



|                     |                                    |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Policy #:           | MLS-M-05                           |
| Effective date:     | 08/01/2023                         |
| Target group:       | All faculty, staff, and students   |
| Section:            | Medical Laboratory Science program |
| Last revision date: | 08/01/2024                         |

## Student Laboratory Safety and Expectations

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the expectations of faculty, staff, and students in the student laboratory (RS 144, 144A, and 144B) related to safety.

### Policy

All faculty, staff, and students will adhere to the safety expectations described herein while preparing, performing, or cleaning in the student laboratory.

### Laboratory Information

The Medical Laboratory Science student laboratory (RS 144, 144A, and 144B) is an approved BSL-2 (biosafety level 2) laboratory with the Indiana University Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). Functions of the laboratory and activities that take place are described and annually reviewed in IBC protocol #978 *Methods Courses in Medical Laboratory Science Curriculum*.

Student activities in the laboratory are currently restricted to those intended for teaching purposes and are a part of the Medical Laboratory Science curriculum. Additionally, testing may be performed within the student laboratory under the approved IU Revenue Producing Activity (RPA) #2885.

### Safety Training

#### Students

Students will complete the following safety training through Indiana University provided resources during the first week of their first semester in the Medical Laboratory Science program. These trainings are assigned in CLS-C404 Diagnostic Methods. Any student who does not complete and submit a certificate of completion by the date indicated will not be allowed to participate in any student laboratory activities after that date, until the certificates are submitted. It is up to the discretion of the faculty teaching laboratory courses that semester if the student is allowed to make up any missed laboratory sessions and assignments.

- Biosafety training
- Bloodborne pathogens training
- Laboratory safety training

## Faculty

All faculty teaching laboratory courses are required to complete the following training through Indiana University provided resources and submit a certificate of completion to the Program Director prior to the start of the semester in which they are teaching the course(s). It is the responsibility of the faculty member to maintain compliance with expectations and expiration dates.

- Biosafety training
- Bloodborne pathogens training
- Laboratory safety training
- NIH Guidelines training – This is required for all on the IBC protocol and is good for 5 years.

## Staff

All staff who assist with laboratory tasks, such as preparation, cleaning, and student help are required to complete the following training through Indiana University provided resources and submit a certificate of completion to the Program Director prior to the start of the semester in which they are assisting. It is the responsibility of the staff member to maintain compliance with expectations and expiration dates.

- Biosafety training
- Bloodborne pathogens training
- Laboratory safety training
- NIH Guidelines training – This is required for all on the IBC protocol and is good for 5 years.

## Laboratory Attire

Faculty, staff, and students are expected to wear acceptable laboratory safety attire while performing laboratory activities. Failure to abide by the following will result in the student being dismissed from class for the day, receiving a zero for the assignments, and possible further disciplinary action if the noncompliance continues.

**Personal protective equipment (PPE)** is specialized clothing or equipment worn or used for protection against hazards. Personal protective equipment is used as an additional safeguard from contamination of clothing, skin, mucous membranes, or puncture wounds.

- Laboratory coats – Coats are expected to be worn whenever performing laboratory activities. These are purchased by the faculty, staff, or student and should be fluid resistant.
- Laboratory gloves – Nitrile laboratory gloves that are acceptable for working with blood and body fluids are provided by the program in a range of sizes. These must be worn during laboratory activities that involve blood, body fluids, microorganisms, and chemicals. Activities where a student is simply observing stained slides using a microscope do not warrant the need for gloves.
- Pants - Legs must be covered to avoid skin contamination or injury from pathogens, chemicals, or reagents. Shorts and Capri pants are not allowed. Skirts and dresses are allowed if they are long enough to cover the legs entirely. Leggings and hosiery (nylons) are not allowed because chemicals or specimens, if spilled, can 'wick' and be held against the skin for prolonged periods of time, causing extensive exposure and/or injury.

- Shoes – Shoes should be comfortable and must enclose the entire foot. Open toe, open heel, and sandals are not allowed in the student laboratory, even if socks are included.
- Hats – Hats with a brim that obscure the eyes are not allowed. Other headgear, including beanies, scarves, headbands, etc., may be worn if they do not pose a danger of being caught in equipment, contaminating, or being contaminated with specimens or reagents, and are not distracting.
- Jewelry – Jewelry may be worn if it does not pose a danger of being caught in equipment, contaminating, or being contaminated by specimens or reagents, and is not distracting.
- Long hair and beards – Hair and beards must be tied back in such a way to avoid contamination and interference with laboratory equipment and specimens.
- Eyewear – Sunglasses and other darkly tinted eyewear are not allowed, unless medically necessary and recommended by the Office of Disability Support Services. Protective eyewear should be worn whenever there is the risk of aerosol exposure or splashing. If students do not normally wear glasses, they should have safety glasses regularly available for such incidents.
- Nails – Fingernails should be clean and at a length that will not hinder the ability to wear gloves or perform tasks. Artificial nails are not encouraged as they offer a higher possibility of trapping and carrying infectious agents.
- Earbuds and headphones – The ability to use earbuds and headphones in the student laboratory is dependent on ability to do so safely. The expectation is that the student is able to hear the instructor, fellow students, instrument alerts, and any safety alerts that may occur (i.e. fire alarms). A single earbud may be used in the student laboratory only while independent working occurs. When the instructor or fellow students are presenting information, earbuds and headphones should be removed to ensure hearing occurs and distractions are reduced. Large headphones that block hearing are not permitted. The manipulation of earbuds, headphones, or devices providing music (i.e. cell phones) must be done safely by removing gloves and washing hands before handling.

### Laboratory Expectations

While in the student laboratory, faculty, staff, and students must adhere to the following expectations. Failure to abide by the following may result in the student being dismissed from class for the day, receiving a zero for the assignments, and possible further disciplinary action if the noncompliance continues.

1. Food, water bottles, gum, and drinks of any kind are prohibited in the laboratory while laboratory activities are taking place. The one exception is when the laboratory is used as a normal classroom and all specimens, reagents, supplies, and equipment are put away.
2. All personal items must be stowed while in the laboratory.
3. Cell phones are allowed in the laboratory if they are in a pocket that is inside and protected by a lab coat; this does not include a lab coat pocket. Phones should not be placed on the counter or shelves. If use of a phone is necessary, remove gloves and wash hands before doing so.
4. Headphones are not allowed in the student laboratory. While working independently, students may have one earbud so long as they are able to hear instructions and comments by the faculty, staff, and other students. Earbuds should not be touched while wearing laboratory gloves and only after hands have been washed.

5. Keep workstation clean and free of chemicals, dirty glassware, and contaminated articles such as towels or lint-free tissue. Workstations must be cleaned and decontaminated prior to leaving or whenever they have visible contamination.
6. Spills must be cleaned immediately as outlined in the *Student Laboratory Safety Manual*. Significant spills and contamination must be reported to the faculty or staff in the laboratory.
7. Mouth pipetting is prohibited.
8. Gloves must be disposed of, and hands washed before leaving the laboratory.
9. Injuries must be documented and reported to the program director as outlined in MLS-A-02 *Incident Report and Review* policy.
10. Adhere to additional guidelines and practices described in the *Student Laboratory Safety Manual*.

### Procedure

1. Faculty, staff, and students will complete safety training prior to the expected date provided by the program director and/or faculty. Certificates of completion must be submitted to the individual or in Canvas, whichever is required.
2. Faculty, staff, and students will read and review the *Student Laboratory Safety Manual* and have the opportunity to ask questions or request points of clarification. Questions related to safety should be asked whenever questions or concerns are identified.
3. All incidence of noncompliance or injury will be reported to the Program Director and the appropriate documents completed. See MLS-A-02 *Incident Report and Review* policy for guidance and form.
4. In the event that expectations for safety in the student laboratory change, faculty, staff, and students will be notified accordingly.

### Related Documents

- MLS-A-02 Incident Report and Review
- MLS-A-04 Opportunities for Improvement Documentation
- DCHS AS-24-A Biosafety and Bloodborne Pathogens Policy

### Policy History

| Date       | Action   |
|------------|--|
| 08/01/2023 | Combined General Safety and Risk Management policy with Laboratory Etiquette and Attire policy; updated policy numbers |
| 08/01/2024 | Updated division name, policy numbers, and titles due to campus reorganization   |