



# Guidelines for Research Activities in Nunavut during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Updated: July 23, 2020

This document is intended to provide guidance to researchers who plan to undertake research activities in Nunavut during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines below apply primarily to research activities that require licensing under Nunavut's Scientists Act, and to researchers who wish to utilize Nunavut Arctic College (NAC) research facilities. NAC will update this document regularly as the restrictions on travel and social distancing in our territory continue to evolve. For more information about these guidelines please contact the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) at: [jamal.shirley@arcticcollege.ca](mailto:jamal.shirley@arcticcollege.ca)

## Scientific Research Licensing Services

Nunavut's *Scientists Act* remains in full force during the COVID-19 Pandemic and the NRI is still able to process applications for new scientific research licenses and to renew multi-year research licenses. Additional time may be needed to complete our community consultations and to secure regulatory approvals and screenings for research licenses so please ensure that your license applications and renewal requests are submitted early. We understand that COVID-19 has forced many researchers to defer, postpone, modify, and even cancel their planned research activities in Nunavut in 2020. It is very important that any researchers who received a license from NRI to conduct research in 2020 please **notify the NRI immediately of any intention to modify or cancel research activities in 2020**. A license amendment may be required for any significant changes to a project (e.g. changes to the timing, methods, personnel, location, and scope of licensed research activities). Certain project modifications may require additional community consultation and/or new regulatory reviews and approvals. We thank you for your patience and understanding.

## **Travel to Nunavut to undertake Research**

Travel to Nunavut to conduct research is still possible but is subject to restrictions imposed by Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our territory. Non-residents wishing to enter Nunavut from any jurisdiction other than the Northwest Territories or Churchill, Manitoba for the purpose of undertaking research **must first complete a minimum fourteen-day isolation period at a place designated by the Chief Public Health Officer.**

Requests to enter an isolation hub must be approved by the CPHO. Requests can be submitted electronically: to [cphotravelrequests@gov.nu.ca](mailto:cphotravelrequests@gov.nu.ca) and must include the following details:

- Names of all travellers requesting isolation.
- Requested dates of travel.
- Summary of reason for travel.
- Proof of consent of travel from the municipal council of the destination community.

Upon completion of the isolation period, the CPHO will issue a clearance letter authorizing the researcher to travel to Nunavut.

Please visit: <https://gov.nu.ca/health/information/travel-and-isolation#Travel%20Ban> for additional information on isolation requirements for travel to Nunavut.

## **Marine (ship based) Research**

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 by sea, Transport Canada has imposed an Interim Order restricting the ability of pleasure craft and commercial vessels to operate in Canadian Arctic waters. Any vessel operator wishing to conduct ship-based research in Nunavut waters must first obtain special authorization from Transport Canada's Marine Safety and Security Division. Research vessel operators must also obtain permission from Nunavut's CPHO if they plan to make landfall in any Nunavut community. Social isolation requirements may be required for ship personnel who plan to enter a Nunavut community.

## **Land Based Research**

Researchers who plan to travel to Nunavut to conduct field activities at remote research locations must obtain authorization from Nunavut's CPHO. Researchers who must transit through a Nunavut community to reach a remote field location will also need to complete the 14-day isolation period at an approved isolation hub. Researchers requesting to enter remote or non-populated areas of Nunavut via private transportation and without coming into contact with Nunavummiut may be permitted to enter Nunavut without completing the 14-day isolation period in a southern hub. Requests must be submitted to the CPHO with the following information:

- Names of all travellers requesting the exemption;
- Requested dates of travel.
- Brief summary of reasons for travel.

- Proof of consent of activities by the landowner.
- A contingency plan detailing how the applicant will avoid contact with hamlets or populated areas in the event of a health or safety emergency.

### **Community Based Research**

Research activities in Nunavut communities can proceed but must comply with the travel and social distancing restrictions imposed by the CPHO to prevent the spread of COVID-19. All persons involved in community research activities must maintain social distancing of two (2) metres wherever it is safe and practical to do so. All organized public gatherings for research purposes must be restricted to 50 for outdoor gatherings, and 10 for indoor gatherings. Organized research gatherings at conference facilities, community halls, and other rental meeting spaces must be limited to fifty per cent (50%) of the rated capacity for the facility as established by the Office of the Fire Marshal. Researchers who wish to conduct gatherings (e.g. project consultations, focus groups, workshops, meetings, interviews, etc.) that exceed the number of people approved under these guidelines must first obtain written authorization from the office of the CPHO. Requests can be submitted electronically:

[cphotravelrequests@gov.nu.ca](mailto:cphotravelrequests@gov.nu.ca)

Prior to arranging any community research activities for an approved project, researchers must confirm that the community authorities and any local partners are still supportive of the project proceeding.

## **Access to Nunavut Arctic College Research Facilities**

Access to the NAC's research facilities (including laboratories and bunkhouses) in Iqaluit, Arviat, Igloolik, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay remains restricted. Licensed researchers who wish to utilize NAC facilities for research purposes must first obtain written authorization from NAC.

Requests to use NAC facilities for research must include the following information:

Information on the isolation measures completed by the applicant prior to or after arriving in Nunavut

Description of the activity to be undertaken and why access to NAC facilities is needed to complete activity

Proof that the user(s) possesses the experience, training, and knowledge to safely undertake the research activity proposed

Description of the health and safety measures to be taken by the user to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (PPE, cleaning and disinfection, social distancing).

User requests will be reviewed by NAC's senior management on a bi-weekly basis. Access will only be granted to research user groups of 3 people or less to maintain social distancing requirements in NAC facilities and minimize disruptions to NAC staff. Users of NAC facilities are responsible for bringing all research equipment, supplies, and the necessary personal protective equipment to undertake research activities safely. Approved users will sign a facility user agreement and will need to comply with additional safety guidelines and terms and conditions as appropriate for specific research activities and NAC facilities. Approved users who also require research support services from the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) must also submit an NRI logistics support request form.

Requests to use NAC research facilities can be submitted electronically to:  
[rick.armstrong@arcticcollege.ca](mailto:rick.armstrong@arcticcollege.ca)

## **Additional COVID-19 information and resources**

Researchers are strongly encouraged to consult the websites below for more information on the measures being taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/chief-public-health-officer-orders>

<https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/nunavuts-path>