**Information Letter: COVID-19 Risks and Procedures for In-Person McMaster University Research at a Non-McMaster Location**

Principal Investigator: name, dept, phone, email

OR

Student Principal Investigator: name, dept, phone, email

Faculty Supervisor: name, dept, phone, email

Study Title: insert study title (the “Study”)

COVID-19 Risks

In light of the current global COVID-19 pandemic, Canadian public health authorities have strongly recommended that everyone takes additional precautions in line with the Ontario Regulations, including those outlined in this letter. McMaster University is attempting to limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by using reasonable efforts to follow the health and safety guidelines recommended by the provincial and federal health authorities. Nevertheless, there remains a risk that by attending a McMaster University research study in-person, you may contract COVID-19. COVID-19 can result in severe illness, medical expenses, loss of income and death.

Please read the following statements carefully and feel free to ask questions if anything seems unclear. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time by notifying the researcher.

COVID-19 Guidance and Required Precautions

The University has placed guidance and precautions in place for your health and safety while participating in McMaster research. This includes but is not limited to the McMaster Vaccination Policy for Faculty, Staff and Students. The requirements will be provided to you prior to your participation in the Study and include the following:

The location for this Study, name the study location (the “Study Site”), is under the jurisdiction of Public Health Ontario/name of other public health authority. In order to help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, the McMaster University researchers are following Public Health Ontario/name of other public health authority directions and in addition, taking the following safety precautions:

* On the day of your visit, no more than an hour before you come to the Study Site, you must complete the [Ontario COVID-19 self-assessment tool](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/) and confirm that the result indicates that “you do not need to self-isolate or get tested.” If this is not the case, you should contact the research team to inform them you cannot attend. [If the study is taking place outside of Ontario then you will need to modify this paragraph with the appropriate local self-assessment information]
* All research team members will follow [McMaster’s Workplace Health and Safety Guidance](https://hr.mcmaster.ca/resources/covid19/workplace-health-and-safety-guidance-during-covid-19/) as well as [McMaster Vaccination Policies](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Vaccination-Policy-COVID-19-Requirements-for-Employees-and-Students.pdf).
* All research team members will follow any COVID-19 safety protocols in place at the study location.
* All researchers and participants will be required to properly wear [a face-covering or mask](https://hr.mcmaster.ca/optional-non-medical-masks-and-facing-coverings/) while indoors or when unable to follow physical distancing guidelines. A mask is required to enter any McMaster buildings. If you do not have a mask, let us know and we will ensure you receive one if required.
* Maintaining a distance of 2m or more from participants, unless some Study procedures require closer distance or contact (e.g., fitting an eye-tracking headset).
* Sanitizing of high-touch surfaces and/or shared equipment between each participant appointment.
* The above safety protocols should be standard for all studies. Please add to the list any additional COVID-19 safety protocols unique to your study, (e.g., use of face shields).

Vaccination Mandate

[If the study location (e.g., hospital, school, private company, etc.) has a vaccination mandate for anyone attending the location then that may apply to your research participants as well. If this is applicable to your study, then explain the vaccine requirements for the study location in this section. If this is not applicable, then delete this section from the letter.]

Collection of Contact Information

In addition to the above, the McMaster University researchers will be collecting personal contact information that will be retained to support contact tracing, if required by the local public health authorities. Contact information will be stored securely and separately from research data, then destroyed within a period of SPECIFY TIME. [NOTE: Contact the public health unit at the location(s) of the fieldwork research and adjust/remove this section based on whether you are required to retain contact information and, if required, the length of time you need to retain the information.]

Additional COVID-19 Precautions

As a Study participant, it is expected that you also follow Public Health Ontario/name of other public health unit directives and in addition requested that you follow the following procedures. Please do everything you can to follow these health-related procedures and directives, to protect yourself and others.

* Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. Ensure you have hand sanitizer if no access to sink to wash your hands
* Avoid physical contact with other individuals to the extent possible.
* Advise a researcher if you believe a safety measure is not being taken, or that safety is at risk.
* Attend the Study alone, or if needed, bring only one support person/parent.
* If taking public transit for this visit, please follow all guidelines from the transit service and public health, such as face masking/covering and hand sanitizing.
* Consider using the washroom before leaving home. Notify the researcher of any washroom needs. Washroom capacity is limited to allow physical distancing.
* **If you are feeling unwell or experiencing any potential COVID-19 symptoms, then please stay home and notify a member of the Study team that you cannot attend**. Contact information can be found on the Letter of Information that you were sent. Examples of potential COVID-19 symptoms are noted at the end of this document.

Additional Information and Consent

A copy of this letter will be provided upon arrival to the Study Site. You will be asked to sign it in the presence of a member of the research team.

Please sign and date this form if you acknowledge and accept the information outlined above about risks of COVID-19 exposure and the related safety measures in place, completed the [Ontario COVID-19 self-assessment tool](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/) no more than an hour before coming to campus, and are willing to participate in the Study at the Study Site. By signing this document, you confirm that you have read the information above and had an opportunity to ask questions. [If the study is taking place outside of Ontario then you will need to modify this paragraph with the appropriate self-assessment information]

□ I acknowledge:

* I am not experiencing any potential Covid-19 symptoms, including without limitation new or worsening cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, temperature equal to or over 38C (100.4F), feeling feverish, chills, fatigue or weakness, muscle or body aches, new loss of smell or taste, headache, gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting), or feeling very unwell.
* In the last 14 days, I have not travelled outside Canada or had close contact with anyone who has any of the symptoms listed above or a confirmed or presumed case of COVID-19.

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian

(if child cannot provide consent):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_