBC Faculty of Medicine site](#).

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

The Office of the Dean will be processing paperwork requiring the Dean's signature on a daily basis. In order to ensure signatures are expedited to the degree possible, we ask that you:

- Do not forward any hardcopy documents for approval via campus mail, Canada Post or courier.
- Separate and scan all individual requests for signatures and forward by email to meddean.approval@ubc.ca. Please ensure that all documents that require signing are **submitted for signature by 2 pm** to accommodate review and approval within two business days.
- For any item that requires an immediate signature, please contact Carolina Cerna, Executive Assistant, by email at meddean.assistant@ubc.ca or by phone at 778-968-6427.

STAYING CONNECTED

For those who are not used to working from home or doing so for an extended period it can be a lonely experience, particularly under the current circumstances. Some ideas to use the technology to stay connected include:

- Having a short VC or audio check-in with your team each day.
- Using the chat feature to check in with your team members or colleagues or to do a quick face-to-face or voice call.
- Using Skype for 'virtual watercooler' chats or group lunch meetings.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- For more information for the Faculty of Medicine community, please visit: <https://www.med.ubc.ca/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-faculty-of-medicine-community/>
- For more information on UBC's response and FAQs, please visit: <https://covid19.ubc.ca/>

Thank you to everyone for working so quickly to enable these social distancing measures. Please continue to reach out with any questions you have or suggestions for how we can best support you and your teams.

Sincerely,

Shanda Jordan Gaetz

Executive Director, Faculty Affairs and Interim Executive Director, Finance & Operations
Faculty of Medicine | The University of British Columbia

