

Lab Closure Policy After an HHMI Laboratory Head's Death, Permanent Incapacitation, or Involuntary Separation

Purpose

This policy describes the support HHMI provides the laboratories of HHMI Investigators or Freeman Hrabowski Scholars (each, an “HHMI Laboratory Head”) after an HHMI Laboratory Head’s death, permanent incapacitation, or involuntary separation from HHMI and the host institution with less than 30 days’ notice (each an “Event”).

Scope

This policy applies to HHMI Laboratory Heads and their laboratories.

Policy

If an HHMI Laboratory Head experiences an Event, HHMI will provide their HHMI laboratory with the support specified in this policy for up to two years after the date of the Event (the “Close-Out Period”). The Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer will decide the length of the Close-Out Period, taking into consideration the ongoing research in the laboratory at the time of the Event. The Close-Out Period is intended to provide the laboratory members in the closing laboratory time to complete research in progress and transition to other opportunities.

In the event that HHMI receives notice that an HHMI Laboratory Head is permanently incapacitated (e.g. the HHMI Laboratory Head or, if the HHMI Laboratory Head is not legally competent, their next of kin or designee with power of attorney notifies HHMI that the HHMI Laboratory Head is permanently unable to perform essential duties as an HHMI Laboratory Head, with or without an accommodation), the Science Operations Manager (SOM) for the laboratory or other recipient of such notice should contact HHMI’s Director, People and Culture with responsibility for host institution sites. The Director of People & Culture will present a recommendation to the Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer. The Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer shall make the final decision on the HHMI laboratory’s eligibility for a Close-Out Period under this policy.

Each HHMI laboratory in a Close-Out Period must work with its host institution to create and submit to HHMI a brief written document that describes the plan for supporting the laboratory members during the Close-Out Period and helping them transition to other opportunities (the “People Plan”). The People Plan must identify other HHMI Laboratory Heads or scientists at the host institution who can, in the absence of the closing laboratory’s HHMI Laboratory Head, provide scientific and professional development advice to the trainees and other members of the closing

laboratory. The HHMI personnel assigned to the host institution, including the Scientific Officer, SOM, HR Business Partner, HHMI site attorney, and Director, People and Culture with responsibility for host institution sites, together with the host institution scientists and officials identified in the People Plan, will work together to support the laboratory during the Close-Out Period. The HHMI Scientific Officer, SOM, and HR Business Partner and the host institution scientists and officials identified in the People Plan as supporting the closing lab should meet (virtually or in-person) at least quarterly to discuss the closing laboratory.

HHMI Support

For closing laboratories that maintain an active research program at the host institution, HHMI support during the Close-Out Period will include:

- The HHMI Laboratory Head's laboratory operations budget for the Close-Out Period, prorated for any partial HHMI fiscal years; the budget level will remain unchanged throughout the Close-Out Period;
- The ability to carry forward during the Close-Out Period up to \$500,000 of unspent laboratory operations budget funds; and
- Occupancy payments to the host institution, consistent with the collaboration agreement between HHMI and the host institution.

HHMI will not provide the HHMI Laboratory Head's salary and benefits during the Close-Out Period. The SOM for the closing laboratory's host institution will control the laboratory's HHMI laboratory operations budget during the Close-Out Period.

If there are at least 12 months remaining in the Close-Out Period, the closing laboratory may work with its Scientific Officer to request equipment as part of HHMI's standard equipment cycle for HHMI Laboratory Heads. All requests must be limited to equipment that is needed to complete ongoing research and must be approved by the Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer. It is not expected that the closing laboratory would need to purchase equipment during the last 12 months of the Close-Out Period, but in the rare instance that equipment is needed to complete ongoing research, the equipment must be funded from the laboratory operations budget, and no equipment costing greater than \$15,000 may be purchased in the last 6 months of the Close-Out Period. Disposal of equipment at the end of the Close-Out Period will be managed in accordance with HHMI's standard procedures.

All HHMI support for the laboratory will end at the end of the Close-Out Period and any remaining funds in the HHMI laboratory operations budget will remain with HHMI.

Laboratory Personnel

The SOM for the closing laboratory's host institution will supervise the HHMI employees in the closing laboratory. Nothing in this policy constitutes an express or implied contract of employment or warranty of any benefits. Employment at HHMI is a voluntary employment-at-will relationship for no definite period of time, unless otherwise agreed in writing by an employee authorized by an HHMI officer to commit to different employment terms. An employee in an at-will relationship has

the right to terminate their employment for any reason and at any time, with or without cause or notice; an employer in an at-will relationship has the right to do the same.

Once the Close-Out Period is determined by the Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer, HHMI will provide written notice to the HHMI employees in the closing laboratory of the anticipated laboratory closure date. Consistent with HHMI's standard procedures, accrued and unused personal time off payouts for eligible laboratory members due upon separation from employment, and severance benefit payments that are determined to be payable under HHMI's Severance Pay Plan, will be charged to the laboratory's HHMI laboratory operations budget. The SOM will encumber the estimated amounts of these funds, whenever possible, at least six months before the end of the Close-Out Period.

If an HHMI Associate in the closing laboratory moves to another HHMI Laboratory Head's laboratory during the Close-Out Period, HHMI will transfer from the closing laboratory's HHMI laboratory operations budget to the other HHMI Laboratory Head's HHMI budget an amount equal to the Associate's salary and benefits for a period beginning on the Associate's start date with the new laboratory and ending the earlier of (i) one year after the date the Associate moves, and (ii) the end of the Close-Out Period.

Generally, it is not expected that the closing laboratory will hire during the Close-Out Period, but an exception may be made if the hire is needed to complete ongoing research. Any requests by the closing laboratory to hire should be made through the Scientific Officer and must be approved by the Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer. No exceptions will be made for graduate students or postdocs.

HHMI Policies

During the Close-Out Period, the closing laboratory will be subject to, and must comply with, all HHMI policies, procedures, and practices, including HHMI's research policies; however, HHMI may decide, in its sole discretion, not to be a party to certain research-related agreements for the laboratory. The Collaboration Agreement between HHMI and the closing laboratory's host institution shall continue to apply to the closing laboratory as if the closing laboratory's HHMI Laboratory Head was still leading the laboratory. The closing laboratory's host institution must enter into a side letter to the Collaboration Agreement documenting this arrangement for the closing laboratory.

Related Procedures, Forms and Policies

None

Contact

[Scientific Officer](#)

[HHMI attorney](#)

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