

## **Frequently asked questions**

### **How is Emory University being impacted by the shutdown?**

Currently, the impact is minimal, but this could change if the shutdown continues over the coming weeks.

### **What is the impact on federal financial aid?**

Funding for most federal student aid should not be impacted. Because of the award cycle, most of the Federal Student Aid programs are forward funded from last year's budget and most of the funding is already in place for 2021-22. Federal Pell Grants and Loans should not be impacted in the short term. However, we remain concerned for members of our student body who have applied for federal financial aid for next year. Processing of aid applications and related systems could be impacted if the shutdown becomes prolonged. For example, students who are required to provide an IRS tax transcript could have challenges doing so if IRS systems become compromised.

### **What is the impact on federally funded research?**

Emory received \$598 million in federal research funding in fiscal year 2020, mostly in the health sciences. An immediate impact for Emory's Woodruff Health Sciences Center is on research administration and communications with NIH and other federal agencies about research grant applications, progress reports, awards and requests. Reviews of submitted applications will not occur or will be delayed, opportunities for new federal funding programs are not being issued and new awards are not being made. It is difficult to predict what will result from a longer-term shutdown, but a protracted shutdown will slow critical research and have a cumulative effect, with missed grant deadlines and reviews, delay of new and continuation awards, limited interactions with program staff, and a backlog of reporting and regulatory issues. Lengthy delays can create funding gaps in ongoing research programs.

### **What is the impact on federally funded clinical research trials at Emory?**

Most federally funded clinical trials that already are underway at Emory will continue. However, the NIH research administrators who support these trials are not available and this may create barriers. Winship Cancer Institute clinical trials conducted with National Cancer Institute (NCI)

support are still open, with the exception of trials requiring active involvement of NCI through registration of participants.

### **What about safety of the patients in these clinical trials?**

Enrolling clinical trials are being conducted under established institutional and federal safety guidelines. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) offices are open for drug distribution and handling of patient safety information on a 24-hour basis during the shutdown, and other emergency NIH contacts for clinical trials are available.

### **What about new clinical trials?**

The initiation of new federally sponsored clinical trials will be increasingly impacted if the shutdown continues. For example, any Winship Cancer Institute new trial concepts or amendments to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) will remain on hold until the shutdown ends. We are also closely watching how COVID\_19 clinical trials will be classified and possible impacts.

### **How does the shutdown impact the availability of medical research information?**

Several national research databases are either unavailable or minimally staffed during a shutdown. National Science Foundation websites and business applications are unavailable: NSF.gov, FastLane.nsf.gov, and Research.gov. The researcher website pubmed.gov, which compiles results of medical studies from around the world, is minimally staffed. This minimal availability of research websites means researchers, both laboratory and clinical, have less up-to-date information, which could affect their research, their interactions with research collaborators, and access to the latest reported treatment results.

### **What is the impact on Emory research programs and faculty at the Atlanta Veterans Affairs Medical Center?**

Health care for veterans, provided by over 250 Emory School of Medicine faculty physicians, will continue without impact. Existing Emory research programs conducted at the VA, however, are being run on a limited budget, and new research project starts are being delayed.

### **How is the shutdown affecting CDC programs that include Emory faculty?**

Many Emory faculty physicians and public health experts, particularly in the areas of global public health and infectious diseases, serve on CDC working groups and as consultants on COVID-19, disease outbreaks and surveillance and vaccine guidelines. Many of these efforts may be delayed during the shutdown.

**What will the impact be for our COVID-19 response?**

The OGCA team is working to learn which COVID-19 operations will remain essential and open during the possible shutdown. We do not expect any disruption to our hospital operations, healthcare providers, and any currently funded federal research projects.