

# SOP for Civil Engineering Geotechnical Engineering Lab for Work During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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## Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to document the additional responsibilities and procedures required within the Civil Engineering Geotechnical Engineering Labs<sup>1</sup> during the COVID-19 pandemic. Note that this SOP supplements all previous laboratory rules and policies, which remain in effect. Failure to comply with this SOP will result in the loss of lab privileges.

## Scope

This SOP applies to all faculty, staff, students, and volunteers who have been approved to access the Civil Engineering Geotechnical Engineering Labs.

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<sup>1</sup> Geotechnical Engineering Labs include: JHE 113, JHE 114 and JHE 121.

## Responsibilities

### Supervisor Responsibilities

- Review this SOP on a monthly basis, update it as required, and draw any changes to the attention of other laboratory supervisors, Kent Wheeler, and personnel under your supervision.
- Ensure that all personnel under your supervision understand and follow this SOP.
- Follow all lab rules and safety policies according to the [McMaster University Laboratory Manual](#) and the [Faculty of Engineering Laboratory Safety Handbook](#).
- Review and address the [McMaster University Workplace Checklist](#).
- Follow all [McMaster University COVID-19 Workplace Guidelines](#).
- Address all concerns brought to their attention.

### Laboratory Technician Responsibilities

- Inform your supervisor if you do not wish to return to campus at this time.
- Follow this SOP.
- Ensure that a copy of this SOP, appropriate signage, and lab capacities are clearly posted in the lab and at each entrance to the Geotechnical Engineering Laboratory.
- Ensure sufficient supply of cleaning solution, hand soap, paper towel, ziplock sandwich bags, and non-medical face masks are located at each entrance or in common areas, as required by this SOP, at all times. Replenished supplies as required. Note gloves are to be supplied by supervisors and kept at each working area.
- Review the [McMaster University Workplace Checklist](#) on a bi-weekly basis and inform your supervisor if there are any deficiencies in this SOP.
- Follow all lab rules and safety policies according to the [McMaster University Laboratory Manual](#) and the [Faculty of Engineering Laboratory Safety Handbook](#).
- Follow all [McMaster University COVID-19 Workplace Guidelines](#).
- Report any unsafe working condition(s) to your supervisor immediately.

### Lab Worker / Student Responsibilities

- Inform your supervisor if you do not wish to return to campus at this time.
- Follow this SOP.
- Follow all lab rules and safety policies according to the [McMaster University Laboratory Manual](#) and the [Faculty of Engineering Laboratory Safety Handbook](#).
- Follow all [McMaster University Workplace Guidelines](#).
- Review the [McMaster University Workplace Checklist](#) to ensure you understand how to address each of the items listed according to this SOP.
- Report any unsafe working condition to your supervisor immediately.

## Planning Your Lab Work

- All lab work must be authorized by your supervisor.

- You must schedule lab time with the lab supervisor or the technician.
- You may schedule lab time up to one week in advance.

## Prior to Coming to Campus

- Self-screen for the following:
  - Fever
  - New or worsening: cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, nasal congestion, difficulty swallowing, change in taste or smell, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain.
  - Atypical signs and symptoms: unexplained fatigue, delirium, unexplained/increased falls, headache, chills, croup, conjunctivitis (pink eye), multisystem inflammatory vasculitis (in children), unexplained tachycardia and decreased blood pressure.

**EVERY TIME** coming to the lab, complete McMaster University Workplace COVID-19 Employee/Researcher Checklist that is available at <https://hr.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/2020/05/Workplace-COVID-19-Employee-Checklist.pdf>

- If you are experiencing one or more symptoms of COVID-19, or if you are concerned that you have been exposed to the virus, *please do not come to campus*. Contact your family doctor or Hamilton Public Health Services at 905-974-9848 for advice, and follow their direction. The [City of Hamilton COVID website](#) may also be helpful.
- You must let your supervisor know that you will not be in the lab as scheduled – any additional information (e.g., reason) you share with your supervisor is personal and is at your own discretion.
- Masks/face coverings are required in all indoor public spaces at all McMaster locations. This includes hallways, elevators, lobbies, classrooms, washrooms and other common use areas — any indoor space where physical distancing can be difficult to maintain, in addition to university shuttle buses.

## Entering the Lab

- Non-medical masks (or equivalent) are mandatory when more than one person is in the lab.
- [Wash your hands](#) prior to arriving on campus.
- Follow signage in JHE, for example hallway directions, number of people allowed in washrooms, knock before entering or exiting doors without windows, etc.
- Deposit your personal belongings (e.g., backpack, lunch, snacks) in your office<sup>2</sup> prior to arriving at the lab.
- Wash your hands immediately upon entering the lab.

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<sup>2</sup> Note, you may not sit and work in your office; however, you may take a break from lab work to eat lunch or have a snack in your office.

- Sanitize the interior and exterior doorknobs (repeat each time you enter or exit the lab).
- Sanitize your workstation, and any personal equipment you plan to use.
- Note that common equipment should be sanitized only as you require access to it (immediately before and after use).

## Exiting the Lab

- [Wash your hands](#).
- Open the door (knocking first if there is no window in the door). While holding the door open with your foot, spray the interior and exterior door handles, wipe with a paper towel, and dispose in the garbage can beside the door. Finish exiting the lab.

## Physical Distancing

- As much as possible, personal space of 2 meters is to be maintained.
- If you need to access a space within two metres of another person, either wait for them to finish in the space, or alert them so that they can allow you to pass.
- Common equipment may need to be accessed in adjoining rooms (e.g., sinks, balance, oven). Only one person should be in any of these spaces at a time.

## Hygiene Measures

- All personnel must wash hands upon entry, and prior to exiting the lab.
- All personnel must wash hands or replace gloves frequently when spending extended periods of time in the lab.
- All personnel must wear non-medical masks (or equivalent).
- Disposable (non-medical) masks will be provided in the lab and located at each entrance. You may choose to bring your own reusable mask instead.
- Information and instructions regarding donning, doffing, and wearing face coverings is available [here](#).
- Masks, gloves, and disinfectant wipes must be disposed of in a garbage bin in the lab.

## Equipment Hygiene

- Lab users are responsible for sanitizing all shared equipment, both before and after use.
- All personnel are required to sanitize their own equipment and bench space both before and after use.
- Saran wrap will be placed beside equipment that cannot be sanitized (e.g., keyboards). This equipment should be wrapped prior to use, and you should remove the wrapping when your shift is over.

## Working Alone

- [McMaster's Working Alone Program](#) remains in effect.
- Report your anticipated schedule to your supervisor. Report any deviations (arriving early, staying late) in real time.
- If there are no other lab users in the lab during your schedule time slot, you must ensure that your supervisor or Monica is present on campus while you are working in the lab<sup>3</sup>.

Initialling in the spaces below indicates that you have read and understood each of the links/additional materials provided:

Responsibility Checklist

McMaster University Guidelines for Coming to Campus

McMaster University Laboratory Manual

Faculty of Engineering Laboratory Safety Handbook

Responsibility checklist

Hand washing

Face covering

Working Alone Program

Laboratory flow floor plan

All faculty, student and staff must confirm their agreement to the above by signing below. Please submit this form to Kent Wheeler and copy your supervisor(s).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature<sup>4</sup>: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>3</sup> In this instance, you and your supervisor must develop and retain a working alone SOP according to [5.1.2 of RMM 304](#).

<sup>4</sup> Typed Signature is acceptable