

## Field Research (Domestic) Planning Timetable

This planning timetable is a guideline to facilitate field research. The timelines recommended will vary depending on the remoteness of your research site and the accessibility of needed supplies. The recommendations are general and are not meant to be all-inclusive.

### 6 months prior to departure

- Begin drafting your Field Activities Plan (FAP) to help ensure you address issues such as training needs (including first aid), lodging, equipment, communications, emergency response plan, etc.
- Prepare any Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) required for things such as vehicles, equipment, communications, risky procedures (e.g. climbing, using chainsaws or other hazardous equipment, biohazards, etc.)
- Consider any hiring needs (e.g., research assistant), what qualifications you are seeking, and any special training needs.

### 5 months prior to departure

- Determine your communication device needs (kind, number, cost). If you plan to use cell phones or satellite phones, ensure they will work where you are going and know if there will be roaming charges
- If you will be using an AU Fleet Vehicle, check the [Use of University Fleet Vehicles Policy and Procedures](#) to ensure you make all necessary arrangements with Facilities and Services
- Draft a list of equipment you will need to take with you. Keep in mind applicable regulations related to the transportation of dangerous goods, etc.
- Draft your trip description and itinerary, which may include the following:
  - Route (start and end points)
  - Time(s) of departure
  - Stopping point(s)
  - Return time, including stopping points
  - Location of field destination, including description of terrain
  - Maps (with enough detail to be able to locate you and your team in case of emergency)
  - Activities that will be engaged in during the field activities

### 4 months prior to departure

- Contact the Research Centre to discuss the hiring of any personnel
- Update the Field Activities Plan, if required
- Ensure you have submitted any paperwork required for permits, permissions, licenses, access to lands, animal use or human participant ethics approval
- Identify any training for personnel and make appropriate arrangements for same
- Contact local officials as necessary and appropriate (AU Employee Health Office, ambulance, forestry service, police) to let them know the particulars of your field research activities



### **2 months prior to departure**

- Confirm first aid training and identify requirements for First Aid Kit(s)
- Set up a Field Safety Log Book to utilize in the field for daily meetings
- Ensure all personnel complete and submit an Emergency Information Form.
- Familiarize the team on incident/injury reporting requirements as outlined in the Athabasca University Occupational Health & Safety Policy and Procedures
- Discuss WCB coverage with the Human Resources and the Employee Health Office

### **1 month prior to departure**

- Gather all Emergency Information Forms, and
  - Copy all forms to take with you in the field and review them for any disclosed health issues
  - Ensure all original Emergency Information Forms are filed with the Research Centre and Employee Health Office
  - Speak with individuals who have disclosed health issues and plan for precautions if necessary
- Ensure an Emergency Response Plan is in place as part of your Field Activities Plan, including:
  - Emergency contact numbers for AU and for all participants on trip
  - Nearest hospital or medical aid information
  - Check-in system, as appropriate
  - Plan for contacting emergency services
  - Evacuation route in case main route is blocked by a hazard (e.g., fire; flood)

### **3 weeks prior to departure**

- Review supply list
- Plan and draft detailed field/project schedule
- Check all equipment to ensure it is operable

### **2 weeks prior to departure**

- Review Field Activities Plan (FAP) to ensure it is complete
- Go over the FAP in detail with all personnel
- Plan for team safety meeting to be conducted at field site
- Finalize your itinerary, file it with Research Centre, and provide a copy to your designated contact person
- Ensure all permits, permissions are in place
- Update list of equipment as needed and file list with the Research Centre, so they know what equipment is being used in case of an incident
- Remain in contact with your designated contact person once out in the field

### **Following Field Research**

- Complete any further injury/incident reports, as required
- Monitor your health for 21 days and consult a health provider if you have any of the following symptoms:
  - High fever, lasting more than 2 days
  - Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea lasting more than one week
  - Persistent cough and shortness of breath
  - Swollen glands in any area of the body



- Skin lesions that are enlarged, painful or ulcerate
- Other unusual symptoms
- If you receive an animal bite, you should consult your health care provider even if you received first aid treatment in the field
- Advise all personnel to monitor their health in the same manner and to advise you if they develop any health conditions that may be related to the research trip
- Debrief:
  - Did any first aid treatments or evacuations take place during the research trip? Reflect on what went well, what went wrong, and determine what could have been done better
  - Report debrief outcomes to the AU Employee Health Office and Research Centre, so others can benefit from your experiences
  - Return all equipment leased or rented

*This form has been adapted with permission from the University of Alberta.*