

Project Management of Legislatively Mandated COVID-19 Research to be Undertaken by the North Carolina Policy Collaboratory at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Project Team

Jeffrey Warren, PhD; Executive Director
Steve Wall, JD; Outreach Director
Laurie Farrar; Financial Budget Analyst

Introduction

The North Carolina Policy Collaboratory (Collaboratory) was established by the NCGA on July 14, 2016 (Section 11.8 of Session Law 2016-94 (H1030) as amended by Section 8.(c) of Session Law 2020-74 (H308) to facilitate the dissemination of the policy and research expertise of The University of North Carolina System and other institutions of higher learning within North Carolina for practical use by State and local government. Session Law 2020-4 (H1043), entitled, “An Act to Provide Aid to North Carolinians in Response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Crisis,” was passed by the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) and signed into law by the Governor on May 4, 2020. Subsection (23) of Section 3.3 appropriates \$29,000,000 to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to allocate to the Collaboratory to use for the following activities:

- i. the rapid development of a countermeasure of neutralizing antibodies for COVID-19 that can be used as soon as possible to both prevent infection, and for those infected, treat infection,
- ii. bringing a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine to the public as soon as possible,
- iii. community testing initiatives, and
- iv. other research and activities related to monitoring, assessing, and addressing the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19.

Scope of Work

Collaboratory staff have been working almost full time on COVID-related issues since May 2020 and part time as far back as March with three COVID-related pilot projects dealing with viral surveillance of wastewater, mobility as a proxy for social response to the pandemic, and critical PPE purchasing and distribution, and both the wastewater and mobility projects have received additional funding (~\$2.8 million) through the NCGA’s \$29 million appropriation discussed above. As part of the overall COVID-19 research project, the Collaboratory has assembled and approved a slate of 85 research projects, including this one, across 14 campuses in the UNC System (i.e., every university campus in the System with the exception of ECU, which received a separate appropriation for COVID-19 research at the Brody School of Medicine). The project team listed above (Warren, Wall, Farrar) will actively manage the full slate of 85 studies and any additional studies that may be funded through these COVID-19 research funds including ensuring scopes of work and related timelines are followed and met, required monthly progress and expense reports are tendered, interim progress reports are

compiled and distributed to the NCGA, project information is posted and kept-up-to-date on the Collaboratory's website, provision of ongoing technical assistance to investigators and administrators, and other relevant management duties as appropriate.

A full list of current COVID-19 research projects being managed is available online:

<https://collaboratory.unc.edu/current-projects/covid-19-research/>

Budget Justification

Although the Collaboratory's project management team listed here (Warren, Wall, Farrar) has been already actively managing the COVID-19 research initiative since May 4, 2020, their salaries have been paid from a funding source outside of this appropriation. Starting on July 1, 2020, this team will be funded from the COVID-19 funds in the amounts listed in the budget summary table below. The non-personnel line listed in this table (\$2,842.13) is a contingency line to account for unexpected budget variations from the 85 COVID-19 research projects being managed. Therefore, the total amount of funding in support of the Collaboratory's legislative COVID-19 research mandate is \$189,891.79.

EHRA Salary	\$123,522.73
SHRA Salary	\$15,387.25
Grad Student	
Temps	
Fringe Pool	\$48,139.68
Non-Personnel Expenses	\$2,842.13
Total	\$189,891.79