



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO



Indio Mountains Research Station

IMRS

Protocol for researchers



I. Introduction and General Policies.

This document provides essential information and instructions for researchers working or planning to work at Indio Mountains Research Station (IMRS).

- **Authorization & Access:** Researchers must schedule trips and request authorization from the director **at least two weeks in advance**. Prior to access, researchers must read the [safety](#), [code of conduct](#), and [sexual misconduct](#) policies, and **complete and submit a statement of acknowledgment** and a [release and indemnification agreement](#) form.
- **Water Supply:** Researchers must **bring their own drinking water**: 5 gallons per person per day.
- **Liability & Compliance:** By entering IMRS, researchers acknowledge that UTEP is not liable for personal or property damage/injury. Users must adhere to all UTEP and IMRS policies, including prohibitions on alcohol, tobacco, and misconduct, as well as site-specific rules and personnel instructions.
- **Orientation & Logging:** An orientation, guidelines, and internet access code will be provided by the director or personnel. All researchers must sign the logbook in the IMRS dining room.
- **Principal Investigator (PI) Responsibilities:** Each PI is responsible for ensuring their staff and students receive specific training for IMRS facilities, equipment, materials, vehicles, experimental procedures, and remote fieldwork safety.
- **User Preparedness:** Researchers must be prepared for the remote nature of the station, carrying a first aid kit, water, a cell phone, and contact numbers for IMRS personnel and Border Patrol.
- **Weather & Cleanliness:** Dress appropriately for seasonal weather and check conditions daily before field work. Users are responsible for maintaining a clean and organized station and **must remove all trash at the end of their visit**, which can be disposed of in Van Horn.
- **Prohibited Items/Activities:** Alcohol is prohibited on IMRS premises. Pet policy information can be found [here](#).
- **Facility Access:** Access to IMRS facilities is restricted to authorized personnel and parties.
- **Cleaning Penalty:** Researchers are responsible for cleaning all utilized spaces. Failure to do so will result in a \$50/hour cleaning charge with a minimum of one hour.
- **PI/Group Leader Responsibilities:** Faculty overseeing a research group must:
 - Contact the IMRS director for approval before visiting.
 - Complete all required travel forms.
 - Provide the director with planned research activities and approved protocols.
 - Properly train assistants for safe work.
 - Ensure at least one participant has **wilderness first aid training** within three years.
 - Ensure all used spaces are cleaned at the end of their visit.



- Report any broken items in buildings to the director.
- Ensure that all participants follow the IMRS safety, code of conduct, and sexual misconduct protocols.
- Monitor weather conditions before and during their visit.
- Ensure all individuals sign the dining room log.

II. Important Phone Numbers

- Sierra Blanca Border Patrol Station: (915) 369-4000
- Van Horn Border Patrol Station: (432) 283-3100
- IMRS Director: (915) 637-3163
- Police, Fire or Medical Emergency: 911
- UTEP Police, Emergency UTEP Dispatcher (24 hour): (915) 747-5611
- UTEP Environmental Health and Safety: (915) 747-7124
- Van Horn Hospital: (432) 283-2760

III. Driving on IMRS Premises

- High-clearance 4x4 vehicles are required and must remain in 4x4 mode on IMRS roads.
- Off-road vehicle activities are prohibited. SUVs and ATVs must use existing roads; off-road sites are accessible only by foot.
- Only drivers authorized by UTEP Motor Pool and the director can use ATVs.
- Users must take an ATV driving e-course ([ATV eCourse - ATV Safety](#)) (select the free option). A copy of the certificate must be provided to the director.
- The director will provide more instructions regarding key locations, unlocking and locking of ATVs, use of air compressor, and unlocking and locking ATV shed.
- Users of ATVs must bring their own gasoline.
- Speed limit: 15 mph.
- Avoid any thorny plant on the road that might lead to a flat tire.
- Users must inform their PI or responsible member the direction they are traveling and the time of return.
- Users must carry communication devices (Iphone, walkie-talkies) and drinking water when driving away from headquarters.
- Users must check tires, breaks, and lights before departure.
- Undergrads are not permitted to drive ATVs or any UTEP vehicles.

IV. Facility Equipment and Maintenance

- Report all building and equipment malfunctions or needed repairs to the director, who will then report to Facilities.
- Facilities must be maintained for safety and cleanliness, ensuring a clean working and living space for all visitors.



- The director will clean facilities before the group arrival. Researchers are responsible for leaving the space clean upon departure.

V. Kitchen/Dining Room

- Researchers must bring their own food, ice, and drinking water.
- The Kitchen is equipped with Coleman stoves, a coffeemaker, and a water dispenser. For safety and proper ventilation, windows must be open while stoves are in use, and only one stove can be operated at a time.
- Only 16 oz propane camping cylinders are allowed for indoor cooking.
- Store propane cylinders in the ATV shed when not in use.
- The dining area has 8 tables (6 chairs each) and two ceiling fans.
- Two outdoor grills are available; one works with charcoal or propane gas.
- Users must bring their own charcoal and lighter fluid.

VI. Restrooms

- There are two bathrooms, each with two toilets and a shower; no hot water is available.
- Users must bring only "**septic-safe**" toilet paper and their own toiletries.
- The log is in the dining room.
- Take all personal toiletries; otherwise, they will be discarded.

VII. Dormitories

There are two dormitories, each with 12 bunk beds.

- Turn off lights, disconnect devices, and close doors/windows when no one is inside.
- Tents can be set up in designated camping areas.

VIII. Ranch House

- This building contains the entrance, the lizard room, and the Wynn Anderson Learning Center.
- The **first aid kit** is located in the entrance area.
- Equipment and research materials are stored here.
- Eating, drinking, and storing food are not permitted in this building; store food in designated dining room areas.

IX. Tool Room

- This room, part of the ranch house, contains tools, an air compressor, flat tire repairs, a car battery charger, and electrical extensions.
- Tools require prior authorization from the director.
- Contact the director if unsure how to operate tools.



- **Return** all tools to their designated places.

X. Library

- The Library includes a long table, two desks, chairs, camping cots, and a sink.
- A bookcase with pertinent literature is available.

XI. Snake Room

- This room can be used for diverse lab activities.
- Snakes may be housed in this location for short periods.
- Contact the director or research personnel for access.
- The lab includes equipment and research material.
- Eating or drinking is not permitted in the lab.
- Users must clean the space, all used utensils, return them to their places, and sign the cleaning log at the end of their visit.

XII. The Shack

- This space is primarily for storing cleaning supplies.
- Authorization from the director is required for access.

XIII. Emergency Procedures

- **Bite or Scratch:** If injured, stop work, wash the area with soap and water, flush with running water for 15 minutes, and report to the director or PI immediately. A first aid kit is in the Ranch House. Monitor for signs of illness and report changes to the PI. Information on [rattlesnake bite prevention and first aid](#), and [zoonotic diseases](#) is also provided.

XIV. Weather-Related Events

- The director or researchers must cancel/postpone scheduled events if extreme weather is forecasted.
- During extreme weather at the station, all outdoor activities must cease, and users must return to headquarters.

XV. Migrants

- Do not provide rides to non-UTEP or non-IMRS associated persons.
- Keep vehicles locked and keys on person.
- Call Border Patrol (915-369-4000) in emergencies (e.g., hospitalization, conflict).
- Report incidents to the IMRS director.
- If an injured migrant poses no threat, provide first aid (if trained) and call Border Patrol.



XVI. Medical Emergency

- If a co-worker loses consciousness or is injured, follow these steps:
 - If working alone outdoors, inform someone of your location and expected return time; have them check on you if needed.
 - Call 911 immediately, providing location and type of assistance needed.
 - Provide immediate emergency first aid to the injured person.
 - Stay with the person until assistance arrives.
 - Contact the director and Principal Investigator.

XVII. Fire or Fire Alarm Notice

- In case of a fire alarm, immediately stop work, secure materials, and evacuate to the parking area.
- If you see flames or smell smoke, follow these steps:
 - Rescue visitors from immediate danger.
 - Call 911.
 - Contain by closing all doors.
 - Extinguish small fires.
 - Remain in the headquarters parking area until safe to move.
 - Notify UTEP Police (x5611) immediately.

XVIII. Workplace Violence

Workplace violence at UTEP IMRS is prohibited and must be reported immediately to campus police at x5611. Violence includes any physical harm or threat, intentional or accidental. A threat is any behavior a reasonable person would see as intending physical harm. "Workplace" covers all University facilities, including IMRS, where University business is conducted.

XIX. Alcohol Policy

Alcoholic beverages are generally prohibited on University and UT System property. The President may allow exceptions for specific University-sponsored events, but not for events sponsored by registered faculty, staff, or student organizations, nor for any student-sponsored events. All state laws concerning alcohol will be enforced.

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