

# Health and Safety Recommendations for Data Collection During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Developed by Tobii Pro Insight, NA 6/12/2020

The health and safety of our researchers, collaborators, clients, and participants are of utmost importance to Tobii Pro. This document was developed as a helpful tool for clients' consideration when preparing to conduct their next in-person eye tracking study during the current health crisis. It is intended to help create a safe and comfortable research experience during data collection, while mitigating the spread of COVID-19. If you are planning an in-person study conducted by Tobii Pro Insight, please reach out for the specific protocols they plan to follow.

Recommendations were designed with various types of eye tracking research projects in mind and are derived from guidelines posted at the time of document creation by U.S. agencies, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)). **These ideas should be adapted by you and adjusted considering your specific team, testing population, testing environment, and research project. Additional information regarding best practices for infection prevention can be found on the CDC and OSHA websites.**

To start, take these four steps when preparing to conduct your next in-person research study.

## **Step 1: Develop your own health and safety protocols and expectations of participants**

To help, this document includes the below topics:

1. [General Infection Prevention](#)
2. [Equipment Management and Disinfection](#)
3. [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) and Equipment Disinfecting Supplies](#)
4. [General Health and Respiratory Etiquette](#)

## **Step 2: Communicate your protocols and expectations clearly to participants**

[Sample communications](#) are provided at the end of the document.

## **Step 3: Train the research team**

Training employees, data moderators, data analysts, and data collectors on general infection prevention, equipment handling, cleaning practices, and respiratory etiquette may be helpful. See [sample communications](#).

## **Step 4: Prepare to provide disposable PPE and cleaning supplies**

Recommended supplies to have on hand during data collection listed below:

- Alcohol Pads (60% alcohol or higher, for G2s and G3s)
- Disinfectant Wipes (for G2 and G3 Battery Packs, additional related equipment)
- Hand Sanitizer (60% alcohol or higher)
- Antibacterial Soap
- Face Masks
- Gloves
- Thermometers (Non-contact or digital with disposable, sterile covers)
- Sheet Protectors
- Paper Towels

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## 1. General Infection Prevention:

These guidelines are recommended specifically for the research team that may include researchers, contractors, and partners (e.g. data technicians, data analysts, and moderators).

- Face masks should be worn by all participants while working. Discard disposable masks after each use or wash cloth masks after each use. Additional information regarding the handling and disinfection of masks can be found on the CDC and OSHA websites.
- Wear gloves when handling shared surfaces and when disinfecting equipment.
- If an individual has a fever of 100.4°F or higher or is experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, as listed by the CDC (including fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea), they are required to stay home.

*Note: Readers are encouraged to seek legal guidance regarding the proper collection and handling of protected health information such as temperature readings and symptomatic data.*

- Individuals who have had a fever (or fever symptoms) should be fever-free, without the aid of fever reducing medication, for 72 hours before returning to the project.
- Respiratory etiquette, such as covering coughs and sneezes, should be followed when in the office or in the field, as well as followed by washing your hands. Hands should be washed with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, hand sanitizer should be used. Details can be found in the General Health and Respiratory Etiquette section.
- Avoid sharing equipment and limit individuals to their assigned equipment. If at any point equipment must be shared, individuals should wash their hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, both before and after exchanging equipment.
- Disinfect equipment after each use. Alcohol pads and wipes should be made available for participants to wipe down equipment again before applying. Details can be found in the Equipment Management and Disinfection section.
- Maintain social distance of at least 6 feet between individuals. Alternatively, install a plexiglass divider or use a face shield to add a layer of protection between technician and participant.

## 2. Equipment Management and Disinfection:

- In studies where wearable eye trackers (G2s and G3s) are used, they should be placed on a table with written and visual instructions for participants to set-up and self-calibrate. The data technician can provide guidance and instructions from at least 6 feet away or from behind a plexiglass partition.
- Studies using G2s can be run without lenses to lessen surface exposure and cleaning efforts.
- Instructional sheets of paper should be encased in plastic to allow for easy sanitation. If papers are not encased in plastic, then they should be discarded immediately after use.
- Wearable eye trackers (G2s and G3s) should be wiped down with alcohol pads (60% alcohol or higher) after each use. All related equipment should be wiped down with disinfectant wipes after each use. Alcohol pads and disinfectant wipes should be made available to participants to wipe down equipment again before applying.
- Making a portable UV-C sanitizer bag available for additional sanitation of select equipment is recommended.

### 3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Equipment Disinfecting Supplies:

- Data technicians should be provided masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer for use during fielding. In addition, providing a personal thermometer to each technician allows them to regularly check their temperature.
- We recommend providing disinfecting wipes, a portable UV-C sanitizer bag, and alcohol pads for thorough cleaning between each session with any equipment mailed to a data collection site.
- Participants may provide their own PPE, but it should also be provided by the client or research facility.

### 4. General Health and Respiratory Etiquette:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, using the restroom, and before eating or preparing food. Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
  - Wet hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
  - Lather hands by rubbing hands together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
  - Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds.
  - Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
  - Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
  - Apply the gel product to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
  - Rub your hands together.
  - Rub the gel over all the surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This should take around 20 seconds.
  - Let the hand sanitizer dry before touching something new.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
  - Throw away used tissues in a lined trash can.
  - Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Additional information regarding best practices for infection prevention can be found on the [CDC](#) and [OSHA](#) websites.**

## 5. Communications of protocols and expectations

Below are sample communications that might be shared with people involved in an upcoming in-person study.

1. [Data Technician/Research Assistant Protocol](#)
2. [Participant Protocol](#)

### Data Technician/ Research Assistant Protocol:

*This applies specifically to individuals working to collect data and directly with participants in the field.*

- All technicians/research assistants must have their temperature taken at the start of each workday and measure under 100.4°F to conduct research.
  - If the recorded temperature is above 100.4°F, it will be taken a 2<sup>nd</sup> time, ensuring the environment is cool and the technician has not recently completed activity that could elevate their temperature.
  - Before beginning sessions for the day, record temperatures electronically to provide access for managers of the project.
  - Digital thermometers with sterile, disposable covers should be used.
- Technicians should wear a face mask while working. Disposable masks must be discarded after each use. Cloth masks must be washed after each use.
- Gloves are encouraged when handling shared surfaces and when disinfecting equipment.
- In studies where wearable eye trackers (G2s and G3s) will be used, they should be placed on a table with written and visual instructions to guide participants through set-up and self-calibration. The technician can provide guidance from at least 6 feet away or from behind a plexiglass partition.
- Technicians should wash their hands at the completion of every session and any time they touch shared surfaces. Hands will be washed with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, hand sanitizer should be used.
- At least 6 feet of distance should always be maintained between individuals, including while conducting eye tracking sessions, interviews, and surveys. Alternatively, a plexiglass divider will be provided to protect both technician and participant.
- Equipment must be thoroughly disinfected between every participant.
- **Additional information regarding best practices for infection prevention can be found on the [CDC](#) and [OSHA](#) websites.**

## Participant Protocol:

*This is requested of all research participants that researchers will be working with in the field.*

- All participants should wear face masks.
- All participants will have their temperature taken before beginning the session and measure under 100.4°F to conduct research.
  - If the recorded temperature is above 100.4°F, it will be taken a 2<sup>nd</sup> time, ensuring the environment is cool and the participant has not recently completed activity that could elevate their temperature.
  - Non-contact thermometers will be used.
- All potential participants will be screened for health, household health, and recent travel.
- In studies where wearable eye trackers (G2s and G3s) will be used, they should be placed on a table with written and visual instructions to guide participants through set-up and self-calibration. The technician can provide guidance from at least 6 feet away or from behind a plexiglass partition.
- All equipment will be thoroughly disinfected after each use. Alcohol pads and wipes will be available for participants to wipe down equipment again before applying.
- A distance of 6 feet will be maintained between technician and participant during eye tracking sessions, interviews, and surveys. Alternatively, a plexiglass divider will be provided to protect both technician and participant.
- **Additional information regarding best practices for infection prevention can be found on the [CDC](#) and [OSHA](#) websites.**