

**Bringing new post-bacs into the lab following return of Group B to our labs**

NIH has continued to on-board new post-baccalaureate fellows since decisions were made about which trainees would return to the lab in Groups O, A, and B. The question about whether new post-bacs arriving after July 20, 2020 can be allowed to work in labs has arisen, and concerns about increasing the density of staff in our labs and whether new post-bacs can be safely allowed to work without coercion and be trained at the NIH have come up.

Each situation will need to be adjudicated by the IC sponsoring the new post-bac, but we conclude that it is possible to bring new post-bacs to the lab as an extension of Group B under the following conditions:

Post-bacs who need (and want) to be in the lab could be added to group B if this does not result in increasing lab density above the 1 person/200-250 nsf current guideline, and if proper supervision can be provided without violating physical distancing (>6 feet).

Training can occur by videos or real-time visual aids; if closer contact is required, then consultation with Dr. Jessica McCormick-Ell, Director of the Division of Occupational Health and Safety (DOHS) will be necessary to be sure both parties have appropriate protective gear.

The usual need to assure that the post-bac is comfortable coming to the lab should be observed and no one can be required to come to the lab.

The PI of the post-bac and day-to-day supervisor must complete a training and safety plan covering the lab activities of the post-bac.

The post-bac should attend the post-bac orientation in their IC (if offered) and participate in an OITE orientation for post-bacs (offered weekly)

The post-bac's PI should provide time for the trainee to participate in professional development and stress management activities.

The post-bac's PI provides a schedule reflecting that they may not work more than 5 days per week and must have time off during the week if asked to report on the weekend.

The post-bac has read the ORS Safety Guidance Document, signed the attestation, and viewed the ORS Safety Guidance Video.

<https://www.ors.od.nih.gov/Documents/Return-to-Work-Guidance.pdf>

<https://employees.nih.gov/pages/coronavirus/return-physical-workspaces-guidance.aspx>

Please use this checklist which should be signed off by the supervisor and PI and provided to the Training Director and SD in the IC in which the trainee is working. Since these represent best practices for bringing post-bacs to the labs at the NIH during the pandemic, it is expected that all post-bacs currently in the lab will also be subject to these requirements.

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Trainee

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Supervisor

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Principal Investigator