

# BURRELL COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

<b>BioScience Research Laboratory: Personal Electronic Device Use</b>		<b>SOP #: RSP.007.00</b>
Effective Date	10/11/19	
Last Revision/Review	10/11/19	

### 1. Purpose

The increase in ownership and widespread use of mobile phones has resulted in to the need to provide guidance on use of personal devices in BCOM Research Laboratories. The need for such guidance is to provide a balanced approach between risk mitigation and personal convenience in areas where the use of such devices could present a hazard to the owner of the device, and/or to others in the Research Laboratories work areas.

### 2. Related Policy/Authority

BCOM Standard Operating Procedure: [IT.002.00 Institutional Data Security](#)

### 3. Faculty/Staff Responsibilities

- 3.1 Laboratory Director or Scientific Research Associate
  - 3.1.1 Informs all employees and students of rules and regulations applicable to the laboratory, including this SOP
  - 3.1.2 Responsible for monitoring personal device usage in the laboratory and for enforcing this SOP
- 3.2 Principal Investigators
  - 3.2.1 Responsible for ensuring that individuals working under their supervision adhere to laboratory procedures
  - 3.2.2 Informs personnel of hazards associated with laboratory procedures
- 3.3 Laboratory Personnel
  - 3.3.1 Plans and conducts all operations in accordance with established procedures
  - 3.3.2 Are aware of the hazards associated with their work
  - 3.3.3 Uses appropriate safe work practices, personal protective equipment and engineering controls.
  - 3.3.4 Reports unsafe conditions or incidents to their PI, Lab Manager, Lab Director, Chemical Hygiene Officer, or the Office for Research & Sponsored Programs.

### 4. Definitions/Abbreviations

- 4.1 **Associate Laboratory Scientist** – A BCOM employee that reports to the Director of Research Laboratories and may act on behalf of the Laboratory Director by delegation.
- 4.2 **Biohazardous Agents** – Biohazardous agents include bacteria, viruses, fungi, other microorganisms and their associated toxins, and recombinant and synthetic nucleic acids.

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- 4.3 **Chemical Hygiene Officer** - The Chemical Hygiene Officer (CHO) is an employee who is designated by the employer, and who is qualified by training or experience, to provide technical guidance in the development and implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Hygiene Plan.
- 4.4 **Hazardous chemical** - Any chemical which is classified as health hazard or simple asphyxiant in accordance with the Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200).  
Laboratory - OSHA defines a laboratory as “a workplace where relatively small quantities of hazardous chemicals are used on a non-productive basis”. For the purpose of this SOP, BCOM defines laboratory as designated areas of Buildings 200 and 300 of the BCOM Research Laboratories located at 9035 Advancement Avenue, Las Cruces, NM.
- 4.5 **Laboratory Director** – also known as Director of Research Laboratories – A BCOM employee appointed by the Assistant Dean for Research who has authority for managing research laboratory operations.
- 4.6 **Laboratory Personnel** - The Laboratory Personnel referred to in the Lab Standard are employees, students, and visiting scientists who may be exposed to hazardous chemicals in the course of his or her assignments.
- 4.7 **Personal electronic device** – These devices are typically consumer electronics, capable of communications, data processing and/or computing. Examples include laptop computers and mobile devices, such as tablets, e-readers, smartphones, smartwatches, and MP3 players.
- 4.8 **Principal Investigator (PI)** - The lead scientist that plans and/or conducts the laboratory research and assumes the overall supervisory responsibility of individuals working under their direction in the conduct of approved research activities in the BCOM Research Laboratories.

### **5. Procedural Steps**

- 5.1 **Personal electronic devices as a contamination risk.**
- 5.1.1 Phones are held near the mouth and eyes, which are most susceptible to infection or damage following contamination with biological or chemical agents.
- 5.1.2 Mobile devices must never be used when working with hazardous materials in any category (chemical or biological).
- 5.1.3 If a phone or personal electronic device needs to be carried into an active research area, the device should be carried on one’s person, under the lab coat, and must not be handled with gloved hands, potentially contaminated hands, or placed on bench surfaces. Failure to follow these guidelines may require decontamination of the device. BCOM is not liable for any damage to devices subjected to decontamination of a personal electronic device that is carried into active research areas.
- 5.1.4 If a phone should ring while an individual is in the lab, or if an individual must make a call, that person must de-glove before answering the phone, or else remove their protective clothing and step outside of the active research area to answer a call. Phones should never be used in instances when such use increases a safety risk to either the user or other laboratory personnel.
- 5.1.5 Mobile devices must never be handled with gloved hands since it is assumed that the exterior surface of gloves worn as personal protective equipment will always be exposed to contaminants.
- 5.1.6 Repeated de-gloving and re-gloving to use mobile devices is discouraged since these procedures may increase the risk of skin contamination from contaminants on the gloves.

5.1.7 To minimize contamination it is recommended that personal devices be kept with personal items in the provided common area lockers or switched off and not used in the active research areas whenever possible.

### **5.2 Working alone**

5.2.1 BCOM telephones are located in the active research areas with emergency dial buttons. Whenever possible, these phones should be used for emergency contact.

5.2.2 BCOM recognizes that there may be situations where individuals may be working alone, after hours, in the Research Laboratories. In such situations, access to a personal electronic device may be considered a safety measure because it allows the individual to summon help if needed. In such instances laboratory personnel should keep the phone on their person, under their lab coat, and only make calls in an emergency, or accept calls at pre-arranged intervals.

5.2.3 Access to a personal electronic device by laboratory personnel does not obviate the need for a full risk assessment of any work being conducted alone, after hours. For example, work with hazardous substances must not be conducted alone, after hours, without prior approval from the Director of Research Laboratories or ORSP.

### **5.3 Personal electronic devices as distractions**

5.3.1 Mobile devices may serve as distraction to workers at the bench, which may increase risk of an accident or error during critical processes.

5.3.2 During safety-critical processes mobile devices should be left outside the lab, or else switched off or placed in silent mode if kept on one's person.

5.3.3 While performing work on laboratory samples, data, or any process that may affect testing outcomes, personal electronic devices should be left outside the lab or be switched off or placed in silent mode if kept on one's person.

5.3.4 Personal electronic devices should be maintained in a mode/manner that does not disturb, distract or interrupt others in active research areas.

### **5.4 Listening to music or audio through earbuds/headphones**

5.4.1 Individuals working in laboratories must be able to participate in normal communication and be able to hear what is happening in their work area.

5.4.2 Portable music devices may only be worn when there is no risk from contamination or distraction.

5.4.3 Individuals must only wear one earbud, and must not remove or adjust earbuds with contaminated hands or gloves. Headphones that are designed to completely cover both ears are not allowed.

5.4.4 Earbuds with cables may not be worn when operating machinery with moving parts, such as centrifuges as they pose a risk of entanglement.

5.4.5 Earbuds must never be worn when reduced situational awareness could result in an accident or incident.

5.4.6 Watching video (e.g., YouTube) on a personal device is not allowed because it potentially adds another form of distraction.

### **5.5 Personal electronic devices pose an ignition risk**

5.5.1 It is possible that personal electronic devices that have not been authorized for use in the research laboratories may ignite flammable vapors under certain conditions. The Laboratory Director and Scientific Research Associate have placed electronic equipment in the Research Laboratories to minimize explosive risks and cannot account for any safety risks associated with personal electronic devices. Care must be taken in the use of personal electronic devices in research laboratories where there is a risk of ignition of flammable vapors.

### **5.6 Accessing the internet**

5.6.1 One of the advantages of modern electronic devices is the ease with which individuals can access information relevant to laboratory work. However, for the reasons described above, laboratory personnel should seek alternative methods for accessing the internet and email.

5.6.2 Three laboratory computers are provided for laboratory personnel to access the internet. These resources should be utilized whenever possible in place of personal electronic devices.

5.6.3 The research laboratories also provide photomicroscopes with capabilities of storing images on removable media as well as other means of data capture from equipment in the laboratory. Laboratory personnel should use the capabilities provided in the laboratory to transfer data to BCOM servers or other secure forms of removable media.

5.6.4 If all laboratory computers are occupied or otherwise unavailable then an individual should remove all PPE, wash their hands and then step outside the lab to access information on their personal device.

5.6.5 Laboratory personnel wishing to bring a BCOM computer that is not part of the normal Research Laboratory inventory must seek guidance from the Director of Research Laboratories or Scientific Research Associate.

### **5.7 Photography**

5.7.1 Personal electronic devices provide a simple and rapid means for capturing photographs; however, use of personal devices during laboratory procedures increases the risk of contamination.

5.7.2 Laboratory personnel are prohibited from using personal electronic devices to capture photographs of laboratory procedures and outcomes. This includes photographs of any human subjects that would result in identification of human subjects on research protocols.

5.7.3 ORSP will provide a tablet capable of capturing photographs for documentation of laboratory procedures and outcomes. These photographs can then be transferred via email or USB for documentation.

5.7.4 The laboratory tablet or image capture device must not leave the laboratory under any circumstances, except under the direction of the scientific research associate and after the device has been thoroughly decontaminated.

5.7.5 In a scenario involving potential intellectual property, users may request an exception in order to avoid any potential unintended sharing of information. In this case, users must

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first receive approval from the Laboratory Director or the Assistant Dean for Research to capture photographs on a non-laboratory device. After receiving approval, users may capture photographs as long as they adhere to the all other provisions of this SOP.

5.7.6 To protect patient information and confidentiality, photography is prohibited in the Human Physiology Lab when IRB approved studies are in progress or under any circumstances where identification of study participants could occur, unless the PI has received prior approval from the Institutional Review Board.

### **5.8 Exceptions**

5.8.1 Individual Principal Investigators may, at their discretion, prohibit any mobile device use in the laboratory for personnel working under their supervision.

### **5.9 Revocation of personal device privilege**

5.9.1 The Laboratory Director may at any time prohibit an individual from carrying a personal mobile device into the laboratory if the individual exhibits repeated violations of these procedures.

## **6. Reports/Charts/Forms/Attachments/Cross References**

## **7. Maintenance**

Office of Research and Sponsored Program; reviewed annually.

## **8. Signature**

Signature on File

10/11/19

Joseph Benoit, PhD

Date

## **9. Distribution List**

Internal/External

## **10. Revision History**

Revision Date	Subsection #	Summary of Changes	New/Cancellation/Replacement Procedure? (if applicable)	Approval Date
1	[e.g., 3.1]			