

Laboratory Move and Closeout Procedure



Overview

It is the policy of Weill Cornell Medicine (WCM) to provide and maintain an efficient, systematic mechanism to support all moves of research laboratories, whether internal moves within WCM or in rented spaces at nearby institutions, research activities in a laboratory being relocated, vacating space for renovations, facilitating the smooth transition of faculty and staff departures or lab closeout. In order to prevent problems, avoid delay, and ensure compliance with applicable health and safety regulations, laboratory moves/departures must adhere to the guidelines set forth in this Update.

Applicability

Laboratories within WCM must be left in a state suitable for new occupants or renovation activities. The vacating Principal Investigator and Department are responsible for ensuring the disinfection of equipment and counters, electronics and fluorescent bulb recycling, and disposal of chemical, biological, radioactive waste materials are properly completed prior to vacating the space. This document also applies to the moves of WCM labs in rented space in neighboring institutions. This procedure helps coordinate the necessary approvals and facilitates a smooth transition for the laboratory.

Responsibilities

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) will provide proper guidance for vacating laboratories. EHS will guide Principal Investigators and departments through the process of cleaning a laboratory and provide hazardous waste pick-ups for clearance purposes. EHS will issue a laboratory clearance for those vacated laboratories found to be compliant with these guidelines.

Radiation Safety Office is overseen and administered by Medical Health Physics (MHP). MHP will guide Principal Investigators and departments through the process of cleaning a laboratory, disposal, and relocation of radioactive materials.

Departments are responsible for ensuring that all Principal Investigators follow this procedure to ensure laboratory clearance by EHS and are responsible for any applicable disposal costs of the Lab move or closeout. Departments are ultimately responsible for the clearance of laboratory space and equipment of Principal Investigators who have left WCM.

Principal Investigator(s) are responsible for following this procedure to ensure that laboratories are left in a suitable condition for EHS to issue a laboratory clearance. Principal Investigator(s) are also responsible for any applicable disposal costs of the Lab move or closeout.

Research Animal Resource Center (RARC) and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) will provide the PI guidance on the appropriate disposition of animal subjects and controlled substances, as well as the process for, termination or transfer of active Animal Care and Use Protocols.

Facilities and Outside Contractors must not work in laboratories that have not been cleared. Cleared laboratory equipment will have a Clearance Form signed by EHS.

Capital Planning Project Managers are responsible for coordinating laboratory equipment moves and implementing this procedure in cases where a given laboratory is being cleared in conjunction with a renovation project or lab move.

Move Consultants (General, Hazardous Material) are responsible for implementing this procedure during certain laboratory relocations on behalf of a Department or Project Manager.

Risk Management provides guidance on a number of issues relating to laboratory closeouts and relocations, including liability insurance issues.

Representative from Receiving Institution (for external moves) must be identified, and contact information must be provided. They will be responsible for moving equipment as well as biological, chemical, and radioactive materials, etc., to the new institution and to assure that the materials are moved in compliance with DOT requirements.

PIs moving to WCM: For Principal Investigators moving to WCM, a separate Lab Move procedure has been implemented. Contact the WCM Human Resources department to initiate a Laboratory move.



**Weill Cornell
Medicine**

Environmental Health and Safety

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Representative from WCM-Leased Space. In some cases, WCM labs are located in leased space at a neighboring institution. A representative from the leasing institution must be identified, and contact information must be provided. The project manager will coordinate the move with the EHS/facility staff and ensure lab closeout procedures are completed once the lab space is vacated.

Procedure

Laboratory space cannot be re-occupied, nor renovation work started, until the space has been inspected and cleared by Environmental Health and Safety (EHS). Once clearance is completed, the Laboratory Clearance Form will be posted conspicuously in the laboratory or area that has been cleared.

1. Upon notification of a departure/closeout or internal move, a *move meeting* will be held with the PI, Environmental Health and Safety, Facilities, Capital Planning (for certain internal moves or renovation), the Department Representative, and, if needed, a representative from the receiving institution and/or outside contractors who will be conducting the move to review the details, set up the schedule for the move, and perform the initial walk-through.
2. Following the *move meeting*, all parties must be notified of any changes to the move/lab closeout schedule.
3. A final walk-through will be coordinated with the PI, Facilities, EHS, and the Department Representative. All research activities must have ceased by this time. The PI must review and complete all the items noted on the Laboratory Closeout Safety Checklist (see Appendix A). The PI must assign a lab member to be at the departure site on the day of the lab move. The PI is responsible for ensuring that the WCM facilities are left clean and free of debris.

Maintaining Safety

- While packing and preparing for your move, corridors must remain free of trash, hazardous materials, or anything blocking egress paths.
- Do not block emergency equipment inside or near the lab space (Eyewash, Safety shower, Fire extinguishers, etc.).
- The process of packing and moving is chaotic. Do not lose sight of the hazards surrounding you! Slips, trips, and falls are among the most common accidents in labs.

Appendix A - Internal Laboratory Move and Closeout Procedure

The Laboratory Closeout Procedure is to be used for:

- Lab moves within the same location (Building)
- Lab moves to external Buildings
- Labs moving to new institutions
- Lab Closeouts

The vacating Principal Investigator and Department must complete the following procedures before EHS clears the laboratory space:

SECTION I: FOR LABORATORITES MOVING WITHIN WCM

If the laboratory is moving to a new institution, go to Section II, External Moves. For Laboratory closeouts, go to Section III, All laboratory moves and closeouts.

☐ Internal Relocation of Lab Equipment

Capital Planning reviews the lab equipment to be moved to ensure there is adequate room in the new lab for the equipment and examines the equipment's utility requirements. Capital Planning also works with Engineering and Maintenance or outside vendors to disconnect any utilities and prepare equipment for the move.

- Provide a list of Laboratory equipment to EHS for review by downloading and using the [Laboratory Move: Equipment](#) form on the [EHS website](#).
- If equipment is to be moved over public streets, Capital Planning will coordinate the move. Only a qualified moving vendor will be contracted to move the equipment and materials.
- If the equipment is moved across public streets, a list of the equipment will be sent to Risk Management for insurance purposes.



❑ Internal Relocation of Chemicals

Chemical moves to laboratories in external campus locations must be transported by a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)-approved Hazardous Material Specialist vendor. EHS has agreements with vendors that provide this service. The department may be responsible for the costs of the outside contractor.

- EHS will review the lab's Chemical Inventory (Salute). Please review inventory to ensure that it is up to date.
- Separate chemicals and other research reagents into items to be moved and items for disposal or reallocation to other labs.
- Lab personnel may transport small volumes of non-hazardous chemicals from their current laboratory to the new laboratory, if the laboratories are in the same building (e.g., no transporting on sidewalks and/or across streets). Laboratory personnel must contact EHS to discuss transportation procedures, including cart usage, secondary containment, and proper incompatible chemical segregation.
- If chemicals are to be moved over public streets, Capital Planning will coordinate the move using a qualified hazardous materials vendor.
- Upon relocation, the chemical inventory (Salute) for the laboratory must be updated.

❑ Internal Relocation of Biological Materials

- Provide a list of Biological Materials to EHS or Capital Planning for review by downloading and using the [Laboratory Move: Biologicals](#) form on the [EHS website](#). Identify freezers, refrigerators, and Liquid Nitrogen dewars containing Biological Materials to be moved using [the same form](#).
- If material is to be moved over public streets, Capital Planning will coordinate the move. Only a qualified moving vendor will be contracted to move the equipment and materials.

❑ Internal Relocation of Radioactive Materials (RAM)

- Provide list of Radioactive Materials to EHS for review by downloading and using the [Laboratory Move: Radiologicals](#) form on the [EHS website](#).
- If the laboratory has been authorized for radiation use, contact Medical Health Physics (MHP) at 646-962-5566 for assistance with clearance. All radioactive waste, lead pigs, lead bricks, sheeting, and radioactive sources from equipment must be properly transferred or disposed. The licensee is responsible for the costs of disposal.
- If Radioactive Material is to be moved over public streets, MHP will coordinate the move. Only a qualified moving vendor will be contracted to move the equipment and materials.

SECTION II: FOR LABORATORITES MOVING TO A NEW INSTITUTION

❑ External Relocation of Lab Equipment

Capital Planning works with Engineering and Maintenance (E&M) or outside vendors to disconnect any utilities and prepare the laboratory equipment for the move.

- Provide list of Laboratory equipment to EHS for review by downloading and using the [Laboratory Move: Equipment](#) form on the [EHS website](#).

❑ External Relocation of Chemicals

Chemicals will not be handled by a regular moving company. Chemical moves must be transported by a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) approved Hazardous Material vendor. The receiving institution is responsible for the coordination of the chemical move. WCM EHS staff is available to assist. In order to utilize these services, laboratory personnel are required to:

- EHS will review the lab's Chemical Inventory (Salute). Please review inventory to ensure that it is up to date.
- Separate chemicals and other research reagents into items to be moved and items for disposal or reallocation to other labs.
- Identify all laboratory chemicals from shelves, cabinets, etc., that require moving and label them as "Chemicals to be moved."
- The vendor will prepare all paperwork necessary for the chemical move.
- The Salute inventory will be deleted.



❑ External Relocation of Biological Materials

- Provide list of Biological Materials to Receiving Institution for review by downloading and using the [Laboratory Move: Biologicals](#) form on the [EHS website](#).
- Identify freezers, refrigerators, and liquid Nitrogen dewars to be moved with Biological materials using [the same form](#).
- The Receiving Institution will coordinate the move using a qualified hazardous materials moving vendor to move the equipment and materials.

❑ External Relocation of Radioactive Materials (RAM)

- Provide list of Radioactive Materials to Receiving Institution for review by downloading and using the [Laboratory Move: Radiologicals](#) form on the [EHS website](#).
- If the laboratory has been authorized for radiation use, contact MHP at 646-962-5566 for assistance with clearance. All radioactive waste, lead pigs, lead bricks, sheeting, and radioactive sources from equipment must be properly transferred or disposed. The licensee is responsible for the costs of disposal.
- A final contamination survey of the laboratory must be performed, and Clearance obtained from EHS obtained before departure.
- If Radioactive Materials are to be moved, WCM MHP will need a copy of the receiver's RAM license to ensure they are authorized to possess the materials being shipped.
- The Receiving Institution will coordinate the move. Only a qualified moving vendor will be contracted to move the equipment and materials.

❑ External Relocation of Animal Subjects

- The EHS will notify the RARC. The PI must coordinate the transfer of animals following the Guidelines for the Shipment of Rodents to Other Institutions.

SECTION III: FOR ALL LABORATORY MOVES AND LABORATORY CLOSEOUTS

Please complete the applicable tasks below.

❑ Biological Waste Materials

- Place all sharps (syringes, Pasteur pipettes, serological pipettes, razor blades, etc.) in a sharps container and [request a collection](#) on the EHS website.
- Dispose of all solid media and supplies in the laboratory as red bag waste.
- Dispose of all other potentially biohazardous waste from the laboratory in red bags as red bag waste.
- Decontaminate all infectious waste (BI-2 wastes) by autoclaving or by treating for 30 minutes with bleach solution (final concentration to be 10%) before drain disposal.
- Decontaminate all work surfaces using freshly prepared 10% bleach solution or 70% alcohol.

❑ Chemical Waste Disposal

All chemical waste must be managed in accordance with [WCM Waste Disposal Procedures](#). At a minimum, the following procedures must be used:

- Keep an appropriate hazardous waste label on all chemical waste containers. Hazardous waste labels are available free of charge from the [EHS website](#) or by contacting EHS.
- Keep all chemical waste in an appropriate container (screw type lid) with the lid closed at all times.
- Keep an area of the laboratory or other waste generation points designated for chemical waste only and label utilizing the [Chemical Waste Satellite Accumulation Area poster](#) available by contacting EHS.
- Complete the [Chemical Waste Collection Request Form](#) on the EHS website.
- For disposal of various aqueous buffers and empty containers, please refer to the WCM Waste Disposal Procedures – [Drain and Trash Disposal of Chemicals](#).
- Depending on the volume of the hazardous waste, additional costs for disposal will be the responsibility of the Department/ PI.



☐ Radioactive Waste Disposal

All Radioactive waste must be managed in accordance with WCM Waste Disposal Procedures. At a minimum, the following procedures must be used:

- Assure that the waste is appropriately segregated and labeled. Additional information about the disposal of radioactive waste is available at [Weill Cornell Radiological Waste](#).
- Collection Requests:** submit a [Radioactive Waste Disposal Request](#) form to ehs@med.cornell.edu.

☐ DEA Controlled Substances

If the materials were procured from the RARC facility, return any leftover DEA Controlled Substances and associated inventory records to the Veterinarian Services Offices between 9:30 - 10:30 AM or 3:00 - 4:00 PM during the weekday. EHS will also notify the Veterinarian Services at rarc-cs@med.cornell.edu about the departing lab to ensure all the RARC procured DEA Controlled Substances are being accounted for and returned.

If the PI has the DEA license, the PI will be responsible for notifying the applicable regulatory agency to update, transfer or terminate the DEA license. Please contact the receiving institution for assistance. All controlled drugs must remain in possession of the registrant throughout the move. Do not include these with your chemical move. Disposal of unwanted controlled drugs can be coordinated through the EHS Environmental specialist.

☐ Disposal of Compressed Gas Cylinders

Remove regulators and replace the valve stem cap. Return gas cylinders to the supplying vendor. Contact EHS at 646-962-7233 for non-returnable cylinders.

☐ Relocating Compressed Gas Cylinders (including Liquid Nitrogen Cylinders)

When laboratory relocations require crossing a public road (example: from 1300 York Avenue to the S building), compressed gas cylinders (including Liquid Nitrogen Cylinders) must be transferred by the supplying vendor. Please call the appropriate vendor prior to relocating to arrange the move.

☐ Liquid Nitrogen Freezers

The vendors supplying liquid nitrogen recommend that liquid nitrogen freezers be drained to a minimum level (to sustain freezing of cells) prior to relocating. Liquid nitrogen freezers are relocated by an EHS approved vendor and should be scheduled for a refill as soon as possible at the new location by the vendor.

☐ Laboratory Equipment Relocation or Disposal

Table 1 provides a list of equipment that requires special handling decontamination.

The following procedures must be completed before laboratory equipment will be cleared:

- Remove all contents from laboratory equipment, e.g., chemicals, media, and glassware.
- Remove all bench coats and disposable liners/covers from equipment and dispose of in red bag waste.
- Decontaminate all surfaces of contamination-prone equipment, e.g., refrigerators, freezers, incubators, water baths, biological safety cabinets, and centrifuges, with an appropriate disinfectant. See Table for specific recommendations. Contact EHS for assistance. An [Equipment Decontamination Form](#) is available on the EHS website.
- Freezers used to store biological materials must be unplugged and defrosted.
- Incubators and water baths must be drained of all water, including water inside the jacket.
- Verify compliance with any Risk Management requirements for liability insurance.

☐ Biological Safety Cabinets (BSCs)

- Remove all contents from inside the cabinet.
- Disconnect tissue culture media vacuum flask.
- Decontaminate all accessible surfaces with an appropriate disinfectant.
- If the BSC is being relocated, an NSF-certified contractor must decontaminate the hood prior to moving.



- In preparation for the move, Engineering and Maintenance will disconnect all services to the BSC.
- Once relocated, the BSC will need to be re-certified by an NSF-certified contractor.
- If the BSC will not be moved and repair work will not open the contaminated inner space, a surface decontamination with an appropriate disinfectant is sufficient.

❑ Electronics and Lab Equipment Recycling

All electronics (e.g., central processing units, monitors, keyboards, printers, televisions, and scanners) and lab equipment must be separated from general trash. All electronics must be clearly labeled with a dated, removable sign "to be recycled." Lab equipment will also need a decontaminated clearance from Environmental Health and Safety. Contact Engineering and Maintenance (E&M) (212-746-2288) or <http://maintenanceexpress.med.cornell.edu> to schedule an equipment collection. Lab equipment must be placed in a designated area under the direct control of the generator (no hallway storage). Additional information on electronics recycling can be found at [Surplus Recycling Procedure](#).

❑ General Laboratory Cleanup

All laboratory areas must be thoroughly cleaned to assure removal of all hazardous residues. All surfaces where hazardous chemicals have been used or stored must be washed with detergent and water. This includes benchtops, cabinets, drawers, floors, etc. To prevent harm to movers, thoroughly decontaminate accessible surfaces of furniture and other items to be removed from the laboratory. Remove all bench coats and disposable liners/covers from work surfaces and dispose of in red bag waste.

- Empty and properly dispose of material from all drawers, cabinets, and fume hoods.
- Properly clean laboratory benchtops, cabinets, drawers, floors, cold rooms, and fume hood surfaces (preferably with soap and water).
- All laboratory equipment to be moved must be cleaned and effectively decontaminated on all external surfaces with EPA-approved disinfectant (70% alcohol, fresh 10% bleach solution, or other disinfectant solution, as approved by EHS). All hazard labels should be defaced. Table 1 (below) provides specific guidance for specialized lab equipment.
- All Laboratory equipment being left behind for another user or disposal must be cleaned & decontaminated on all external and internal surfaces. All hazard labels should be removed or defaced.

Table 1	Laboratory Equipment Requiring Special Handling/Preparation
Biological Safety Cabinet	Requires decontamination by third-party vendor prior to relocation. E&M to disconnect services to the cabinet.
Equipment used for Biological Material work (e.g., refrigerators, freezers, centrifuges)	Requires surface decontamination prior to relocation.
Chemical Fume Hood	Must be empty: chemicals and waste removed. Surfaces cleaned & decontaminated.
Incubator	Drain water jacket, clean and decontaminate internal and external surfaces. E&M to disconnect services (CO ₂) to the incubators prior to moving.
Ductless Chemical Hood	Requires decontamination and removal of the filter prior to the move. Discarded filters should be treated as hazardous or biohazardous waste depending on the use of the hood and chemical/ biohazardous materials used.
HPLC or other equipment that draws fluids internally	Requires decontamination and drainage of all lines prior to relocation.
Equipment used for radioisotope work (e.g., pipettors, centrifuges)	Requires decontamination prior to relocation.
Non-scientific equipment (desktop computers, etc.)	Wipe down with 70% alcohol.



If you have any questions, please contact: **Environmental Health and Safety:**

- Phone 646-962-7233
- FAX 646-962-0288
- ehs@med.cornell.edu
- <http://weill.cornell.edu/ehs>

If you have any questions, please contact: **Radiation Safety Office:**

- Phone 646-962-4567
- mhp@med.cornell.edu

Appendix B – Schedule for Research Internal Lab Move / Departures

Please note that this only pertains to the EHS coordination of the lab move. Other divisions, including IBC, IACUC, IRC, Material Transfer Agreements, Grants and Contracts, may have additional requirements that may apply to your lab. Please contact them as applicable.

8 Weeks Prior to the Move / Departure

Date: _____

- Notify EHS. Request EHS Laboratory Closeout Procedure.
- Notify other departments such as the IBC, IACUC, RARC, Grants and Contracts regarding the move.
- Draft equipment, Chemical, Biological, Radiological Materials, DEA chemical inventories to be moved.

7 Weeks

Date: _____

- Lab Move/Departure meeting.
- Initial Laboratory Walkthrough.

4 Weeks

Date: _____

- Equipment, Chemical, Radioactive, and Biological Material Inventories finalized.
- For internal moves: Capital Planning and EHS to schedule move vendors.

3 Weeks

Date: _____

- For internal moves: Capitol Planning completes equipment review. Chemical, Biological, Radiological inventories reviewed by EHS.
- Standing orders (gases, dry ice, lab coats, etc.) canceled (for departures), or vendors notified of change in location.

2 Weeks

Date: _____

- End use of Radioactive Materials.
- Begin clean-up and decontamination of the Radioisotope Lab area.
- Schedule Radioactive Waste pick-up.
- Schedule survey with Health Physics: 646-962-7233.

5 Business Days

Date: _____

- End all research work.
- Begin lab clean-up and decontamination of equipment.
- Schedule chemical and electronic waste pick-up.

2 Business Days

Date: _____

- Chemicals and biological and radioactive materials sorted.
- If needed, Hazardous Materials vendor(s) to pack chemicals and biological materials.
- Lab cleaned.
- Equipment sign-off by EHS.



1 Business Day

Date: _____

- Lab sign-off by EHS.
- Equipment and furniture packed by movers.
- Hazardous materials moved by HazMat Mover.

Day of Move / Departure

Date: _____

- PI or lab Representative to monitor outside vendors and move process.
- Formal sign-off by Medical College/ Department Representative.
- EHS issues Laboratory Clearance and posts document.