



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

Updated: March 03, 2021

This document is intended to provide guidance to researchers who plan to undertake research activities in Nunavut during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines apply primarily to research activities licensable under Nunavut's *Scientists Act*, and to researchers who wish to utilize Nunavut Arctic College (NAC)'s research facilities during the pandemic. NAC will strive to update this document regularly as the restrictions on travel, physical distancing, and other health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our territory continue to evolve; however, the COVID-19 situation in Nunavut is changing quickly, and researchers are responsible for ensuring that they understand and adhere to the most current public health measures that relate to their specific research activities. For more information about these guidelines please contact the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI): jamal.shirley@arcticcollege.ca.

Scientific Research Licensing Services

The NRI is still able to process applications for new scientific research licenses and to renew multi-year research licenses during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional time may be needed to process license applications, 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. **Current research license holders should notify the NRI immediately of any intention to alter, defer, or cancel research activities planned for 2021.** A license amendment may be required for certain changes to a project (e.g. changes to the timing, duration, methods, and location of research activities, or to the names of research team members). Research modifications may also require additional community consultation and/or new regulatory reviews and approvals which require time to process. We thank you for your patience and understanding.

Travel to Nunavut to Undertake Research

It is possible for non-Nunavut residents to travel to Nunavut to conduct research activities; however, all travel requests must first be approved by Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer. Non-Nunavut residents wishing to travel to a Nunavut community **must obtain permission from the community and complete a minimum fourteen-day isolation period at a place designated by the Chief Public Health Officer.** Requests for travel approval and for permission to enter an isolation hub must be submitted to the CPHO electronically: cphotravelrequests@gov.nu.ca.

The following details must be included with each request:

- Names of all travellers requesting isolation;
- Requested dates of travel;
- Summary of reason(s) for travel; and
- Proof of consent 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.

NOTE: In the event a positive COVID-19 case occurs while a researcher is visiting a community, travel to and from the affected community may become restricted, and in-community isolation requirements may come into force. Research planning should account for having to stay longer than anticipated (e.g. bring enough food to stay longer than anticipate and not affect community supplies, budget time and money for extended accommodations).

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; and
- A contingency plan detailing how the applicant will avoid contact with hamlets or populated areas in the event of a health or safety emergency.

Gatherings for Community-Based Research

Gatherings for research purposes in Arviat are currently not permitted.

Gatherings for research purposes in all other Kivalliq communities (Naujaat, Rankin Inlet, Chesterfield Inlet, Whale Cove, Baker Lake, Coral Harbour) are permitted subject to the following restrictions:

Gathering Sizes	Indoor gatherings—dwelling	Household plus 15 residents
	Indoor gatherings—non-dwelling	15
	Indoor gatherings—Community halls; conference spaces	50% of maximum capacity or 50 people
	Indoor gatherings—GN, feds, Inuit orgs, hamlets	50% of maximum capacity or 50 people
	Outdoor gatherings	100 people
	Masks	Strongly recommended

Gatherings for research purposes in all communities in the Kitikmeot and Baffin regions are permitted subject to the following restrictions:

Gathering Sizes	Indoor gatherings—dwelling	Household plus 15 residents
	Indoor gatherings—non-dwelling	15
	Indoor gatherings—Community halls; conference spaces	75% of maximum capacity or 100 people
	Indoor gatherings—GN, feds, Inuit orgs, hamlets	75% of maximum capacity or 100 people
	Outdoor gatherings	100 people
	Masks	Not required

Researchers should always maintain two meters distance from others in public and maintain good hygiene practices. Researchers who wish to organize gatherings that exceed the number

of people approved under these Public Health Orders must first obtain written authorization from the office of the CPHO. Requests can be submitted electronically: cphotravelrequests@gov.nu.ca.

Researchers travelling to Nunavut communities must also comply with any additional public health measures stipulated by local municipalities to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If a COVID-19 infection occurs in a community while a researcher is visiting to undertake a study, the research activities should be suspended immediately.

NOTE: Multi-year license holders who wish to travel to a Nunavut community to continue research activities that were approved prior to the pandemic must contact local authorities to ensure that the community is still supportive of the research proceeding.

Non-compliance with applicable COVID -19 related public health measures may result in a research license being revoked or suspended.

Access to Nunavut Arctic College Research Facilities

Public access to NAC's research facilities in Arviat is currently not permitted. Licensed researchers may utilize the NAC's research facilities (including laboratories and bunkhouses) in Iqaluit, Igloolik, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay by submitting a request to NAC's manager of research support services, Rick Armstrong, at rick.armstrong@arcticcollege.ca. Each request 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;
- Proof that the user(s) possesses the experience, training, and knowledge to safely undertake the research activity proposed; and
- Description of the health and safety measures to be taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (PPE, cleaning and disinfection, social distancing).

To maintain social distancing requirements, a maximum of three users will be allowed access to each NAC research facility at any given time.

NOTE: Users are responsible for bringing all necessary personal protective equipment, including appropriate gloves, face masks, sanitizer, lab coats, and eye protection, to safely undertake research activities. NAC is not able to provide any PPE to visiting users. Users will also need to comply with any additional health and safety measures required for specific research activities. Users who require research support services from the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) must submit an [NRI logistics support request form](#).

Additional COVID-19 Information and Resources

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Nunavut, all visiting researchers should:

- Stay home if you feel unwell;
- Maintain physical distancing from others;
- Wash or sanitize your hands often;
- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve;
- Avoid touching your face;
- Wear effective masks; and
- Throw used tissue in the trash right away.

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

<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>