



**University of Hawaii - Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology
Scientific Boating and Diving Field Work
~ COVID-19 Critical Operations Supplemental Guidelines ~
Effective: 3-26-2020**

Overview: The work-from-home proclamations by the Mayor and the Governor allow exemptions for educational institutions and critical research. Both the dean and provost have confirmed that research at UH can continue. Under this guidance, HIMB will continue to be open to those needing access for research, animal husbandry, equipment maintenance, and facilities work. However, we should be limiting our research activities as much as possible, and Principle Investigators should be limiting the number of people conducting work in their labs. People working on site must be able to maintain a minimum of 6ft physical distance, so please plan/schedule accordingly.

For more information about COVID-19, including what to do if you are sick or have symptoms, visit the [UH COVID-19 resource website](#) or the [CDC resource page](#).

For guidance and resources specific to the UH Research Community:

<https://www.hawaii.edu/research/research-continuity-and-planning-for-covid-19/>

Purpose: Due to the nature of the work environment, all **critical** HIMB Scientific Boating and Diving operations will continue with appropriate procedures in place to ensure social distancing and the health and welfare of participants are protected as much as possible during this time.

Any proposed project activity under HIMB auspices must have special approval, on a case by case basis, with a proper endorsement from the HIMB Marine Safety Officer. In some cases, and with any diving activities, approval must also come from the Director and/or the Dean and/or the Diving Control Board.

General Precautions: Should research activity be approved and take place, it is important to employ all of the following measures with earnest:

- Any scheduling of essential / critical operations must happen in a manner that considers all risk variables and the potential for exposure to COVID-19 for each individual person well in advance.
- Each team member / participant must communicate their understanding and acceptance, and be offered the opportunity to not participate without any undue pressure or concern for reprisal.

General Precautions: Continued

- All research requiring in-person social interaction must be conducted with social distancing in mind. If you are sick, or have reasonable cause to believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, you must remain home and monitor your symptoms; possibly up to 14 days. Only return to work only after you have been completely free of symptoms a full 24 hours.
- All operations must be conducted under the assumption that at least one member of the operations is currently asymptomatic, infected, and contagious.
- During all aspects of the operation, adequate interpersonal distancing must be maintained unless appropriate PPE are employed. Minimum surface interpersonal distances must not be less than 6 feet. It must be recognized that the 6-foot distance is generally specified for indoor, land-based conditions. In a windy and moisture-laden environment such as on a boat, downwind positions require greater distancing.
- At a minimum all personnel while on the surface must wear a covering over their mouth and nose in order to reduce respiratory droplet dispersal from coughs and sneezes into the air and onto vessel surfaces, and discourage inadvertent face touching. If standard PPE equipment is not available, all team members must use the best available substitute, such as sunglasses, and balaclavas, neck gaiters/buffs, etc. which cover the mouth and nose.
- Dive equipment and any personal auxiliary equipment used must be dedicated to an individual diver for the duration of the operation. Each diver will only prepare, maintain and handle their own diving equipment including during transportation and exit and entry from the water.
- All dive equipment and vessels used must be properly disinfected according to CDC procedures before and after use. For information on how to disinfect dive and snorkel equipment see: <https://www.diversalertnetwork.org/news/dan-encourages-divers-and-dive-operators-to-properly-disinfect-dive-gear>

Upon completion of Vessel Operations please fill out **Boating Activity Report Form:** <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScwVV8lqolp1N6dTz6Yrm5HHRkOqcDI2HV3t-pqSW2WTXuPQ/viewform>

For detailed information regarding approval and procedures for **Scientific Diving:** <https://www.hawaii.edu/ehso/diving-safety/>

Safety Support: Please contact your supervisors, managers and your HIMB Marine Safety Officer with any questions and for specific guidance to help maintain critical functions involving any boating and diving operations. Thank you and stay safe!

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