



Montefiore

From the OFFICE OF THE DEAN



Dear Einstein Community:

I want to begin by stating that I just finished my first dean's online "chat," and welcomed the opportunity to connect with many of you. I learned a lot from your questions and look forward to future opportunities to hear what's on your mind.

One thing is clear: Many of you are wondering how Einstein will change as we transition from Phase 1 of our return to regular operations to Phase 2, which begins on Monday, June 15. Some of you raised issues and concerns about human resources and return to work policies, others to matters concerning research, personal health and safety, and operations.

At this point, I don't expect there to be drastic changes to most of the policies, procedures, and guidelines currently in place. Nearly all of them were designed in accordance with local, state, and federal guidelines to protect the health and safety of everyone on campus—and appear to be effective. This includes a required health screening for those coming to campus, the wearing of masks in public places, limiting the number of people working in labs at any given time as well as the number of individuals on campus, and practicing strict social-distancing measures.

Of the changes that are being made, I would like to note the following, which will be integrated into [our COVID-19-dedicated "internal" site](#), and are a part of our [Provisional Policy Guidelines for Phase 2](#).

Lab Operations

- Laboratories are now allowed 100% of occupancy, consistent with CDC-recommended occupancy guidelines that are posted at the entrances of labs, common equipment rooms, offices, and other shared spaces.

- Lab personnel must continue to maintain six-foot social distancing, wear masks, and follow all other safety measures used in phase 1.
- Labs must also continue to utilize shifts, alternate work days, and other means to reduce density.

Clinical Trials

- Top priority should be given to existing trials and the limited number of new studies deemed high priority by the department where the subject can benefit from the study intervention; new clinical trials that are activated should follow departmental clinical reopening practices.
- Clinical researchers should work with their departmental chairs to determine if their new or existing trials should be given priority to re-start or launch.
- Investigators must contact the IRB if they are amending protocols, including initiating remote study procedures.

Campus Synagogue and Muslim Prayer Space

- These areas of worship can now reopen following New York State guidelines, which allow 25% of the maximum occupancy posted outside of their locations.

I should stress, however, that what is slated to happen during Phase 2 could change significantly depending on the presence of COVID-19 in our local community. As has happened elsewhere in NYC, there has been a sharp decrease in the number of cases and deaths from the virus in recent weeks, both in our health system and in the Bronx. All good news. But no one can predict the future. If there is a new spike in cases, Einstein will adjust accordingly.

During this transition period, it is critically important that everyone at Einstein seek guidance and counsel from their immediate supervisors. While we have detailed policies and procedures in place, it's important to [be flexible in ways that meet the unique and sometimes very specific needs of individual employees](#). In considering these arrangements, it should be noted that we do not expect all employees to return to work this coming Monday as we must continue to keep

the number of individuals on campus below full capacity. As a result, each person's schedule for returning to Einstein should be worked out with their supervisors.

Finally, I want to stress that the most important thing about Einstein goes well beyond what can be found in any policy document. It has to do with fulfilling our values, mission, and purpose. This has become all too clear in recent weeks as our nation has been shaken to its core by multiple acts of racial injustice—leading to ongoing protests demanding real, meaningful solutions to the structural racism that currently permits such atrocious acts to occur in our country. At this time, more than ever, it is vital that we take to heart Einstein's values—which have long been rooted in equality and social justice—and take steps to fulfill their promise.

We must, in short, both understand and live these values. That was certainly the case in recent months, as we all witnessed the courageous performance of many Einstein and Montefiore employees who helped save the lives of thousands of patients who live in our community.

We should all take great pride in what they and many others accomplished under extremely challenging circumstances—and strive for continued positive change in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Tomaselli', with a stylized, flowing script.

Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D.

The Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean

Albert Einstein College of Medicine

Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer

Montefiore Medicine