

Date: May 19, 2020

To: School of Medicine Faculty in the Clinical Sciences

From: Ann J. Brown, MD, MHS, Vice Dean for Faculty
James E. Tcheng, MD, Assistant Dean for Faculty Appointments
Annette A. Whitesell, Director of SoM APT Office

RE: Tenure Clock Extensions for COVID-19 Related Delays

The SoM leadership acknowledges that most research programs in the Clinical Sciences will be substantially affected because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ramp down that started in mid-March required that on-site work be stopped or converted to a virtual platform. Therefore, in early April, the Dean's office granted a 6-month tenure clock extension to all clinical sciences faculty in the SoM.

We also recognize that there may be research/scholarly programs that will experience extraordinary continuing challenges related to the pandemic. Work may be suspended or significantly curtailed for prolonged periods or require greater times to restart. In these cases, especially if the interruption has been for a prolonged period (4 months or more), you are encouraged to apply for a further tenure clock extension beyond the 6 months already granted. Examples of conditions that would support a COVID-19 related extension include (but are not limited to):

- Loss of key research personnel or collaborators
 - resignation, reassignment, furlough, illness, family care responsibilities
- Loss or suspension of key research infrastructure
 - loss of animal colony, inaccessible study site, inability to obtain supplies or equipment
- Reduction in capacity of investigator
 - substantial increase in work responsibilities or workload, illness, family care responsibilities
- Changes to research environment that negatively impact or otherwise preclude research
 - education scholarship conducted in the context of in-person classes or requiring direct contact
- Changes to research facilities that preclude conduct of research at previous levels
 - 50% reduction of laboratory personnel because of need for physical distancing in lab
- Sponsor changes to grant funding and programs
 - delays in receipt of grant funding, withdrawal of funding opportunities

- New government, Duke University, or sponsor regulations or policies related to COVID-19 that substantively affect research plans or conduct
 - unanticipated adjustments or limitations placed on research execution

COVID-19 related tenure clock extension requests will be processed like all other tenure clock extension requests. They will require approval from the Department Chair, the Dean, and the Provost. Requests are initiated with a letter from the faculty member to the Department Chair. The letter should briefly describe the reasons for the extension. In lieu of a letter, a fillable request form can be found under resources at this link entitled, “Tenure Clock Extension Form”. (scroll to resources at the bottom)

<https://medschool.duke.edu/about-us/faculty-resources/faculty-appointments-promotion-tenure/clinical-science-apt/faculty>

It is also a good time to mention that tenure clock extensions may be granted for qualifying life events that markedly delay progress. These are described in Chapter 4 of the faculty handbook on page 4-15: https://provost.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/FHB_Chap_4.pdf.