**Information on COVID‐19 For Research Participants**

The University of North Alabama recognizes the essential role of research in the advancement of investigation and innovation for our University, as well as locally, nationally and globally. The protection of those who volunteer to participate in UNA-sponsored research is of paramount importance. As we are currently facing a global pandemic because of the Covid-19 virus, please read this basic information about the risks associated with the virus so that you can determine if you wish to participate in this research project.

**How is COVID‐19 spread?** COVID‐19 is a respiratory virus that is spread by respiratory droplets, mainly from person‐to person. This can happen between people who are in close contact with one another. It is also possible that a person can get COVID‐19 by touching a surface or object (such as a doorknob or counter surface) that has the virus on it, then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.

**Can COVID‐19 be prevented?** Although there is no guarantee that infection from COVID‐19 can be prevented and no vaccine is currently available, there are ways to minimize the risk of exposure to the virus. Examples include, but are not limited to, “social distancing” where individuals physically distance themselves from others (a minimum of 6 feet is often used as a standard distance); using effective barriers between persons; wearing personal protective equipment like masks, gloves, etc.; washing hands with soap and water or sanitizing hands after touching objects; disinfecting objects touched by multiple individuals, etc.

**What are the risks of COVID‐19?** For most people, COVID‐19 causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness. While we are still learning about this virus, current information suggests that about 1‐3% of people who are infected with COVID‐19 might die as a result.

**Who is most at risk?** Individuals over the age of 65 and those with chronic conditions such as cancer, diabetes, heart, lung or liver disease, severe obesity, and conditions that cause a person to be immunocompromised have the highest rates of severe disease and serious complications from infection.

**What precautions should be taken?** Based on the proposed research, precautions for the risk of COVID‐ 19 will be addressed on a project by project basis. You will be provided with information about precautions for the project in which you may participate. The researchers are expected to have standard procedures in place for addressing the risk of COVID‐19. It is important for participants to follow any precautions or procedures outlined by UNA and the Principal Investigators when participating in a study. Further, participants will need to determine how best to address the risk of COVID‐19 when traveling to and from research locations. The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention has issued recommendations on types of prevention measures you can use to reduce your risk of exposure and the spread of COVID‐19.

COVID-19 is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness or even death. There is an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 in any place where people are present, including participation in on-campus research. UNA is taking efforts to limit exposure or infection. While UNA is taking steps to follow federal, state, and local health recommendations and reduce opportunities for spread of infection, it is impossible to shield the campus community from all risk of infection. Even if reasonable care is taken, there is still a risk that individuals may be exposed to or infected with COVID-19 while on University grounds or property or while involved with University business. Members of the UNA community are responsible for complying with the [UNA COVID-19 Recovery Guidance Plan](https://una.edu/university-communications/COVID-19%20Recovery%20Guidance%20Plan.pdf) and any and all local, state and/or federal guidance, regulations, orders, laws, etc.

UNA continues to monitor the latest information on COVID‐19 in order to protect our students, employees, visitors, and community. Our research personnel will update participants as appropriate. If you have specific questions or concerns about COVID‐19 or your participation in research, please talk with the Principle Investigator (PI).The name and contact information for the PI, along with contact information for the UNA Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Research Participants, can be found in the consent document provided to you.