



# **ACTION PLAN FOR THE PREVENTION OF COVID-19 DISEASE TRANSMISSION**

"The New Normal" Routine at CIBIO-InBio

20 September 2020

## **1. Introduction**

Given the current knowledge about COVID-19, as well as the lack of vaccine or treatment for the new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), CIBIO-InBIO intends to **keep the Center opened for "normal" activity** but maintaining the set of measures and recommendations implemented since May 11.

The return to activity should be undertaken by all with caution as the virus continues to circulate in the community and, due to the increase in exposure and contacts, a second epidemic wave is expected. We therefore request all users to respect the measures implemented and all care taken so far, since this is a matter of social responsibility in which each of us is responsible to protect ourselves and others.

## **2. Assumptions**

In light of current knowledge, the new Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) can be transmitted through direct or indirect contact:

- **Direct contact** by dissemination of respiratory droplets, produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks, which can be inhaled or landed in the mouth, nose or eyes of people who are close by;
- **Indirect contact** by hand contact with a surface or object contaminated with SARS-CoV-2 and then with the mouth, nose or eyes. It is further considered that "transmission of COVID-19 is more likely to occur when there is close contact (less than 2 meters) with an infected person. "The longer the contact and closeness people have, the greater the risk".

In this context, there is a need to reconcile ongoing work with compliance of required measures to ensure minimization of SARS-CoV-2 transmission.

### **3. Scope of application**

The following rules are applied to all workers, students, visitors, facilities and equipment/materials, in order to minimize potential risks through contact and proximity.

## **4. Guidelines for the "New Normal" Reopening**

### **4.1. Access to the Building**

#### **4.1.1. General rules**

- All users should be aware of the CIBIO-InBIO's Contingency Plan in place, that follow DGS guidance 006/2020 (*SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Infection - Prevention, control and surveillance procedures in companies*), and act in accordance whenever necessary;
- The CIBIO-InBIO has the right to reserve and refuse admission to the building to people with symptoms compatible with those of COVID-19 and citizens arriving from abroad;
- Inside the building, the maximum capacity of people per room has been calculated according to its useful area, number of existing workplaces and the 2-meter distance rule recommended by the DGS. The maximum capacity allowed will be posted at the entrance of each room;
- Entries and exits must be performed through the main entrance of the building, following the signposted directional flow. The circulation through the emergency exits is not authorised;
- Members must comply with the distance, and hand and respiratory hygiene measures;
- For the administrative staff and reception, remote attendance (via email or phone) will be privileged but, when in-person communication is needed, attendance must be scheduled in advance. The distance given on the signposts, at the entrance of the staff services, must be respected;
- It is mandatory to use a mask inside the building. Raise awareness among visitors on the use of masks and, in case they do not have one, they can request a disposable mask at the entrance.

### 4.1.2. Teaching activities

According to the Decree-Law no. 39-A/2020 - DR no. 137/2020, 1st Supplement, Series I of 2020-07-16, the preparation of the 2020-2021 school year calendar is based on three principles:

Objective: to guarantee face-to-face activities - CIBIO will privilege face-to-face teaching activities but always taking into account distance and hygiene measures, promoting equity among students in terms of participation and evaluation, providing integral education for students, stimulating the diversity of academic paths and contributing to territorial cohesion.

Implementation: adopting realistic procedures - the face-to-face activity will be implemented in a realistic, innovative and responsible manner in view of the uncertainty in which we are living. Whenever there is a need, new measures regarding distance and sanitization can be adopted in view of the present situation, that will be promptly communicated to the CIBIO-InBIO community.

Opportunity: to stimulate innovation and pedagogical modernization - the face-to-face education system must be supported by digital technologies, as well as mixed/combined forms of teaching at all levels of higher education, in order to respect the social distance and maximum capacity limits imposed.

Therefore, the access to the Center for teaching activities need to be performed considering the following rules and recommendations:

#### **Access to the Center**

- The access for students and UP teachers do not require any previous request (by online survey). For CIBIO-InBIO members responsible for teaching, the access to the building still needs to be requested through the online survey (accessible from the CIBIO's website).
- However, a daily record of students is needed. The teacher will be responsible for ensuring that this record is made through the attendance sheets available in each room. The sheet must be delivered in the reception desk at the end of each class for archiving (crucial information in the event of an outbreak);
- Post-graduation courses, seminars or conferences (e.g. BIODIV, TiBE, etc.) that usually have their own registration system, should deliver a copy of a daily attendance at the reception as well.

### **Planning and Preparation of Classes**

- Classes should take place in rooms A, B and auditorium, taking into account that the maximum capacity of each room is 15, 10 and 40 people, respectively;
- The person responsible for teaching the class should schedule the room in advance at the reception desk, always respecting its maximum capacity;
- If the number of students exceeds the maximum capacity of the classroom, rooms A and B can be connected to accommodate a maximum of 25 students. This will be the privileged room disposition for the Master courses to ensure that classes will be fully in person;
- Otherwise, the implementation of new distance learning technologies (in accordance with the platforms made available by the University of Porto) should be considered;
- The practical classes in the laboratories should be given in small groups, always respecting the maximum capacity allowed for each room. The schedule and organisation of these classes must be coordinated with the chief technician (Susana Lopes) in advance, so CIBIO-InBIO members with ongoing lab work can be notified.

### **Protective Measures - Teachers**

- Teachers have a crucial role in diffusing the knowledge about COVID-19 in their community, and have the duty to, during their program, make students aware of the current prevention measures adopted by the institution;
- The classroom seating arrangement respects the physical distance according to the DGS recommendations, and should not be changed without permission;
- The schedule assigned to lunch and recess breaks should be coordinated between the two adjacent classrooms (room A and B), in order to avoid the agglomeration of students in the corridors and common spaces;
- The classroom's cleaning should be reinforced and coordinated between the teacher and the cleaning staff; in this way, at the end of each class (at lunch break or the last class), the teacher is responsible to inform the cleaning staff when the room is free for cleaning.

### **Protective Measures - Students**

- Students always need to occupy the same seat in every class and until the end of the course;
- During the lunch/recess breaks and whenever the weather permits, students should go to wide, open spaces, outside the building, while waiting for the next class;
- When returning to the classroom, students must wait for the teacher already inside the room, seated in their fixed places, to avoid crowding near the door.

### **4.1.3. Research activities**

The access to the Center for non-teaching activities will continue to be performed through online survey (accessible from the CIBIO's website):

- In laboratories, the access is managed by the technician in charge, Susana Lopes;
- In the offices, researchers should organize themselves so that the maximum capacity limit is not exceeded;
- In the library, the accessible places are signposted, and users should only occupy those seats;
- Rooms A and B will be available to all members only during school holidays (e.g. Christmas, etc.), and accessible places will be signposted;
- It is mandatory that members register their entries and exits on the respective record sheet at the main entrance.

### **4.1.4. Rules for Laboratories**

- The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is mandatory and, in the impossibility of keeping a distance of two meters, the use of goggles and/or protective visors in the development of tasks;
- Users must always wear their laboratory coats;
- At the end of each day, lab coats must be:
  - a. placed in a bag found in the trolley at the end of the corridor, to be washed by Cristina (person responsible for the sterilization of the material) or
  - b. taken home to wash, under the responsibility of each user, or
  - c. placed in a bag provided by Cristina for UV sterilization.
- Laboratory users will be notified in the event of practical classes for UP courses. During this period, the authorization will be conditioned to the maximum capacity of the laboratories.

#### **4.2. Specific measures of hygiene and cleaning of premises and materials**

- A plan for cleaning and disinfection has been implemented for all surfaces, especially those that are touched more frequently (e.g. switches, door handles, etc.);
- Doors and windows must be opened to keep the environment clean, dry and well ventilated, but also to minimise the touch on handles in case of doors. If this is not possible, it should be ensured that the operation of the ventilation system is effective, avoiding the recirculation mode, as well as its cleaning and maintenance (including door handles).

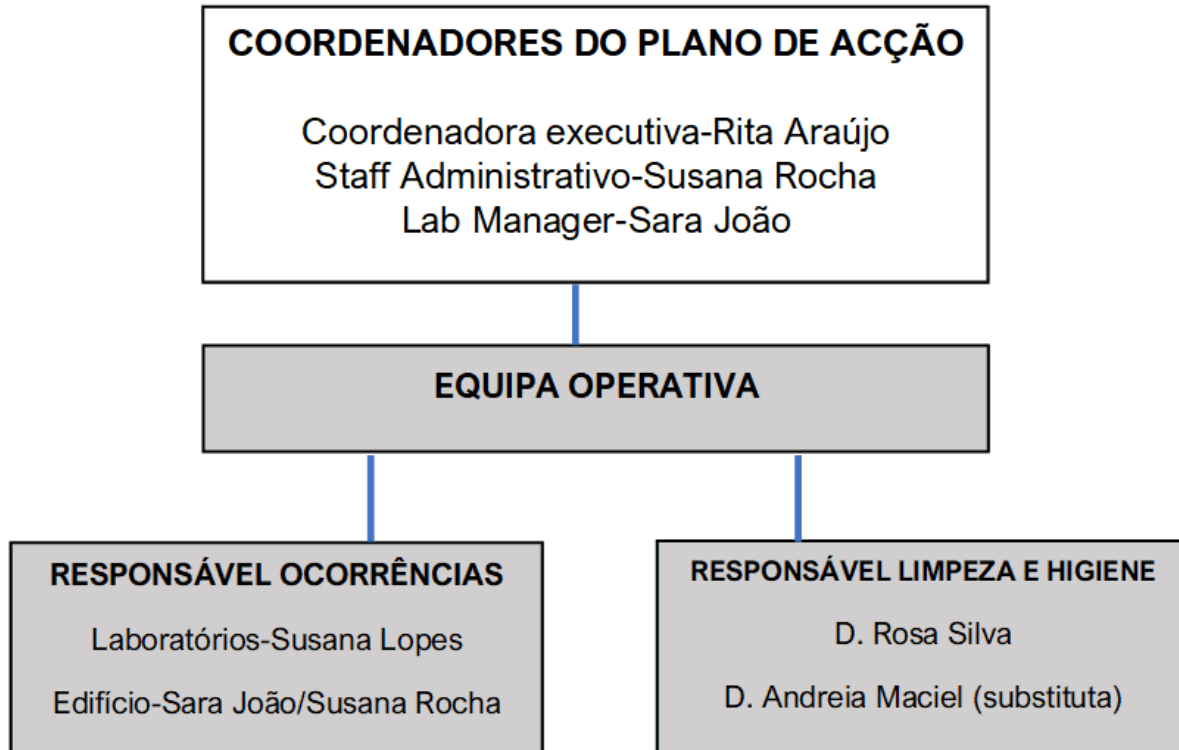
#### **4.3. Specific measures for travelling abroad**

- After the reopening of the borders between the members of the Schengen Area on July 1, the procedures to be adopted by the members that wish to carry out fieldwork abroad are the same as those pre-COVID19, in regard to the need to request an official permission document from CIBIO-InBIO Coordination;
- Before requesting access to the building, CIBIO-InBIO members or visitors travelling from abroad are **obliged to undertake a 14-day quarantine** or to present a **negative result** from a portuguese certified laboratory (based on molecular biology analyses) upon arrival;
- In order to prove the date of entry into Portugal, a proof of arrival should be sent to the administrative services via email, such as the boarding pass or receipts from travel costs or any other purchase in national territory.

#### **4.4. Information**

- The CIBIO-InBIO community will disseminate information on the measures to be taken, by the means already known, thus keeping all users informed;
- Whenever the need arises, new instructions and disclosure documents will be posted.

## 5. Contingency and Action Plan for Covid-19 Prevention - Coordination Team



## 6. Bibliography

Orientação nº 019/2020 de 03/04/2020 COVID-19: FASE DE MITIGAÇÃO – Utilização de Equipamentos de Proteção Individual por Pessoas Não-Profissionais de Saúde

Orientação nº 011/2020 de 17/03/2020 Infeção por SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) – Medidas de prevenção da transmissão em estabelecimentos de atendimento ao público

Orientação nº 014/2020 de 21/03/2020 Infeção por SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) – Limpeza e desinfeção de superfícies em estabelecimentos de atendimento ao público ou similares

Orientação nº 006/2020 de 26/02/2020 Infeção por SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) – Procedimentos de prevenção, controlo e vigilância em empresas