NOTICE TO UBC RESEARCHERS REGARDING EMERGENCY REVIEWS

UBC’s Research Ethics Boards have been operating in accordance with UBC SOP 501: REB Review During Publicly Declared Emergencies since the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic as a public health emergency in mid-March, 2020. In keeping with the terms of the SOP UBC has been fast-tracking COVID-19 studies that are deemed to be urgent and related to the pandemic. Most of UBC’s REBs have convened special emergency meetings to accommodate the need for rapid review of some studies. In accordance with Article 3.2.11 the UBC REB Chairs and/or designees have made a periodic assessment of the impact of the emergency on ethics review processes. Given the length of the public emergency and the fact that most new applications for COVID-19 related research are not urgent in the sense of having the potential to immediately impact the course of the pandemic and/or the lives of COVID-19 patients, UBC’s REBs will be adjusting their review processes accordingly. Effective February 16th, 2021, most studies, whether related to COVID-19 or not, will be reviewed in accordance with previously established procedures for either expedited or full board review, in accordance with previously established and published REB review meeting dates. COVID-19 studies will however, continue to be prioritized. Researchers may continue to request special emergency review meetings for their studies but they will be required to justify the need for such a meeting. In addition to being COVID-19 related any such study must meet the criteria of being urgent. UBC’s REBs will make the final determination as to whether a special emergency review meeting is appropriate.

Please contact the administration of the applicable REB or the Director of Research Ethics should you require additional information or clarification of this notice.