

# NYUAD Procedures for Human Subjects Research Protection

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# 1. Definitions<sup>1</sup>

## **Legally Authorized Representative\***

Means an individual or judicial or other body authorized under applicable law to consent on behalf of a prospective subject to the subject's participation in the procedure(s) involved in the research.

## **Common Rule – effective date: 21 January 2019**

The Common Rule refers to the “Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects” adopted by a number of federal agencies. Although the Common Rule is codified by each agency separately, the text is identical to DHHS regulations in 45 CFR 46 Subpart A. For the purposes of this document, references to the Common Rule will cite the DHHS regulations.

## **Human Subject\***

Human subject means a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research

- i. Obtains information or biospecimens through intervention or interaction with the individual, and uses, studies, or analyzes the information or biospecimens; or
- ii. Obtains, uses, studies, analyzes, or generates identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.

## **Intervention\***

Intervention includes both physical procedures by which information or biospecimens are gathered and manipulations of the subject or the subject's environment that are performed for research purposes. Interaction includes communication or interpretation contact between investigator and subject.

## **Private and Identifiable Private Information\***

*Private information* includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information that has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and that the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (*e.g.*, a medical record).

*Identifiable private information* is private information for which the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information.

*An identifiable biospecimen* is a biospecimen for which the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the biospecimen.

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<sup>1</sup> Some definitions were changed in accordance with revised common rule (January 21st, 2019)



## **Research\***

Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities. The following activities are deemed not to be research:

- (1) Scholarly and journalistic activities (*e.g.*, oral history, journalism, biography, literary criticism, legal research, and historical scholarship), including the collection and use of information, that focus directly on the specific individuals about whom the information is collected.
- (2) Public health surveillance activities, including the collection and testing of information or biospecimens, conducted, supported, requested, ordered, required, or authorized by a public health authority. Such activities are limited to those necessary to allow a public health authority to identify, monitor, assess, or investigate potential public health signals, onsets of disease outbreaks, or conditions of public health importance (including trends, signals, risk factors, patterns in diseases, or increases in injuries from using consumer products). Such activities include those associated with providing timely situational awareness and priority setting during the course of an event or crisis that threatens public health (including natural or man-made disasters).
- (3) Collection and analysis of information, biospecimens, or records by or for a criminal justice agency for activities authorized by law or court order solely for criminal justice or criminal investigative purposes.
- (4) Authorized operational activities (as determined by each agency) in support of intelligence, homeland security, defense, or other national security missions

## **Institutional Official (IO)**

The IO is responsible for ensuring that the IRB at the Organization has the resources and support necessary to comply with all federal regulations and guidelines that govern human subjects' research. The IO is legally authorized to represent the institution, is the signatory official for all Assurances, and assumes the obligations of the institution's Assurance.

## **IRB**

The administrative body established to protect the rights and welfare of human research subjects recruited to participate in research activities conducted under the auspices of this institution.

## **IRB Approval\***

The determination of the IRB that the research has been reviewed and may be conducted at an institution within the constraints set forth by the IRB and by other institutional and federal requirements.

## **Minimal Risk\***

That the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

## **Certification**

The official notification by the institution to the supporting Department or Agency, in accordance with the requirements of this policy, that a research project or activity involving human subjects has been reviewed and approved by an IRB in accordance with an approved assurance

## **Research under the Auspices of the Organization**

Research conducted at this institution, conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of this institution (including students) in connection with his or her institutional responsibilities, conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of this institution using any property or facility of this institution, or involving the use of this institution's non-public information to identify or contact human subjects.

## **Principal Investigators**

At NYUAD only faculty with institutional-paid appointments may serve as the Principal Investigator or as the faculty sponsor on a research project involving human subjects.

Adjunct faculty of the institution and any investigator whose status is considered to be "in training" (i.e. students and post-doctoral fellows) may not serve as a Principal Investigator but may serve as a co-investigator.

The IRB recognizes one Principal Investigator (PI) for each study. The Principal Investigator has ultimate responsibility for the research activities.

Protocols that require skills beyond those held by the Principal Investigator must be modified to meet the investigator's skills or have one or more additional qualified faculty as Co-investigator(s).

## **Investigators**

The HHS regulations at 45 CFR part 46 uses the term "investigator" to refer to an individual performing various tasks related to the conduct of human subjects research activities, such as obtaining informed consent from subjects, interacting with subjects, and communicating with the IRB. For the purposes of the HHS regulations, OHRP interprets an "investigator" to be any individual who is involved in conducting human subjects research studies. Such involvement would include:

- Obtaining information about living individuals by intervening or interacting with them for research purposes;
- Obtaining identifiable private information about living individuals for research purposes;
- Obtaining the voluntary informed consent of individuals to be subjects in research; and
- Studying, interpreting, or analyzing identifiable private information or data for research purposes.

Investigators can include physicians, scientists, nurses, administrative staff, teachers, and students, among others. Some research studies are conducted by more than one investigator, and usually one investigator is designated the "principal investigator" with overall responsibilities for the study. In every human subjects research study, investigators have certain responsibilities regarding the ethical treatment of human subjects.

### **Clinical Trial\***

A research study in which one or more human subjects are prospectively assigned to one or more interventions (which may include placebo or other control) to evaluate the effects of the interventions on biomedical or behavioral health-related outcomes.

*\*Definition taken directly from 45CFR46*

## **2. Institutional Authority**

The NYUAD Vice Chancellor, through the NYUAD Provost, has designated the NYUAD Senior Vice Provost for Research Outreach and Managing Director of the Research Institute as the NYUAD Institutional Official (“IO”) responsible for compliance with laws and regulations applicable to research carried out under the auspices of NYUAD. The IO is authorized to establish IRBs and to assure compliance with applicable laws, regulations and University policy in the review, approval and monitoring of human subjects research. The IO is responsible for maintaining a Federal-wide Assurance (FWA) with the Office of Human Research Protections of the United States Department of Health and Human Services and any required licensures of the research ethics committee with agencies of the governments of Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates. The IO is the NYUAD liaison with the NYU Research Compliance Office for matters related to human subjects protection.

The NYUAD Research Administration Office is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the IRB. The IRB functions in coordination with NYUAD officials and other review committees but at all times maintains its independence to appropriately review, approve and monitor research with human subjects.

The NYUAD IRB has jurisdiction over all human subject research (as defined above) conducted under the auspices of NYUAD. Research under the auspices of NYUAD includes research conducted at NYUAD, conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of NYUAD (including students) in connection with his or her institutional responsibilities, conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of NYUAD using any property or facility of NYUAD, or involving the use of NYUAD’s non-public information to identify or contact human subjects.

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### **2.1. Assurance of Compliance**

NYUAD has provided written assurance that it will comply with Federal regulations protecting human subjects (a Federal-wide Assurance, or FWA). The FWA is an assurance of compliance with the federal regulations for the protection of human subjects in federally funded research. Other departments and agencies that have adopted the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects may rely upon the FWA for the research that they conduct or support. NYUAD maintains these same standards for all human research regardless of funding status.

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## 2.2. Regulatory Compliance

The IRB is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal regulations, the laws of Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates and institutional policies. All human subjects' research at NYUAD is conducted in accordance with the policy and regulations found in 45CFR46. The actions of the IRB will also conform to all other applicable laws and regulations.

In the event of conflict between applicable standards of protection, NYUAD follows the standard that provides greater protection to human subjects.

## 3. NYUAD Institutional Review Board

The NYUAD IRB is the administrative body established to protect the rights and welfare of human research subjects recruited to participate in research activities conducted under the auspices of this institution. The IO and the Chair of the IRB review the activity of the IRB periodically and make a determination as to the appropriate number of review boards and meetings that are needed for NYUAD.

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### 3.1. Authority of the IRB

The IRB at the NYUAD reviews and has the authority to approve, require modifications in, or disapprove all research activities involving human subjects conducted under the auspices of NYUAD, except for research that meets the criteria for Exempt from IRB review. The IRB also has the authority to suspend, place restrictions on, or terminate approvals of research activities that fall within its jurisdiction that are not being conducted in accordance with IRB requirements, or that have been associated with unexpected serious harm to subjects.

The IRB ensures that appropriate safeguards exist to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects [45 CFR 46.111]. IRB review and approval of proposed research involving human subjects must take place before research is initiated. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the IRB reviews all research documents and activities that bear directly on the rights and welfare of the subjects of proposed research. Examples of IRB review documentation include, *inter alia*: protocols, consent/assent document(s), tests, surveys, questionnaires and similar measures, and recruiting documents.

Before any human subject becomes involved in research at NYUAD, an IRB will properly consider:

- Risks to the subject
- Anticipated benefits to the subject and others
- Importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result from the study
- Informed consent process to be employed

The IRB has the authority to suspend, place restrictions upon, or terminate approval of research activities that fall within its jurisdiction that

- Are not being conducted in accordance with IRB requirements, or
- That have been associated with serious harm to subjects

The IRB has the authority to observe (or delegate a third party to observe) the consent process and the research if the IRB deems this necessary.

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## 3.2. Jurisdiction of the IRB

The IRB jurisdiction extends to all research (funded and unfunded) involving human subjects conducted at NYUAD, as well as research conducted elsewhere by NYUAD faculty, staff, and students, excluding research where the IRB determines that involvement of human subjects falls within one or more exempt categories (see [Categories of Research Permissible for Exemption](#)).

If an IRB chair, member, or staff person believes the IRB to have been unduly influenced by any party, a confidential report shall be made to the Institutional Official. The IO will investigate it, or refer it to someone else to conduct an investigation, in addition to corrective action to prevent additional occurrences.

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## 3.3. IRB Relationships

The IRB functions independently of, but in coordination with, other institutional regulatory committees. The IRB, however, makes independent determinations regarding approval or disapproval of a protocol based upon whether or not human subjects are adequately protected. The IRB retains review jurisdiction over all research involving human subjects conducted, supported, or otherwise subject to regulation by any federal department or agency that adopted the human subjects' regulations. Human research must have IRB approval before the research can begin.

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## 3.4. Roles and Responsibilities

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### 3.4.1. Institutional Official

The ultimate responsibility of the IRB resides with the Senior Vice Provost for Research Outreach who serves as the Institutional Official (IO) of the program. The IO is responsible for ensuring the IRB has the resources and support necessary to comply with all institutional policies and with federal regulations and guidelines that govern human subject's research. The IO is legally authorized to represent the IRB.

The IO also holds ultimate responsibility for oversight over the:

- Institutional Review Board (IRB);
- Conduct of research conducted by all NYUAD investigators.

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### 3.4.2. IRB Administrator

The IRB Administrator is responsible for:

- Developing, managing and evaluating policies and procedures that ensure compliance with all local, and federal regulations governing research. This includes monitoring changes in

regulations and policies that relate to human research protection and overseeing all aspects of the IRB program

- Advising the IO on matters regarding human subjects and research
- Implementing the institution's IRB policy
- Assuring the IRB members are appropriately knowledgeable to review research in accordance with ethical standards and applicable regulations
- Assuring that all investigators are appropriately knowledgeable to conduct research in accordance with ethical standards and applicable regulations
- The development and implementation of an educational plan for IRB members, staff and investigators
- Submitting, implementing and maintaining an approved FWA through the IO and the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP)
- Managing the finances of the IRB
- Assisting investigators in their efforts to carry out the organization's research mission
- Developing and implementing needed improvements and ensuring follow-up of actions, as appropriate, for the purpose of managing risk in the research program
- Developing training requirements as required and as appropriate for investigators, subcommittee members and research staff, and ensuring that training is completed on a timely basis
- Serving as the primary contact at IRB for the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other federal regulatory agencies
- Day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the IRB office, including supervision of IRB staff
- Responding to faculty, student and staff questions
- Working closely with the Chair of the IRB and on the development of policy and procedures, as well as organizing and documenting the review process
- Preparation and maintenance of documents related to IRB activities
- Other duties as may be delegated by the IO

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### **3.4.3. Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

The IRB prospectively reviews and makes decisions concerning all human research conducted at NYUAD facilities by its employees or agents, or under its auspices. The IRB is responsible for the protection of rights and welfare of human research subjects at all NYUAD facilities. It discharges this duty by complying with the requirements of the Common Rule; local regulations, the FWA and institutional policies.

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### **3.4.4. Chairperson of the IRB**

The IO will appoint a Chair and Vice Chair of the IRB to serve for renewable one-to-three-year terms. Any change in appointment, including reappointment or removal, requires written notification.

The IRB Chair should be a highly respected individual at NYUAD who is fully capable of managing the IRB and the matters brought before it with fairness and impartiality. Moreover, the IRB Chair must be prepared to resist pressure from the institution's administration, the investigators whose protocols are brought before him/ her, and other professional and nonprofessional sources.

The IRB Chair is responsible for conducting convened IRB meetings.

The IRB Chair may designate other IRB members to perform duties, as appropriate, for review, signature authority, and other IRB functions.

The IRB Chair advises the IO about IRB member performance and competence.

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### **3.4.5. Vice Chair of the IRB**

A Vice Chair serves as the Chair of the IRB in the absence of the Chair, and maintains the same qualifications, authority, and duties as the IRB Chair.

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### **3.4.6. The Principal Investigator**

The Principal Investigator (PI) has primary responsibility for carrying out the human research protection program. The PI is expected to abide by the highest ethical standards and to develop a protocol that incorporates the principles of the Belmont Report. He/she is expected to conduct research in accordance with the approved research protocol and to oversee all aspects of the research by providing supervision of support staff, including oversight of the informed consent process. The PI is responsible for obtaining prior IRB review and approval for any proposed changes to research methodology, recruitment, consent procedures, etc. to a previously approved protocol, except where an immediate change in protocol is warranted to protect the health and welfare of subject(s).

All subjects must give informed consent (unless a waiver has been approved by the IRB) and the Investigator must establish and maintain an open line of communication with all research subjects within his/her responsibility. In addition to complying with all the policies and standards of the governing regulatory bodies, the Investigator must comply with institutional and administrative requirements for conducting research. The Investigator is responsible for ensuring that all research staff completes appropriate training and must obtain all required approvals prior to initiating research.

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## **3.5. Resources for the IRB**

The NYUAD Office of the Provost provides resources to the IRB, including adequate meeting and office space, and staff for conducting IRB business. Office equipment and supplies, including technical support, file cabinets, computers, internet access, and copy machines (etc.) will be made available to the IRB and staff.

Periodically, the IO will review the activity, workload and resources of the IRB. The resources provided for the IRB will be reviewed during the NYUAD annual budget review process.

## **4. IRB Membership**

Appointments are made by the IO for renewable terms of between one and three years.

In accordance with the governing regulations, IRB members are selected based on appropriate diversity, including consideration of race, gender, cultural backgrounds, specific community concerns in addition to

representation by multiple, diverse professions, knowledge and experience with vulnerable subjects, and inclusion of both scientific and non-scientific members. The structure and composition of the IRB must be appropriate to the amount and nature of the research that is reviewed. Every effort is made to have member representation that has an understanding of the areas of specialty that encompasses most of the research performed at the IRB. The IRB has procedures that specifically outline the requirements of protocol review by individuals with appropriate expertise.

In addition, the IRB will include members who are knowledgeable about and experienced working with vulnerable populations that typically participates in IRB research.

The IRB must promote respect for its advice and counsel in safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects; and possess the professional competence necessary to review specific research activities. A member of the IRB may fill multiple membership position requirements for the IRB.

Changes in membership will be reported to OHRP.

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## **4.1. Composition of the IRB**

The IRB will at all times consist of at least five members with a guiding principle to promote complete and adequate review of research activities commonly conducted by the institution.

In addition to possessing the professional competence necessary to review specific research activities, the IRB will be able to ascertain the acceptability of proposed research in terms of institutional policies and regulations, applicable law, and standards of professional conduct and practice. The IRB will therefore include persons knowledgeable in these areas.

Since the IRB will regularly review research that involves vulnerable categories of subjects, including, for example, children, prisoners, , individuals with impaired decision-making capacity , or economically or educationally disadvantaged, consideration is given to the inclusion of one or more individuals on the IRB who are knowledgeable about, and experienced in, working with vulnerable populations. In fact, when protocols involve vulnerable populations, the review process will include one or more individuals who are knowledgeable about or experienced in working with these participants, either as members of the IRB or as consultants. Prior to the meeting, the IRB Administrator and IRB Chair will review the agenda to ensure that the membership present for the meeting has the appropriate expertise and experience with any vulnerable populations that are included in the protocols being reviewed.

The IRB includes at least one member whose principal concerns are in scientific areas and at least one member whose principal concerns are in nonscientific areas.

The IRB includes at least one member who is not otherwise affiliated with the institution and who is not part of the immediate family of a person who is affiliated with the institution.

No IRB may have a member participate in the IRB's initial or continuing review of any project in which the member has a conflicting interest, except to provide information requested by the IRB. On an ongoing basis the



IO will monitor the membership and composition of the IRB in order to meet regulatory and organizational requirements.

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## **4.2. Alternate Members**

The appointment and function of alternate members is the same as that for principal IRB members. The role of the alternate member is to serve as a voting member of the IRB when regular principal member is unavailable to attend a convened meeting. When an alternate member substitutes for a principal member, the alternate member will receive and review the same materials prior to the IRB meeting that the principal member received or would have received.

The alternate member will not be counted as a voting member unless the principal member is absent. The IRB minutes will document when an alternate member replaces a principal member.

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## **4.3. Use of Consultants (Outside Reviewers)**

When necessary, the IRB Chair may solicit individuals with competence in specialized areas to assist in the review of issues or protocols requiring expertise beyond, or in addition to, that available on the IRB.

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## **4.4. Attendance Requirements**

Members should attend all meetings for which they are scheduled. If a member is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, that member should inform the IRB Chair, Vice Chair, or the IRB Administrator, preferably with sufficient advance notice to assure quorum attendance. If the inability to attend will be prolonged, a request for an alternate to be assigned may be submitted to the Chair or the IRB Administrator. If an IRB member is to be absent for an extended period of time, such as for a sabbatical, he or she should notify the IRB at least 30 days in advance so that an appropriate replacement can be obtained. The replacement can be temporary, for the period of absence, or permanent if the member is not returning to the IRB. If the member has a designated alternate, the alternate can serve during the Principal member's absence, providing that the IRB receives advance notice.

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## **4.5. Training / Ongoing Education of Chair and IRB Members in Regulations, Procedures**

A vital component of a comprehensive human research protection program is an education program for the IRB Chairs and the IRB members. NYUAD is committed to providing training and an on-going educational process for IRB members and the staff of the IRB, related to ethical concerns and regulatory and institutional requirements for the protection of human subjects.

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### **4.5.1. Orientation**

New IRB members, including alternate members, will meet with an IRB Chair, the IO and the IRB Administrator for an informal orientation session. After the initial session, all new IRB members will meet with the IO for a formal introduction to the IRB and members' responsibilities. At this session, the new members will be given an IRB Handbook that includes:

- The Belmont Report
- NYUAD Procedures for Human Subjects Research Protection
- Federal regulations relevant to the IRB
- Information on local law relevant to the IRB

New members are required to complete the initial education requirement (discussed in the next section) prior to serving as Primary Reviewer.

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### **4.5.2. Initial Education**

IRB members will complete the IRB Members Basic Course provided online by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI).

To ensure that oversight of human research is ethically grounded and that the decisions made by the IRB are consistent with current regulatory and policy requirements, training is continuous for IRB members throughout their service on the IRB. Educational activities include, but are not limited to:

- In-service training at IRB meetings
- Training workshops
- Review of appropriate publications
- Identification and dissemination by the IRB Administrator of new information that might affect the human research protection program, including emerging laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and ethical and scientific issues to IRB members via email, mail, or during IRB meetings

The IO will provide support and may send members of the IRB to attend conferences such as the annual PRIM&R/ARENA conference or regional OHRP conferences on human research protections.

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### **4.5.3. Staff Training**

All new IRB staff will meet with the IO or designee for a formal introduction to the IRB and staff members' responsibilities. At this session, the new staff will be given an IRB Handbook that includes:

- The Belmont Report
- NYUAD Procedures for Human Subjects Research Protection
- Federal regulations relevant to the IRB
- Information on local laws relevant to the IRB

All new IRB staff are trained in the appropriate purpose and use of all IRB forms, documents, and procedures, such as Application forms for Initial and Continuing Review, Reviewer forms, Project

Closure forms, etc.

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## **4.6. Reporting and Investigation of Allegations of Undue Influence**

If an IRB Chair, member, or staff person feels that the IRB has been unduly influenced by any party, he/she shall make a confidential report to the Institutional Official (IO), depending on the circumstances. The official receiving the report will conduct a thorough investigation and corrective action, when appropriate and necessary, will be taken to prevent additional occurrences.

## **5. IRB Records**

The IRB must prepare and maintain adequate documentation of the IRB's activities including: copies of all items reviewed, including, but not limited to research proposals; investigators' brochures and recruitment materials; scientific evaluations (if any) that accompany the proposals; approved consent documents any proposed amendments and the IRB action on each amendment; reports of injuries to subjects and serious and unexpected adverse events; documentation of protocol violations, and documentation of non-compliance with applicable regulations.

IRB records must also include continuing review activities and copies of all correspondence between the IRB and investigators.

Documentation of verified exemptions consists of the reviewer's written concurrence that the activity described in the investigator's request satisfies the conditions of the cited exemption category.

IRB records for initial and continuing review by the expedited procedure must include: the specific permissible category; a description of action taken by the reviewer, and any determinations required by the regulations and protocol-specific findings supporting those determinations.

IRB records must document any determinations required by the regulations and protocol-specific findings supporting those determinations.

All records must be accessible for inspection and copying by authorized representatives of OHRP, sponsors, and other authorized entities at reasonable times and in a reasonable manner.

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### **5.1. IRB Records**

IRB records include, but are not limited to:

- Written operating procedures
- IRB membership rosters
- Training records
- IRB correspondence (other than protocol related)

- IRB Study Files
- Documentation of exemptions
- Documentation of convened IRB meetings minutes, including voting records for all IRB actions
- Documentation of review by another institution's IRB when appropriate
- Documentation of cooperative review agreements, e.g. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)
- Federal Wide Assurances
- Protocol violations submitted to the IRB

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## 5.2. IRB Study Files

The IRB will maintain a separate IRB study file for each research application (protocol) that it receives for review. Protocols will be assigned a unique identification number by the IRB Staff and entered into the IRB tracking system.

Accurate records are maintained of all communications to and from the IRB. The IRB maintains a separate file for each research protocol that includes, but is not limited to:

- Protocol and all other documents submitted as part of a new protocol application
- Protocol and all other documents submitted as part of a request for continuing review/termination of research application. This also includes progress reports
- Documents submitted and reviewed after the study has been approved, including reports of modifications to research/amendments and adverse event reports
- Copy of IRB-approved Consent Form
- Documentation of the type of IRB review
- For expedited review, documentation of any determinations required by the regulations and protocol-specific findings supporting those determinations, including:
  - Waiver or alteration of the consent process
  - Research involving pregnant women, fetuses, and neonates
  - Research involving prisoners
  - Research involving children
  - Research involving persons with impaired cognitive function
- Documentation of all IRB review actions
- Notification of suspension of research
- Correspondence pertaining to appeals
- Copies of approval letters and forms that describe what Principal Investigator must have before beginning the study
- IRB correspondence to and from research investigators
- All other IRB correspondence related to the research
- Reports of unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others and adverse events.

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## 5.3. Minutes of an IRB Meeting

Proceedings must be written and available for review by the next regularly scheduled IRB meeting date. After ratification of the minutes by the Board members, if it is determined that revisions/corrections are necessary, the Minutes will be amended and presented at the following IRB meeting.

Minutes of IRB meetings must contain sufficient detail to show:

- The basis for requiring changes in research
- The basis for disapproving research
- The presence of a quorum throughout the meeting, including the presence of one member whose primary concern is in a non-scientific area
- Attendance at the meetings, including documentation of those members or alternate members who are participating through videoconference or teleconference, including documentation that those attending through videoconferencing or teleconferencing received all pertinent material prior to the meeting and were able to actively and equally participate in all discussions
- Alternate members attending the meeting and for whom they are substituting
- Names of consultants present
- Name of investigators present
- Names of guests present
- The initial attendance list shall include those members present at the beginning of the meeting. The minutes will indicate, by name, those members who enter or leave the meeting. The vote on each action will reflect those members present for the vote on that item
- Business items discussed
- Actions taken by the IRB including those involving full review, as well as expedited review and those studies that have been determined to be exempt from IRB review
- Separate deliberations, actions, and votes for each protocol undergoing initial review, continuing review, or review of modifications by the convened IRB
- Documentation that the research meets each of the required criteria [45 CFR 46.116(d)] along with protocol-specific information containing justification as to why the IRB considers the research to meet each criterion when approving a consent procedure that does not include or that alters some or all of the required elements of informed consent, or when waiving the requirement to obtain informed consent
- Documentation that the research meets each of the required criteria [45 CFR 46.117(c)] along with protocol-specific information justifying why the IRB considers the research to meet each criterion when the requirements for written documentation of consent are waived
- When approving research that involves populations covered by Subparts B, C, or D of 45 CFR 46, the minutes will document the IRB's protocol-specific justifications and findings regarding the determinations stated in the Subparts or the IRB's agreement with the findings and justifications as presented by the investigator on IRB forms
- The vote on actions, including the number of members voting for, against, and abstaining
- Number of those excused, Number of those recused
- Notations indicating an IRB member's conflicting interest with the research under review, as defined by NYUAD policy as described in this document at 7.5.3
- A conflicted IRB member may be present at the meeting to respond to IRB member questions, etc. during review/discussion but must leave the meeting during deliberations and voting
- A written summary of the discussion of controversial issues and their resolution
- Review of additional safeguards to protect vulnerable populations if entered as study subjects when this is not otherwise documented in IRB records
- The frequency of continuing review of each proposal that warrants review more often than annually and the basis for that determination
- Risk level of initial and continuing approved protocols
- Review of interim reports, e.g. unanticipated problems or safety reports; amendments; report of violation/deviations; serious or continuing non-compliance; suspensions/terminations, etc.

- Relevant information provided by consultants will be documented in the minutes or in a report provided by the consultant
- Determinations of conflict of interest management plans and that the IRB found it acceptable.
- Identification of any research for which there is need for verification from sources other than the investigator that no material changes are made in the research

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## 5.4. Membership Rosters

A membership list of IRB members must be maintained and must identify members sufficiently to describe each member's chief anticipated contributions to IRB deliberations. The list must contain the following information about members (IRB Membership Roster)

- Name
- Earned degrees
- Affiliated or non-affiliated status (neither the member him/ herself nor an immediate family member of the member may be affiliated with the NYUAD)
- Status as scientist or non-scientist.
- Indications of experience, such as board certifications or licenses sufficient to describe each member's chief anticipated contributions to IRB deliberations
- Representative capacities of each IRB member; including naming the IRB member prisoner representative (as required by Subpart C), and naming the IRB members knowledgeable about or experienced in working with children, pregnant women, cognitively impaired individuals, and other vulnerable populations locally involved in research
- Role within the IRB (Chair, Co-Chair, etc.)
- Alternate status
- Relationship (e.g., employment) between the individual IRB member and the organization

The IRB Office must keep the IRB membership list current.

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## 5.5. Documentation of Expedited Reviews

IRB records for initial review by the expedited procedure must include: the specific permissible category; that the activity described by the investigator satisfies all of the criteria for approval under expedited review; the approval period and any determinations required by the regulations including protocol-specific findings supporting those determinations. Unless the IRB determines otherwise, continuing review of research eligible for expedited review is not required. Records of continuing review activities will include the rationale for conducting continuing review of research that otherwise would not require continuing review. In general, the IRB will afford a two year approval period, after which time a notice will be sent to the PI via email or directly through the online submission system to inquire whether the study remains open. This process does not entail continuing review, but simply reflects the need to close out studies in the online system once they have been completed. If a study approved by the expedited procedure remains open two years after the original approval date, a follow up message will continue to be sent to the PI on a two year schedule until the study is reported to be completed.

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## 5.6. Access to IRB Records

The IRB has policies and procedures to protect the confidentiality of research information:

- All IRB records are kept secure in locked filing cabinets or locked storage rooms.
- Digital storage is maintained on password-protected secure hard disk drives conforming to the highest level of security available at any time
- Ordinarily, access to all IRB records is limited to the IO, IRB Chairs, IRB members, IRB Administrators, IRB staff, authorized institutional officials, and officials of Federal and state regulatory agencies. Research investigators are provided reasonable access to files related to their research. Appropriate accreditation bodies are provided access and may recommend additional procedures for maintaining security of IRB records. All other access to IRB records is limited to those who have legitimate need for them, as determined by the IO and Administrator.
- Records are accessible for inspection and copying by authorized representatives of Federal regulatory agencies during regular business hours
- Records may not be removed from the IRB Office; however, the IRB staff will provide copies of records for authorized personnel if requested
- All other access to IRB study files is prohibited

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## 5.7. Written Procedures and Guidelines

The NYUAD Procedures for Human Subjects Research Protection detail the policies and regulations governing research with human subjects, and further set forth the requirements for submitting research protocols for review by the NYUAD IRB.

The written procedures and guidelines are updated as needed. The IRB Administrator will keep the NYUAD research community apprised of any new information that may affect the human research protection program, including laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and emerging ethical and scientific issues. Such notification will be given via electronic mail, displayed on the IRB's website and via the IRB's web-based Newsletter.

# 6. IRB Review Process

These procedures and guidelines apply to all research involving human subjects, regardless of sponsorship and performance site, conducted under the auspices of NYUAD.

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## 6.1. Human Subjects Research Determination

The responsibility for the initial determination as to whether an activity constitutes human subjects research rests with the PI. The PI should make this determination based on the definitions of "human subject research" and using the Checklist for Human Subject Research Determination.

PI will be held responsible by NYUAD to make the proper human subjects' research determination. As such, PI may request a confirmation that an activity does not constitute human subjects' research from the IRB Office.

The request should be made via electronic mail or written communication. All requests must include sufficient documentation of the research activity to support the determination.

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### **6.1.1. Categories of Research Permissible for Exemption**

The categories of research permissible for Exemption are defined in 45 CFR 46. 104 and are described on the IRB Application for Exemption. The Exempt Reviewers are required to use the *Checklist for Exemption Determination* to make a determination.

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### **6.1.2. How to Submit an Exemption Application<sup>2</sup>**

Any investigator submitting an IRB Application for Exemption Review must include with that application the following documentation:

- A summary of the research;
- A description of the research procedures;
- Consent documents (if applicable);
- Plan for privacy and confidentiality;
- A copy of the proposal if the research is externally funded, and
- Expected date of completion date.

The exemption application must be signed and dated by the Principal Investigator.

The IRB Chair (or designee) reviews all requests for exemptions and determines whether the request meets the criteria for exempt research. The IRB Chair may designate an IRB member to review requests for exemptions submitted to the IRB. The Chair selects designees who are qualified to review this category of submission based on their expertise of the protocol content and knowledge of regulations pertaining to research. If there is not a designated reviewer to consider requests for exemptions, the IRB Chair reviews the requests. Individuals involved in making the determination of an IRB exempt status of a proposed research project cannot be involved in the proposed research. Reviewers do not have any apparent conflict of interest.

The reviewer indicates whether the request for exemption was approved or denied, and if approved, the rationale for the determination and category under which it was permitted.

Under certain circumstances, the reviewer may conduct a limited review of a protocol, focusing primarily on informed consent process and privacy & confidentiality before determining the protocol exempt from further review (Please see the exemption categories guidance document for more information).

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## **6.2. Expedited Review of Research**

The IRB may use the expedited review procedure to review either or both of the following: (A) some or all of the research appearing on the categorical list below (see: [Categories of Research Eligible for Expedited Review](#)) and

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<sup>2</sup> This section was changed in accordance with revised common rule (January 21st, 2019)



found by the reviewer(s) to involve no more than minimal risk, and/or (B) minor changes in previously approved research for which approval is authorized.

A minor change is one which, in the judgment of the IRB reviewer, makes no substantial alteration in the

- (i) Level of risks to subjects;
- (ii) Research design or methodology (e.g., an addition of a procedure which would increase risk to subjects);
- (iii) Number of subjects enrolled in the research (e.g., increases representing greater than 10%);
- (iv) Qualifications of the research team;
- (v) Facilities available to support safe conduct of the research, or
- (vi) Any other change in the research that would otherwise warrant review of the proposed changes by the convened IRB. Adding procedures that are not eligible for expedited review (see: [Categories of Research Eligible for Expedited Review](#)) would not be considered a minor change.

Under an expedited review procedure, the review may be carried out by an IRB Chair or by one or more IRB reviewers designated by the Chair.

When reviewing research under an expedited review procedure, the IRB Chair, or designees, should receive and review all documentation that would normally be submitted for a full-board review including a completed application, recruitment materials, consent process and documentation, description of experiment or study procedures, and full research instrument.

If the research appears to qualify for expedited review, the reviewer shall conduct the expedited review. If the research does not qualify for expedited review, the reviewer shall refer the application to the IRB for full review at its next convened meeting. [PI shall be informed by IRB administrative staff that the protocol has been referred to the full IRB committee for review.]

In reviewing the research, the reviewers will follow the Review Procedures described in [Review Process](#) and may exercise all of the authorities of the IRB but for disapproval of the research. A research activity may be disapproved only after review in accordance with the non-expedited procedure set forth below.

Reviewers will indicate approval or required modifications and share this with the investigator via electronic mail or via the online submission system. If the modifications are minor, the reviewer(s) may determine if the investigator has sufficiently addressed the modifications. If the modifications are major and have been reviewed by the IRB Chair or IRB Vice Chair, the reviewer(s) may send the review back to the Chair or Vice Chair (s) for further review. Upon the discretion of the reviewer(s) and/ or the IRB Chair or IRB Vice Chair, the protocol may be submitted to the IRB for full board review.

In the event that expedited review is carried out by more than one IRB member and the expedited reviewers disagree on the resolution of the application, the IRB Chair/Vice Chair may make a final determination.

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### **6.2.1. How to Submit an Expedited Review**

The Principal Investigator should indicate on the *Application for New Protocol Review* the specific category under which the investigator believes the research is eligible for expedited review.

Investigators must submit a completed IRB *Application for New Protocol Review* and include the following documentation:

- A summary of the research;
- Description of the research procedures;
- Consent documents (if applicable);
- Plan for privacy and confidentiality;
- Plan for dissemination of findings;
- A copy of the proposal if the research is externally funded;
- A protocol;
- Expected date of completion date, and
- Any conflict of interest disclosure.

The application must be signed and dated by the Principal Investigator.

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### **6.2.2. Informing the IRB**

All members of the IRB will be apprised of all expedited review approvals by means of the agenda for the next scheduled meeting. The expedited review approvals will be made available for any optional review at the request of any IRB member.

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## **6.3. Convened IRB Meetings**

Except where exempt or expedited review procedure is followed, the IRB must review proposed research at convened meetings at which a quorum is present.

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### **6.3.1. Quorum**

A quorum consists of a simple majority of the voting membership, including at least one member whose primary concern is in a non-scientific area. The IRB Chair, with the assistance of the IRB staff, will confirm that an appropriate quorum is present before calling the meeting to order. The IRB Chair will be responsible in ensuring that the IRB meetings remain appropriately convened.

Votes may only occur when a quorum is present. IRB staff take note of arrivals and departures of all members and notify the IRB Chair if a quorum is not present. If a quorum is not maintained, the proposal must be tabled or the meeting must be terminated. All members present at a convened meeting have full voting rights, except in the case of a conflict of interest (see [IRB Member Conflicts of Interest](#)).

In order for the research to be approved, it must receive the approval of a majority of those voting members present at the meeting.

While it is preferred that IRB members be physically present at the meeting, if physical presence is not possible, a member may be considered present if participation occurs via teleconference or videoconference. In such cases, the member must have received all pertinent material prior to the meeting and must be able to participate actively and equally in all discussions.

Opinions of absent members that are transmitted by mail, telephone, facsimile or e-mail may be considered by the attending IRB members but may not be counted as votes or to satisfy the quorum for convened meetings.

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### **6.3.2. Pre-Meeting Distribution of Documents**

The location and time of each IRB meeting is set forth on the agenda cover sheet distributed to all IRB members.

The agenda, including all review assignments, all protocols and supporting documentation to be reviewed, are provided to IRB members prior to each meeting.

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### **6.3.3. Meeting Procedures**

The IRB Chair, or Vice-Chair in the event that the IRB Chair is absent, will call the meeting to order, once it has been determined that a quorum is in place. The Chair or Vice-Chair will remind IRB members to recuse themselves from the discussion and vote by leaving the room where there is a conflict. The IRB will review and discuss the IRB Minutes from the prior meeting and determine if there are any revisions/corrections to be made. If there are no changes to be made, the Minutes will be accepted as presented and considered final. If it is determined that revisions/corrections are necessary, the Minutes will be amended and presented at the following IRB meeting.

The IRB reviews all submissions for initial and continuing review, as well as requests for modifications. The Primary and Secondary Reviewer present an overview of the research and lead the IRB through the completion of the regulatory criteria for approval in the *Institutional Review Board - Protocol Review/Initial Review* checklist.

All members present at a convened meeting have full voting rights, except in the case of a conflict of interest (see below) when the member is excused for that portion of the meeting when the item is under action. In order for the research to be approved, it must receive the approval of a majority of those voting members present at the meeting.

It is the responsibility of the IRB Administrator to record the proceedings of the session.

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### **6.3.4. Guests**

At the discretion of the IRB, the Principal Investigator may be invited to the IRB meeting to answer questions about his or her proposed or ongoing research. The Principal Investigator may not be present for the discussion or vote on his or her research.

Other guests may be permitted to attend IRB meetings at the discretion of the IRB Chair. Guests may not speak unless requested by the IRB and must sign the IRB's *Confidentiality Agreement*.

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### **6.3.5. Primary Reviewers**

The IRB staff assigns a primary reviewer for all protocols requiring initial full review, continuing full review and for all protocols requiring full review of modifications to previously approved research. When making reviewer assignments, IRB staff will assign a member or members of the IRB, and will take into consideration the vulnerable populations involved in the research and the scientific or scholarly expertise required to review the research. Such protocols will then be assigned to at least one IRB member who has the appropriate expertise. If the IRB cannot identify a primary reviewer with appropriate expertise, the IRB Chair will solicit consultants from the Institution or the community with competence in such specialized areas to assist in the review of the issues or protocols requiring appropriate scientific or scholarly expertise beyond or in addition to that available on the IRB (see: [Use of Consultants \(Outside Reviewers\)](#)).

Prior to the convened IRB meeting, each protocol application (including background information, project protocol, and informed consent) is reviewed in depth by the assigned Primary reviewer(s). All other IRB members receive copies of aforementioned with the exception of the protocol and/or investigators brochure. They are expected to have reviewed all provided material in order to have a meaningful discussion of the presented information during the convened IRB meeting.

At the meeting, the Primary Reviewer presents an overview of the goals, design, study procedures, safety procedures, and qualifications of the investigators. The IRB reviews the protocol application using *Reviewer's Checklists* appropriate for the type of review (e.g., initial, continuing, amendment).

Both primary reviewers and other IRB members who are not assigned as primary reviewers of proposed studies that require copies of protocols and/or any documentation can request this from the IRB staff. Further, upon request, copies of minutes and or physical protocol files can be obtained through the IRB Administrator.

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## **6.4. Review Process**

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### **6.4.1. IRB Office Pre-review**

Applications are screened by the IRB Administrator for completeness and ensuring regulatory compliance prior to the placement of the application on the agenda. The IRB Administrator will perform comprehensive pre-reviews of all new protocol full board submissions. Investigators will send electronic copies of their submissions to the Administrator via electronic mail or via the online submission system. The Administrator will check for completeness of submissions and further identify the pertinent issues for the IRB. The Administrator will identify questions and deficiencies before the protocol is added to an agenda for full board review. Changes to the protocol made after the agenda packets have been delivered to IRB members will be forwarded to the full board prior to consideration of the protocol application at the convened meeting.

The investigator will be informed of missing materials and the necessary date of receipt for inclusion on that meeting's agenda. Specific questions about the IRB policies and procedures, determination of whether a particular protocol is human research or not and what particular forms are required for a particular study can be

submitted to the IRB Administrator for information and/or clarification. Individual appointments with the IRB Administrator are strongly recommended for first-time submitters.

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#### **6.4.2. Materials Received by the IRB for the Initial Review of Research**

Each IRB member will receive the following documentation, as applicable:

- Complete protocol application form
- Protocol summary
- Proposed consent / parental permission / assent form(s)
- Recruitment materials
- Subject information
- Data collection instruments (including all surveys and questionnaires)

If an IRB member requires additional information to complete the review, that member may contact the IRB Administrator to make the request of the investigator.

When a protocol is reviewed by the expedited procedure process, reviewers are provided with and expected to review all information that the convened IRB would have received. For expedited review protocols, any IRB member can request to review the full protocol by contacting the IRB staff.

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#### **6.4.3. IRB Member Conflicts of Interest**

IRB members and consultants will not participate in any IRB action, including the initial and continuing review of any project, in which the member has a conflicting interest, except to provide information requested by the IRB. IRB members are expected to self-identify conflicting interests. A Primary Reviewer or expedited reviewer with a conflict of interest must notify the IRB Chair, who will re-assign the protocol to another IRB member.

Real or perceived conflicts of interest on the part of any individual associated with the use of human subjects in research, and the protection of the subjects, can seriously undermine the credibility of the process and must be avoided. The IRB strives to avoid conflicts of interest in performing its obligations. A conflict of interest may take many forms, but arises when members of the NYUAD community are in a position to influence the University's business, research, or other decisions in ways that could lead directly or indirectly to financial gain for the member or his or her family, or give improper advantage to others. For example, an IRB member who is named as Co-Investigator on a protocol is considered to have a Conflict of Interest for purposes of consideration of that protocol.

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#### **6.4.4. Possible IRB Actions Taken by Vote**

##### **Approved**

The study is approved as submitted.

### **Requires Modifications to Secure Approval**

The protocol and/or consent form require minor revisions, such as wording changes, with replacement language provided. The required revisions are agreed upon at the IRB meeting. Such revisions are presented to the Principal Investigator for incorporation by simple concurrence. Only the IRB Chair or designee may approve the study upon receipt and approve the revisions without further action by the IRB.

The date of approval is the date the fully-convened IRB approves the protocol, rather than the date that the minor changes were approved by the IRB Chair or designee.

### **Deferred for Substantive Issues**

Substantive issues regarding the protocol and /or consent form must be addressed. This action is taken if substantial modification or clarification is required, or insufficient information is provided to judge the protocol application adequately (e.g., the risks and benefits cannot be assessed with the information provided). IRB approval of the proposed research will not occur by the convened IRB until subsequent review of the material is submitted for the Principal Investigator.

If the application is deferred the following will occur:

- The IRB informs the investigator in writing of the IRB's decision, setting forth the IRB's questions and concerns
- The investigator's response is sent to the IRB
- In order to receive approval for a deferred protocol, the protocol must be submitted for full IRB review at a subsequent, convened meeting of the same IRB. The IRB staff will provide to the IRB members the investigator's response, the revised protocol and/or consent with highlighted changes, all original submission materials (inclusive of changes, if any were required), and the previous IRB written decision (relayed to the Principal Investigator by the IRB staff) signed by the Principal Investigator. The amended protocol is then placed on the agenda for the following meeting
- The amended protocol application is given full IRB review
- The outcome of the IRB's deliberations is once again communicated to the investigator in writing
- The IRB's determination concerning the subsequent amended submission will be documented in the minutes of that meeting

### **Disapproved**

Questions and issues are of such a magnitude that the IRB determines approval of the study is unwarranted. Approval of a previously disapproved protocol requires full IRB review (see: [Appeal of IRB Decisions](#)).

### **Approval in Principle [45 CFR 46.118]**

There are two circumstances in which the IRB may grant approval required by a sponsoring agency without having reviewed all of the study procedures and consent documents:

- If study procedures are to be developed during the course of the research, but human subjects approval is required by the sponsoring agency
- If the involvement of human subjects depends on the outcomes of work with animal subjects

The IRB may then grant Approval in Principle without having reviewed the, as yet undeveloped, recruitment, consent, and intervention materials. Approval in Principle is granted to satisfy sponsoring agency requirements or to allow sponsor consideration of a proposal or to allow investigators to have access to funding to begin aspects of the project that do not involve human subjects. The PI must attain full approval before commencing Human Subjects research.

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#### **6.4.5. Independent Verification Regarding Material Changes**

Protecting the rights and welfare of subjects may require the IRB to independently verify information about various aspects of the study utilizing sources other than the investigator. Independent verification includes, but is not limited to:

- Adverse event reporting
- Information in the scientific literature
- Confirmation that no material changes occurred during the IRB-designated approval period

The IRB may determine the need for verification from outside sources on a case-by-case basis based upon the following criteria:

- Protocols where concern about possible material changes occurring without IRB approval have been raised based on information provided in continuing review reports or from other sources
- Protocols conducted by Principal Investigators who have previously failed to comply with federal regulations and/or the requirements or determinations of the IRB
- Protocols randomly selected for internal audit
- Whenever else the IRB deems verification from outside sources is relevant

The following factors may also be considered when determining whether or not a study requires independent verification:

- The probability and magnitude of anticipated risks to subjects
- The probable nature and frequency of changes that may ordinarily be expected in the type of research proposed

In making independent verification determinations, the IRB may prospectively require that such verification take place at predetermined intervals during the approval period, may retrospectively require such verification at the time of continuing review, review of amendments and/or unanticipated problems, or may require such verification at any time during the approval period in the light of new information.

If any material changes have occurred without IRB review and approval, the IRB will decide the corrective action to be taken.

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### 6.4.6. Reliance on IRB Review of another Institution<sup>3</sup>

#### Collaborations and Independent Investigators

Cooperative research projects are those projects that involve more than one institution. In the conduct of cooperative research projects, each institution is responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects.

Any institution located in the United States that is engaged in cooperative research must rely upon approval by a single IRB for that portion of the research that is conducted in the United States (effective in 2020). The reviewing IRB will be identified by the Federal department or agency supporting or conducting the research or propped by the lead institution subject to the acceptance of the Federal department or agency supporting the research (46.114.b1).

While this provision does not apply to research at NYUAD, it is relevant in cases where there are collaborations with U.S. institutions or where U.S. Federal funding is involved. In addition, the NYUAD IRB may enter into a joint review arrangement, rely on the review of another IRB, or make similar arrangements for avoiding duplication of effort.

Investigators should identify all collaborating sites in the protocol application and indicate which aspects of the research will take place at each site. Whenever possible, arrangements will be made to designate one IRB as the IRB of record, whereby one institution's IRB has responsibility for reviewing the study and the collaborating institutions agree to accept those determinations. This decision is made by the IRBs involved, but the PI may request which IRB he/she prefers to be the IRB of record. Generally, the IRB of record will be at the institution where most or all of the research activities will be conducted.

Any investigator listed as a collaborator on a protocol application that is not affiliated with NYUAD, with a collaborating institution with an approved FWA, or otherwise covered by a contract between NYUAD and a sponsor, will be required to submit an Individual Investigator Agreement form which will be modeled on the template provided by the [OHRP](#). The form will commit the investigator to comply with all relevant IRB determinations, federal, state and local regulations, and NYUAD policies pertaining to the prospective review of research studies and the protection of human participants in research. For research receiving U.S. Federal funding, Independent Investigators will also have to complete the same disclosure of conflict of interest form that employees of the institution are required to complete. The conflict of interest committee will be asked to review such disclosures and determine if a conflict exists, if it is manageable and if so what actions must be implemented for that management. For additional information about conflict of interest, see [FCOI](#).

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### 6.4.7. Reporting IRB Actions

All IRB actions are communicated directly, in writing, to the Principal Investigator in a timely way of the IRB's determination by the IRB Chair/Vice Chair. When approving a protocol, the IRB will forward written notification of approval. The approval will contain date(s) of the protocol approval and the protocol expiration date. When deferring a protocol, the IRB notification will include the modifications required for approval along with the reasoning for requiring such modifications. When disapproving, terminating or suspending a protocol, the IRB notification will include the reasoning behind such decision.

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<sup>3</sup> Some definitions were changed in accordance with revised common rule (January 21st, 2019)



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## 6.5. Continuing Review of Active Protocols<sup>4</sup>

The IRB will conduct a continuing review of ongoing research at intervals that are appropriate to the level of risk for each research protocol. Continuing review applies as long as the research remains active for long-term follow-up of participants, even when the research is permanently closed to the enrollment of new participants and all participants have completed all research related interventions. Continuing review applies even when the remaining activities are limited to the analysis of private identifiable information.

### 6.5.1 Continuing Review / Approval Period

Per the new rule, effective January 21, 2019, protocols determined to be greater than minimal risk and reviewed by the full board will be reviewed not less than once per year following initial approval.

Unless an IRB determines otherwise, a continuing review of research is not typically required in the following circumstances:

- Research eligible for expedited review in accordance with 46.110;
- Research reviewed by the IRB in accordance with the limited IRB review described in 46.104(d)(2)(iii), (d)(3)(i)(C), or (d)(7) or (8);
- Research that has progressed to the point that it involves only one or both of the following, which are part of the IRB-approved study:
  - Data analysis, including analysis of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, or
  - Accessing follow-up clinical data from procedures that subjects would undergo as part of clinical care.

The IRB retains the right to require a continuing review for particular projects (e.g., those which may present some risks justifying follow up). For protocols reviewed and approved prior to January 21, 2019 via the expedited review process, investigators may request transition to this new continuing review process at the current date for continuing review or sooner by submitting a request for approval of an amendment.

The PI will be asked to indicate anticipated time frame for a project. At the time of completion, the PI will be required to complete a closure form reporting on progress made, number of participants recruited, and other information on status. If time frame is indefinite, then the IRB will check up on project status every two years.

For research where a continuation review is required, research may not be conducted beyond the approval period. If federal funds/support are obtained after the initial approval, the investigator is obligated to inform the IRB, via a request for approval of an amendment, and annual continuing review will be required.

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<sup>4</sup> This section has been changed in accordance with revised common rule (January 21st, 2019)

Federally funded or supported research and FDA regulated research will continue to receive IRB review and approval on an annual basis, at a minimum.

Unless specifically waived by the IRB, research that meets any of the following criteria may require review more often than annually:

- Significant risk to research subjects (e.g., death, permanent or long lasting disability or morbidity, severe toxicity) without the possibility of direct benefit to the subjects;
- The involvement of especially vulnerable populations likely to be subject to coercion (e.g., institutionalized psychiatric patients, incarcerated minors); or
- A history of serious or continuing noncompliance on the part of the Principal investigator.
- The following factors will also be considered when determining which studies require review more frequently than on an annual basis:
  - The probability and magnitude of anticipated risks to subjects;
  - The likely medical condition of the proposed subjects;
  - The overall qualifications of the Principal Investigator and other members of the research team;
- The specific experience of the responsible Principal Investigator and other members of the research team in conducting similar research;
- The nature and frequency of adverse events observed in similar research at this and other institutions;
- The novelty of the research, thereby increasing the possibility of unanticipated adverse events, and
- Any other factors that the IRB deems relevant.

At NYUAD, determination of the approval period and the need for additional supervision and/ or participation is made by the IRB on a protocol-by-protocol basis. For example, for an investigator who is performing particularly risky research, or for an investigator who has recently had a protocol suspended by the IRB due to regulatory concerns, an on-site review by a subcommittee of the IRB might occur, or approval might be subject to an audit of study performance after a few months of enrollment, or after enrollment of the first several subjects.

For each initial or continuing protocol approval, the IRB will indicate an approval period with an approval expiration date specified. IRB approval is considered to have lapsed at midnight on the expiration date of the approval. For a study approved by the convened IRB, the approval period starts on the date that the IRB conducts its final review of the study; that is, the date that the convened IRB approved the research or the date the convened IRB granted conditional approval noting minor non-substantive issues. For a study approved under expedited review, the approval period begins on the date the IRB Chair or IRB member(s) designated by the Chair gives final approval to the protocol.

The approval date(s) and approval expiration date are clearly noted on all IRB notifications sent to the Principal Investigator and must be strictly adhered to. Investigators should allow sufficient time for development and review of renewal submissions.

Review of a change in a protocol ordinarily does not alter the date by which continuing review must occur. This is because continuing review is review of the full protocol, not simply a change to it.

It is the investigator's responsibility to ensure that the continuing review of ongoing research is approved prior to the expiration date. By federal regulation, no extension to that date can be granted.

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### **6.5.2 Continuing Review Process**

Investigators must submit an application for continuation far enough in advance that it can be reviewed where it can avoid interruption of the research.

For all studies reviewed by the full board, all IRB members are provided with and review all of the above-referenced material. The Primary Reviewer and IRB Chair will also receive a copy of the most recent protocol version. At the convened IRB Board meeting, the Primary Reviewer will lead the IRB through the completion of the regulatory criteria for approval in the *Reviewer's Checklists*.

In the case of expedited review, the IRB will include the rationale for conducting continuing review of research that otherwise would not require continuing review. IRB members may request the IRB staff to provide them with any additional materials required for the review.

Review of currently approved or newly proposed consent documents may occur during the scheduled continuing review of research by the IRB, but informed consent documents should be reviewed whenever new information becomes available that would require modification of information in the informed consent document.

A new protocol version that has not been previously approved by the IRB will not be accepted at the time of continuing review unless the protocol is also submitted through a *Request for Amendment* form with all accompanying materials for amendments.

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### **6.5.3 Lapse in Continuing Reviews**

The IRB and investigators must plan ahead in order to meet required continuing review dates. If the IRB has not reviewed and approved a research study by the end of the approval period specified by the IRB, all research activities involving human subjects must cease, including recruitment and enrollment of subjects, consent, interventions, interactions, and data collection, unless the IRB concludes that it is in the best interests of individual subjects to continue participation in the research interventions or interactions. This interruption will occur even if the investigator has provided the continuing information before the expiration date. Therefore, investigators must allow sufficient time for IRB review before the expiration date.

Once lapsed, IRB review and re-approval must occur prior to re-initiation of the research.

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## **6.6 Modification of an Approved Protocol**

Investigators may wish to modify or amend their approved applications. Investigators must seek IRB approval before making any changes in approved research—even though the changes are planned for the period for which IRB approval has already been given. A change may be implemented without IRB only when the change is necessary to eliminate an immediate hazard to the subject (in which case the IRB must then be notified at once).

Modifications may be approved by the IRB if they are within the scope of what the IRB originally authorized. For example, if a researcher wishes to add a population to an existing study, but not alter the study procedures or purpose, a modification request is usually appropriate. Likewise, modifying a procedure without changing the study's purpose or study population may also be appropriate. Investigators must submit documentation to inform the IRB about the changes in the status of the study, including, but not necessarily limited to:

- Completed Application for Approval of Amendment form
- Revised Investigator's protocol application
- Revised approved consent/parental permission/assent documents (if applicable) or other documentation that would be provided to subjects when such information might relate to their willingness to continue to participate in the study
- Revised or additional recruitment materials
- Any other relevant documents provided by the investigator

All changes must be accompanied by a detailed summary of the changes and a rationale (if applicable).

The IRB Chair will determine whether the proposed changes may be approved through an expedited review process, if the changes are minor, or whether the modification warrants full board review. The reviewer(s) using the expedited procedure may determine whether the proposed changes may be approved through the expedited review procedure and, if not, must refer the protocol for full board review.

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### **6.6.1 Expedited Review of Protocol Modifications**

An IRB may use expedited review procedures to review minor changes in ongoing previously-approved research during the period for which approval is authorized. An expedited review may be carried out by the IRB Chair and/or designee(s) among the IRB. Minor changes/modifications would not include the addition of procedures involving more than minimal risk to participants or changes that do not fall in categories (1)-(7) of research that could be reviewed using the expedited procedure. (see: [Categories of Research Eligible for Expedited Review](#))

The reviewer(s) complete the *Checklist for Amendment Review Determination* to determine whether the modifications meet the criteria allowing review using the expedited procedure, and if so, whether the research with the proposed modifications meets the regulatory criteria for approval.

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### **6.6.2 Full Board Review of Protocol Modifications**

When a proposed change in a research study is not minor (e.g., procedures involving increased risk or discomfort are to be added), then the IRB must review and approve the proposed change at a convened meeting before the change can be implemented. The only exception is a change necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the research subjects. In such a case, the IRB should be promptly informed of the change following its implementation and should review the change to determine that it is consistent with ensuring the subjects' continued welfare.

Major changes/modifications would include the addition of procedures involving more than minimal risk to participants or changes that do not fall in categories (1)-(7) of research that could be reviewed using the expedited procedure (see: [Categories of Research Eligible for Expedited Review](#)).

All IRB members are provided and review all documents provided by the investigator.

At the meeting, the Primary Reviewer presents an overview of the modifications and leads the IRB through the completion of the regulatory criteria for approval.

When the IRB reviews modifications to previously approved research, the IRB consider whether information about those modifications might relate to participants' willingness to continue to take part in the research and if so, whether to provide that information to participants.

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### **6.6.3 Closure of Protocols**

The completion or termination of the study is a change in activity and must be reported to the IRB. Although subjects will no longer be "at risk" under the study, the Request for Closure allows the IRB to close its files.

Investigators may submit closure applications to the IRB as a study closure of a protocol (in *Notification of Study Closure*). IRB staff will review the closure application for completeness and will determine how to notify the IRB. Closure applications will be included on the next agenda as a *Request for Final Study Closure* item.

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## **6.7 Unanticipated Problems**

Federal regulations require organizations to have written policies and procedures to ensure the prompt reporting of unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others to the IRB, appropriate institutional officials, and regulatory agencies and departments.

Not all unanticipated problems involve direct harm to subjects. Events can occur which are unexpected and result in new circumstances that increased the risk of harm to subjects without directly harming them. In addition, the event may have presented unanticipated risks to others (e.g., the sexual partners of the subjects, individuals the subject may come in contact with, family members, research personnel, etc.) in addition to the subjects. In each case, while the event may not have caused any detectable harm or adverse effect to subjects or others, they nevertheless represent unanticipated problems and should be promptly reported.

Events which harm subjects are referred to as "Adverse Events." Although adverse events occur most commonly in the context of biomedical research, adverse events can occur in the context of social and behavioral research. Only unanticipated adverse events that are related to the research need to be reported. For instance, if a research subject were to die due to causes that are clearly unrelated to the study, it is not necessary to report the death as an adverse event.

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### **6.7.1 Definitions**

Unanticipated Problem Involving Risks to Participants or Others (Unanticipated Problem)

Any event, any incident, experience, outcome, or new information that (1) was unforeseen and (2) indicates that the research procedures caused harm to participants or others or indicates that participants or others are at

increased risk of harm (including physical, psychological, economic, or social harm) than was previously known or recognized.

### **Adverse Event**

Any physical, psychological or social harm to subjects during the course of research. An adverse event can be any unfavorable or unintended event.

### **Unanticipated**

An event is “unanticipated” when its specificity and severity are not accurately reflected in the informed consent document, protocol and/or Investigator’s Brochure.

The incident, experience or outcome is not expected (in terms of nature, severity, or frequency) given the research procedures that are described in the protocol-related documents, such as the IRB-approved research protocol and informed consent documents; and the characteristics of the subject population being studied;

### **Related to the Research**

An event is “related to the research procedures” if in the opinion of the Principal Investigator, it was more likely than not related to the research procedures, or if it is more likely that not that the event affects the rights and welfare of current participants, or if it is unclear whether or not the event may have been related to the research procedures.

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## **6.7.2 Reporting**

Principal investigators must report to the IRB as soon as possible any:

- Adverse events which in the opinion of the principal investigator are both unexpected and related
- An unanticipated event related to the research that exposes individuals other than the research participants (e.g., investigators, research assistants, students, the public, etc.) to potential risk
- Information that indicates a change to the risks or potential benefits of the research.
- A breach of confidentiality, including the loss of digital storage devices
- Incarceration of a participant in a protocol not approved to enroll prisoners
- Change to the protocol taken without prior IRB review to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to a research participant
- Complaint of a participant when the complaint indicates unexpected risks or cannot be resolved by the research team
- Protocol violation (meaning an accidental or unintentional change to the IRB approved protocol) that harmed participants or others or that indicates participants or others may be at increased risk of harm
- Event that requires prompt reporting to the sponsor
- Sponsor imposed suspension for risk

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### 6.7.3 IRB Review

Upon receipt of an *Unanticipated Event Report* from a Principal Investigator, the IRB Administrator checks the form for completeness. If any applicable sections of the form are incomplete or have been answered unsatisfactorily, the IRB Administrator will contact the investigator to obtain additional information. Corrections are documented in the IRB file.

The IRB Administrator submits the *Unanticipated Event Report* and all supporting documents provided by the investigator to the Chair for review.

Based on the information received from the Principal Investigator and upon the advice of the Administrator or other reviewers, the IRB Chair may suspend research to ensure protection of the rights and welfare of participants. In making a determination whether to direct suspension, the Chair may consider whether the PI has voluntarily put the research on hold. Suspension directives made by the IRB Chair must be reported to a meeting of the convened IRB.

The results of the IRB review are recorded in the IRB minutes, protocol record, communicated to the investigator and referred to the IRB staff to be handled according to the reporting procedures.

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## 6.8 Further Review/Approval of IRB Actions by Others within the Institution

Research that has been approved by the IRB may be subject to further appropriate review and approval or disapproval by officials of the institution; **however, those officials may not approve research if it has been not been approved by the IRB. [45 CFR 46.112]** There are no required institutional reviews after the IRB grants approval, but the institution reserves the right to subject research reviewed by the IRB to further review.

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## 6.9 Appeal of IRB Decisions

NYUAD will consider appeal(s) of IRB decisions. The Principal Investigator may appeal an IRB decision in writing. All appeals must be addressed to the IRB Chair and should be accompanied by a letter detailing the reason for the appeal. The Principal Investigator should be prepared to attend the meeting of the IRB to address issues raised by the Board. The IRB makes the final determination in all appeals.

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## 6.10 Post-Approval Monitoring<sup>5</sup>

Because the revised Common Rule eliminates the need for annual continuation review, as a mechanism for monitoring ongoing human subjects research projects, the IRB will randomly select approved studies for post-approval monitoring. However, for-cause audits will be a priority for the Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM) Program. Special emphasis may be placed on studies that include vulnerable populations or have activities that

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<sup>5</sup> This section has been added in accordance with revised common rule (January 21st, 2019)

may place participants at greater risk than what may be anticipated in ordinary circumstances. Monitoring will be done with an emphasis on quality improvement and support for researchers.

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### 6.10.1 Categories of PAM review

- **Routine:** Studies will primarily be randomly selected by the IRB Office. In routine PAM reviews, the IRB Office may focus on the project as a whole or select certain elements of study activities to monitor.
- **Informed consent:** This review is intended to support researchers in conducting the informed consent process. It may include observation (when possible) of the consent process and/or a thorough review of the process including training of people obtaining consent, and review of signatures and storing.
- **For-cause:** Under 45 CFR 46.113 requirements, this review is performed when concerns regarding compliance, protocol adherence, or subject safety are brought to the attention of the IRB or the IRB Monitor. This would be an on-site audit that may include a review of all or any related study activities.
- **Investigator Initiated:** A PI may request an on-site review to help keep records and procedures in compliance with federal regulations and institutional policies or to prepare for an external audit by a sponsor or federal agency.

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### 6.10.2 Notice Periods for scheduling PAM

Except in cases where the safety of subjects is a concern, or where the IRB specifically requests an unannounced audit, written notification will be sent from the Office of Research. Depending on the nature of the research study, an IRB member who has experience in the study topic may also be present during the review. The Investigator will contact the IRB Administrator to arrange a visit within the following estimated timeframes:

- **Routine:** At least two weeks' notice in advance of the initial meeting.
- **Informed Consent:** At least one week notice in advance of the monitoring.
- **For-cause:** At least twenty-four (24) hours' notice by a telephone call and email to the PI from the Institutional Official or his/her designee.
- **Investigator Initiated:** A time will be arranged by mutual convenience.

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### 6.10.3 Elements of Audit Review

Investigators will receive a letter informing them that their study has been chosen for a review. The investigator will then contact the Reviewer, and a time will be scheduled.

Prior to the meeting, the Reviewer will examine the Study Protocol and all documentation related to the study in the IRB file including:

- The IRB approved protocol or the Grant Application, if applicable;
- The IRB File that includes IRB Meeting issues (quorum, diversity, expertise, conflict of interest); adequacy of review, related of correspondence/amendments, records of adverse events, and protocol deviations submitted by the investigator;



- Whether annual continuing review was completed (if applicable)
- Elements of Informed Consent/Assent documents, as well as review of the required elements of informed consent according to the federal regulations and IRB requirements.
- Subsequent publications resulting from IRB approved protocols may also be reviewed.

Investigators can prepare for the audit by reviewing the checklist of questions below. (Please note that not all items on the checklist apply to all research studies)

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#### **6.10.4 Preparing for the PAM review: Questions for PI and research study team**

- Does the researcher have available the most recently approved protocol, consent form, and study documents?
- How many participants are currently enrolled? How many have been approved by the IRB?
- Are all key personnel listed on Appendix A? Are personnel conducting procedures according to their role in the study?
- Have any participants withdrawn/dropped from study? If so, why?
- Have any adverse events occurred? Were any reported to the IRB?
- Are participants consented with the most recently IRB approved stamped version? Have all the consent forms been signed and dated by the participant and the person obtaining consent?
- Have all study measures and procedures been approved by the IRB before implementation?
- Are all study records stored as indicated in the protocol?
- Are all advertisements and methods of recruitment being used IRB-approved?
- Are study documents maintained as outlined in the protocol?
- Are participant ID numbers generated per protocol?
- Have all enrolled participants met eligibility criteria? Is there documentation of eligibility?
- Have there been any protocol deviations? Have they been reported to the IRB?
- Have there been any unanticipated problems with protocol implementation?
- Has participant compensation been documented?
- Have there been any participant complaints?
- Are raw data files organized, complete, and legible?

Initially, a brief meeting between the Reviewer and the PI will be set up to discuss the study. The PI will provide the Reviewer with study files. The PI must make available the use of a quiet space for the Reviewer to review the study files. The PI or designee who is familiar with the study will be available during the process to assist the Reviewer address any related questions. The Reviewer will provide recommendations and educational support on record retention and documentation, and other compliance related issues. Documents pertaining to research will be held strictly confidential.

Review of Regulatory Compliance may include review of: (See [Monitoring Review Form](#))

1. Roles and responsibilities of investigators and key personnel
2. Protocol file/regulatory documentation.

3. IRB Documentation.
4. Consent/Assent Forms.
5. Individual Participant Records. A random sample to determine if :
  - The participants met the inclusion/exclusion criteria for the study.
  - Study related procedures are performed according to the protocol.
  - Study related procedures are scheduled and performed per the study timeline.
  - Data are recorded and stored securely as described in the Consent Form.
  - Adverse Events have been reported according to institutional policy.
  - Protocol deviations have been reported to the IRB.
  - Payments were made to participants as described in the protocol.
  - Participant ID numbers are assigned according to the protocol.

After the review process, the Reviewer will meet with the PI and provide a brief summary of findings.

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### **6.10.5 Reports of Findings**

A Summary Report will be drafted by the IRB Reviewer and sent to the PI for his/her review and responses. The report will provide a detailed summary of the review, identifying areas of improvement and recommendations for improvement. The PI and the IRB Reviewer will sign the report. A copy of the signed report will be provided to the Assistant Director, Research Ethics and Governance, the PI, and the IRB Chair. When indicated, the PI will be invited to respond to each indication of non-compliance listed in the summary with a plan of corrective action for each item. This plan will be submitted to the IRB within 2 weeks of the date of the summary.

It is anticipated that in most cases serious violations involving risk of injury to participants will have already been reported to the IRB. However, if an audit demonstrates that a serious violation involving risk of injury to participants has not been reported, it will be reported immediately to the IRB Chair, Assistant Director, Research Ethics and Governance, and to the Senior Vice Provost of Research (or his/her designee).

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### **6.10.6 PAM of Informed Consent/Assent Process**

Investigators can request an overview of the consent process at any time before or during initiation of a study. During the PAM of consent, the IRB Reviewer will examine:

- The timing of recruitment and screening in relation to informed consent.
- The appropriateness of the person obtaining consent.
- The consent process to meet the needs of vulnerable populations.
- Steps to aid participants with barriers to understanding or lack of capacity to consent (language, reading level, etc.)
- Steps to see if the participant understands the research purpose, risks, benefits, voluntary participation, withdrawal, confidentiality, costs/compensation, and contacts for questions or injuries.

## 7. Criteria for IRB Approval of Research

In order for the IRB to approve human subjects' research it must determine that the following requirements are satisfied:

- Risks to subjects are minimized by using procedures which are consistent with sound research design and which do not unnecessarily expose subjects to risk
- Risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to subjects, and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result. In evaluating risks and benefits, the IRB should consider only those risks and benefits that may result from the research (as distinguished from risks and benefits of therapies subjects would receive even if not participating in the research). The IRB should not consider possible long-range effects of applying knowledge gained in the research (for example, the possible effects of the research on public policy) as among those research risks that fall within the purview of its responsibility.
- Selection of subjects is equitable. In making this assessment the IRB should take into account the purposes of the research and the setting in which the research will be conducted and should be particularly cognizant of the special problems of research that involves a category of subjects who are vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, such as children, prisoners, individuals with impaired decision-making capacity, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons.
- Informed consent will be sought from each prospective subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, in accordance with, and to the extent required by [45 CFR §46.116].
- Informed consent will be appropriately documented, or appropriately waived, in accordance with, and to the extent required by [45 CFR §46.117].
- When appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provision for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of subjects.
- When appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of data.
- When some or all of the subjects are likely to be vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, such as children, prisoners, individuals with impaired decision-making capacity, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons, additional safeguards have been included in the study to protect the rights and welfare of these subjects.

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### 7.1 Scientific Merit

In order to assess the risks and benefits of the proposed research, the IRB must determine that the science is adequate to provide sufficient benefit to justify the risks, including:

- The research uses procedures consistent with sound research design;
- The research design is sound enough to reasonably expect the research to answer its proposed question; and
- The knowledge expected to result from this research is sufficiently important to justify the risk.

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## **7.2 Selection of Subjects is Equitable**

The IRB will review the inclusion/exclusion criteria for the research to ensure equitable selection of subjects. In making this assessment the IRB takes into account the purposes of the research and the setting in which the research will be conducted, and is particularly cognizant of the special problems of research involving vulnerable populations, such as children, prisoners, fetuses, pregnant women, individuals with impaired decision-making capacity, or persons who are economically or educationally disadvantaged.

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### **7.2.1 Recruitment of Subjects**

The investigator will provide the IRB with all recruiting materials to be used in identifying participants.

The IRB must approve any and all advertisements prior to posting and/or distribution.

This information should be submitted to the IRB with the initial application or as an addendum to the protocol.

Once approved by the IRB, an advertisement cannot be altered or manipulated in any way without prior IRB approval.

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## **7.3 Privacy and Confidentiality**

The IRB will determine whether adequate procedures are in place to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of the data.

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### **7.3.1 Definitions**

#### **Privacy**

Control over the extent, timing, and circumstances of sharing oneself (physically, behaviorally, or intellectually) with others.

#### **Confidentiality**

Methods used to ensure that information obtained by researchers about their subjects is not improperly divulged.

#### **Private Information**

Includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information that has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and that the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (e.g., a medical record).

#### **Identifiable Information**

Private information for which the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information.

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### **7.3.2 Privacy**

The IRB must determine whether the activities in the research constitute a violation of privacy. The IRB must be provided with information regarding how the investigators obtain access to subjects or subjects' information and the subjects' expectations of privacy in the situation. Investigators must have appropriate authorization to access the subjects or the subjects' information.

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### **7.3.3 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality and anonymity are not the same. If anyone, including the investigator, can readily ascertain the identity of the subjects from the data, then the data are not anonymous and the IRB must determine if appropriate protections are in place to minimize the likelihood that the information will be inappropriately divulged. The level of confidentiality protections should be commensurate with the potential of harm from inappropriate disclosure.

The IRB will review all information received from the Principal Investigator and determine whether or not the privacy and confidentiality of research subjects is sufficiently protected.

In reviewing confidentiality protections, the IRB shall consider the nature, probability, and magnitude of harms that would be likely to result from a disclosure of collected information outside the research. It shall evaluate the effectiveness of proposed de-identification techniques, coding systems, encryption methods, storage facilities, access limitations, and other relevant factors in determining the adequacy of confidentiality protections.

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## **7.4 Vulnerable Populations**

At the time of initial review the IRB will consider the scientific and ethical reasons for including vulnerable subjects in research. The IRB must determine if appropriate additional safeguards are in place to protect the rights and welfare of subjects if they are likely to be members of a vulnerable population (e.g., persons with diminished autonomy).

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## **7.5 Informed Consent Process**

No investigator may involve a human being as a subject in research without obtaining the legally effective informed consent of the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative unless a waiver of consent has been approved by the IRB in accordance with [Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent \(Waiver of Signed Consent\)](#) in this policy.

The IRB will consider where the consent process will take place and the individual who will be obtaining consent (e.g. the investigator, collaborator, or qualified designee) in its determination regarding the appropriateness of the consent process. When the potential participant's understanding of the research may be impaired due to the timing, location, or individuals participating in the proposed consent process, the IRB will require an alternative process.

The information that is given to the subject or the representative must be in language understandable to the subject or the representative.

No informed consent, whether oral or written, may include exculpatory language through which the subject or the representative is made to waive or appear to waive any of the subject's legal rights.

If someone other than the investigator conducts the interview and obtains consent, the investigator needs to formally delegate this responsibility and the person so delegated must have received appropriate training to perform this activity.

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## 7.6 Basic Requirements

The requirement to obtain the legally effective informed consent of individuals before involving them in research is one of the central protections provided by the IRB. When informed consent is required, it must be sought prospectively, and properly documented.

The informed consent process involves three key features:

- Disclosing to the prospective human subject information needed to make an informed decision.
- Facilitating the understanding of what has been disclosed
- Promoting the voluntariness of the decision about whether or not to participate in the research

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## 7.7 Waiver of Informed Consent

The IRB may approve a consent procedure which does not include, or which alters, some or all of the elements of informed consent set forth above, or waive the requirement for informed consent provided the IRB finds and documents that all the following conditions are met:

- The research involves no more than minimal risk to the subjects
- The waiver or alteration will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects
- Whenever appropriate, the subjects must be provided with additional pertinent information after participation

**OR**

- The research or demonstration project is to be conducted by or subject to the approval of local government officials and is designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine;
- Public benefit or service programs;
- Procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs;
- Possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or
- Possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs;

**AND**

- The research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration

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## **7.8 Documentation of Informed Consent (Signed Consent)**

Informed consent must be appropriately documented, in accordance with, and to the extent required by [45 CFR 46.117].

- Informed consent is documented by the use of a written consent form approved by the IRB and signed and dated by the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative at the time of consent.
- A copy of the signed consent form must be given to the person signing the form.
- The consent form may be either of the following:
  - A written consent document that embodies the elements of informed consent may be read to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, but the subject or representative must be given adequate opportunity to read it before it is signed; or
  - A short form written consent document stating that the elements of informed consent have been presented orally to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. When this method is used:
    - There must be a witness to the oral presentation; and
    - The IRB must approve a written summary of what is to be signed by the subject or representative; and
    - The witness must sign both the short form and a copy of the summary; and
    - For subjects who do not speak English, the witness must be conversant in both English and the language of the subject.
- The person actually obtaining consent must sign a copy of the summary; and
- A copy of the summary must be given to the subject or representative, in addition to a copy of the short form.

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## **7.9 Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent (Waiver of Signed Consent)**

Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, informed consent shall be documented by the use of a written informed consent form approved by the IRB and signed (including in an electronic format) by the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. A written copy shall be given to the person signing the informed consent form.

Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, the informed consent form may be either of the following:

- (1) A written informed consent form that meets the requirements of §46.116. The investigator shall give either the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative adequate opportunity to read the informed consent form before it is signed; alternatively, this form may be read to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative.

(2) A short form written informed consent form stating that the elements of informed consent required by §46.116 have been presented orally to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, and that the key information required by §46.116(a)(5)(i) was presented first to the subject, before other information, if any, was provided. The IRB shall approve a written summary of what is to be said to the subject or the legally authorized representative. When this method is used, there shall be a witness to the oral presentation. Only the short form itself is to be signed by the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. However, the witness shall sign both the short form and a copy of the summary, and the person actually obtaining consent shall sign a copy of the summary. A copy of the summary shall be given to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, in addition to a copy of the short form.

An IRB may waive the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed informed consent form for some or all subjects if it finds any of the following:

- (i) That the only record linking the subject and the research would be the informed consent form and the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. Each subject (or legally authorized representative) will be asked whether the subject wants documentation linking the subject with the research, and the subject's wishes will govern;
- (ii) That the research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context; or
- (iii) If the subjects or legally authorized representatives are members of a distinct cultural group or community in which signing forms is not the norm, that the research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and provided there is an appropriate alternative mechanism for documenting that informed consent was obtained.

In cases in which the documentation requirement is waived, the IRB may require the investigator to provide subjects or legally authorized representatives with a written statement regarding the research.

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## 7.10 Surrogate Consent

This policy is designed to protect human subjects from exploitation and harm and, at the same time, make it possible to conduct essential research on problems that are unique to persons who are incompetent, or who have an impaired decision-making capacity.

Unless waived by the IRB, informed consent must be obtained directly from the individual subject. Under appropriate conditions, investigators instead may obtain informed consent from a legally authorized representative of a subject.

*Legally authorized representative* means an individual or judicial or other body authorized under applicable law to consent on behalf of a prospective subject to the subject's participation in the procedure(s) involved in the research. If there is no applicable law addressing this issue, *legally authorized representative* means an individual recognized by institutional policy as acceptable for providing consent in the non-research context on behalf of the prospective subject to the subject's participation in the procedure(s) involved in the research.



Obtaining consent from a representative of an adult subject rather than directly from the subject (i.e., surrogate consent) by any NYUAD investigator requires the prior approval of the IRB. The IRB will allow use of surrogate consent in accordance with NYUAD policy only for subjects who lack the capacity to provide their own consent.

If a subject previously determined to lack capacity to consent regains capacity during the study, the investigator must obtain the consent of the individual for the remaining part of the study. The consent process must disclose all research procedures performed to date and allow the individual an opportunity to continue in or withdraw from the study. The subject must sign the IRB-approved consent document and the research record should document what research procedures were already performed or remain to be performed.

The IRB must approve any use of surrogate consent prospectively during review of the protocol or modification of the protocol. The submission to the IRB must include details of how the investigator will verify the authority of the individual to serve as the legally authorized representative designated to provide surrogate consent.

If feasible, the investigator must explain the proposed research to the prospective research subject even when the surrogate gives consent. Under no circumstances may a subject be forced or coerced to participate in a research study.

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## **7.11 Consent and Language Barriers**

Researchers should prepare both English language and translated consent forms for proposals that include non-English-speaking subjects. The IRB may consult with language experts or require a "back-translation" into English. When non-English speaking subjects enroll, they and the witness sign the translated document. The subjects are given a copy of the signed translated consent document.

If a non-English-speaking subject is enrolled unexpectedly, researchers may rely on an oral translation of the English language consent form, but should take extra care in the informed consent process to ensure that the subject has understood the project. A statement in the research records (and on the English language consent form) should indicate that the translation took place, identify the translator, and document the translator's belief that the subject understands the study and the consent process. Researchers should try to provide a written translation of the vital emergency contact information.

If the subject does not clearly understand the information presented at the signing of the consent document or in subsequent discussions, his/her consent may not be informed, and therefore, not effective.

If a Principal Investigator decides to enroll a subject into a protocol for which there is not an existing IRB-approved informed consent document in the prospective subject's language, the Principal Investigator must receive IRB approval to follow the procedures for a "short form" written consent (see: [Documentation of Informed Consent \(Signed Consent\)](#)).

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### **7.11.1 Use of Interpreters in the Consent Process**

Unless the person obtaining consent is fluent in the prospective subject's language, an interpreter will be necessary to deliver information in the IRB-approved script and to facilitate the consent conversation. Preferably

someone who is independent of the subject (i.e., not a family member) should assist in presenting information and obtaining consent. Whenever possible, interpreters should be provided copies of the short form and the IRB-approved consent script well before (24 to 48 hours if possible) the consent conversation with the subject. If the interpreter also serves as the witness, she/he may sign the short form consent document and script as the witness and should note "Interpreter" under the signature line. The person obtaining consent must document that the "short form" process was used in the progress notes of the subject's medical record, including the name of the interpreter.

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### **7.11.2 Braille Consent**

For blind subjects who read Braille, the IRB may approve a consent document prepared in Braille. In order to assure itself that a Braille consent document is accurate, the IRB may require a transcription into print text or review of the document by an IRB member or other person who reads Braille. If possible, the subject will sign the Braille consent; otherwise verbal consent will be obtained, witnessed and documented as described below.

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### **7.11.3 Oral Consent**

When subjects are unable to read a written consent form (such as blind or illiterate subjects), the IRB may approve an oral consent process, provided the subject (1) retains the ability to understand the concepts of the study and evaluate the risk and benefit of being in the study when it is explained verbally and (2) is able to indicate approval or disapproval to study entry.

For research that is no more than minimal risk, documentation of consent may be waived according to the criteria in [Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent \(Waiver of Signed Consent\)](#).

For more than minimal risk research, the consent form must be read to the subjects and the subjects must be given an opportunity to ask questions. An audiotape approved by the IRB may be used. If capable of doing so, the subject signs, or marks an X to signify consent. If that is not possible, the subject will provide verbal consent. The person obtaining consent and a witness will sign the written study consent form with a statement that documents that an oral process was used and, if necessary, that the subject gave verbal consent. Signed copies of the consent form are given to the subject and, whenever possible, these documents should be provided to the subject on audio or video tape.

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## **8. Vulnerable Populations**

When some or all of the participants in a protocol are likely to be vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, the IRB should include additional safeguards to protect the rights and welfare of these participants. Some of the vulnerable populations that might be involved in research include children, pregnant women, fetuses, neonates, prisoners, mentally disabled persons or adults who lack the ability to consent.

If the IRB reviews research that involves categories of participants vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, the review process will include one or more individuals who are knowledgeable about or experienced in working with these participants.

[45 CFR 46] has additional subparts designed to provide extra protections for certain vulnerable populations which also have additional requirements for IRBs, where research is funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services:

**Subpart B**

Additional Protections for Pregnant Women, Human Fetuses and Neonates Involved in Research

**Subpart C**

Additional Protections Pertaining to Biomedical and Behavioral Research Involving Prisoners as Subjects

**Subpart D**

Additional Protections for Children Involved as Subjects in Research

Researchers conducting human subject research must check with the IRB to determine applicability of and how to apply the subparts.

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## 8.1. PI Responsibilities

The Principal Investigator is responsible for identifying the potential for enrolling vulnerable subjects in the research proposal. The Principal Investigator is responsible for identifying subjects who may be mentally disabled.

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## 8.2. IRB Responsibilities

- The IRB shall include representation, either as members or ad hoc consultants, individual(s) interested in or who have experience with the vulnerable populations involved in a research proposal.
- The IRB reviews the PI's justifications for including vulnerable populations in the research to assess appropriateness of the research proposal, and may require that additional safeguards be included to protect the rights and welfare of vulnerable subjects as needed.

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### 8.2.1. Initial Review of Research Proposal

- The Principal Investigator should identify the potential to enroll vulnerable subjects in the proposed research at initial review and provide the justification for their inclusion in the study.
- The IRB evaluates the proposed plan for consent of the specific vulnerable populations involved. If the research involves adults unable to consent, the IRB evaluates the proposed plan for permission of legally authorized representatives.
- The IRB evaluates and approves the proposed plan for the assent of participants.
- The Principal Investigator should provide appropriate safeguards to protect the subject's rights and welfare, which may include the addition of an independent monitor. The independent monitor is a qualified individual not involved in the research study who will determine the subject's capacity to provide voluntary informed consent.
- The IRB assess the adequacy of additional protections for vulnerable populations provided by the Principal Investigator.

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### **8.2.2. Continuing Review and Monitoring**

At Continuing review the Principal Investigator should identify the number of vulnerable subjects enrolled and any that needed an independent monitor in the progress report.

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## **8.3. Research Involving Children**

The following applies to all research involving children, regardless of funding source. The requirements in this section are consistent with [Subpart D of 45 CFR 46].

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### **8.3.1. Definitions**

#### **Child**

Under DHHS regulations "children" are persons who have not attained the legal age for consent to treatments or procedures involved in the research, under the applicable law of the jurisdiction in which the research will be conducted.

#### **Guardian**

Under DHHS regulations "guardian" means an individual who is authorized under applicable local law to consent on behalf of a child to general medical care.

#### **Assent**

A child's affirmative agreement to participate in research. Mere failure to object, absent affirmative agreement, should not be construed as assent.

#### **Permission**

The agreement of parent(s) or legal guardian to the participation of their child or ward in research.

#### **Parent**

A child's biological or adoptive parent.

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### **8.3.2. Allowable Categories**

Research on children must be reviewed and categorized by the IRB into one of the following groups:

1. Research not involving physical or emotional risk greater than that ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests (i.e., minimal risk). [45 CFR 46.404]
2. Research involving greater than minimal risk but presenting the prospect of direct benefit to the individual subject. [45 CFR 46.405]
3. Research involving greater than minimal risk and no reasonable prospect of direct benefit to the individual subject, but likely to yield generalizable knowledge about the subject's disorder or condition. [45 CFR 46.406]
4. Research not otherwise approvable which presents an opportunity to understand, prevent, or

alleviate a serious problem affecting the health or welfare of children. [45 CFR 46.406]  
HHS will conduct or fund research that the IRB does not believe meets the requirements of 46.404, 46.405, or 46.406 only if:

- a) The IRB finds that the research presents a reasonable opportunity to further the understanding, prevention, or alleviation of a serious problem affecting the health or welfare of children; and
- b) The Secretary, after consultation with a panel of experts in pertinent disciplines (for example: science, medicine, education, ethics, law) and following opportunity for public review and comment, has determined either:
  - (1) That the research in fact satisfies the conditions of [§46.404](#), [§46.405](#), or [§46.406](#), as applicable, or
  - (2) the following:
    - The research presents a reasonable opportunity to further the understanding, prevention, or alleviation of a serious problem affecting the health or welfare of children;
    - The research will be conducted in accordance with sound ethical principles;
    - Adequate provisions are made for soliciting the assent of children and the permission of their parents or guardians, as set forth in [§46.408](#).

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### 8.3.3. Parental Permission and Assent

#### Parental Permission

In accordance with [45 CFR 46.408(b)], the IRB must determine that adequate provisions have been made for soliciting the permission of each child's parents or guardians.

The IRB may waive the requirement for obtaining consent from a parent or legal guardian for research that is not FDA-regulated if both of the following are true: the research meets the provisions for waiver in [45 CFR 46.116(d)(1-4)]; or the IRB determines that the research protocol is designed for conditions or a subject population for which parental or guardian permission is not a reasonable requirement to protect the subjects (for example, neglected or abused children), and an appropriate mechanism for protecting the children who will participate as subjects in the research is substituted, and that the waiver is not inconsistent with Federal State, or local law.

The IRB may waive the requirement for obtaining consent from a parent or legal guardian if:

- The research meets the provisions for waiver in [45 CFR 46.116(d)(1-4)] and if the IRB determines that the research protocol is designed for conditions or a subject population for which parental or guardian permission is not a reasonable requirements to protect the subjects (for example, neglected or abused children)
- An appropriate mechanism for protecting the children who will participate as subjects in the research is substituted, and that the waiver is not inconsistent with Federal State, or local law. The choice of an appropriate mechanism would depend upon the nature and purpose of the activities described in the protocol, the risk and anticipated benefit to the research subjects, and their age, maturity, status, and condition.

Permission from parents or legal guardians must be documented unless waived by the IRB.

## **Assent from Children**

For research activities involving adolescents whose capacity to understand resembles that of adults, the assent procedure should likewise include information similar to what would be provided for informed consent by adults or for parental permission. For children whose age and maturity level limits their ability to fully comprehend the nature of the research activity but who are still capable of being consulted about participation in research, it may be appropriate to focus on conveying an accurate picture of what the actual experience of participation in research is likely to be (for example, what the experience will be, how long it will take, whether it might involve any pain or discomfort). The assent procedure should reflect a reasonable effort to enable the child to understand, to the degree they are capable, what their participation in research would involve.

The IRB presumes that children ages 4 and older should be given an opportunity to provide assent. Generally, oral assent through the use of a script should be obtained from children 4-7 years of age. Written assent using a written document for the children to sign may be sought for older children. If the child's assent is not obtained the Principal Investigator may either re-approach the child at a later time or not enroll the child.

At times there may be inconsistency between parent permission and child assent. Usually a "no" from the child overrides a "yes" from a parent, but a child typically cannot decide to be in research over the objections of a parent. Obviously, there are individual exceptions to these guidelines (such as when the use of an experimental treatment for a life threatening disease is being considered). The general idea, however, is that children should not be forced to be research subjects, even when their parents consent to it.

If the IRB determines that the capability of some or all of the children is so limited that they cannot reasonably be consulted or that the intervention or procedure involved in the research holds out a prospect of direct benefit that is important to the health or well-being of the children and is available only in the context of the research, the assent of the children is not a necessary condition for proceeding with the research.

Even when the IRB determines that the subjects are capable of assenting, the IRB may still waive the assent requirement under circumstances detailed in the [Waiver of Informed Consent](#).

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### **8.3.4. The Assent Form**

When the IRB determines that assent is required, it shall also determine whether and how assent must be documented.

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### **8.3.5. Children who are Wards**

Children who are wards of the State or any other agency, institution, or entity can be included in research involving greater than minimal risk and no prospect of direct benefit to individual subjects, but likely to yield generalizable knowledge about the subject's disorder or condition, only if such research is:

- Related to their status as wards; or
- Conducted in schools, camps, hospitals, institutions, or similar settings in which the majority of children involved as subjects are not wards

If the research meets the condition(s) above, an advocate must be appointed for each child who is a ward (one individual may serve as advocate for more than one child), in addition to any other individual acting on behalf of the child as legal guardian or in *loco parentis*.

The advocate must be an individual who has the background and experience to act in, and agrees to act in, the best interests of the child for the duration of the child's participation in the research and who is not associated in any way (except in the role as advocate or member of the IRB) with the research, the investigator(s), or the guardian organization.

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### **8.3.6. Research Involving Pregnant Women or Fetuses**

NYUAD applies the Federal Regulations 45 CFR Subpart B to all research regardless of funding source as applicable.

## **9. Complaints, Non-Compliance and Suspension or Termination of IRB Approval of Research**

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### **9.1. Complaints**

As part of its commitment to protecting the rights and welfare of human subjects in research, IRB reviews all complaints and allegations of non-compliance and takes any necessary action to ensure the ethical conduct of research.

Complaints reported to the IRB will be evaluated as possible unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others under [Unanticipated Problems](#).

The Chair of the IRB will investigate all complaints, concerns, and appeals received by the IRB. This includes complaints, concerns, and appeals from investigators, research participants and others.

All complaints, written or verbal (including telephone complaints), and regardless of point of origin, are recorded and forwarded to the IRB Chair and IRB Administrator.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Chair will make a preliminary assessment whether the complaint warrants immediate suspension of the research project. If a suspension is warranted, the procedures in [Suspension](#) will be followed.

If the complaint meets the definition of non-compliance, it will be considered an allegation of non-compliance according to [Non-Compliance](#).

If the complaint meets the definition of an unanticipated problem involving risk to subjects or others, it will be handled according to [Unanticipated Problems](#).

Within 3 business days of receipt of the complaint, the IRB Chair and/or IRB Administrator shall generate a letter to acknowledge that the complaint has been received and is being investigated, providing a follow-up contact name.

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## 9.2. Non-Compliance

All members of the NYUAD community involved in human subject research are expected to comply with the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct in accordance with federal and local regulations and institutional and IRB policies governing the conduct of research involving human subjects.

Investigators and their study staff are required to report instances of possible non-compliance. The Principal Investigator is responsible for reporting any possible non-compliance by study personnel to the IRB. Common reports to the IRB that are not serious or continuing are typically protocol violations. However, any individual or employee may report observed or apparent instances of noncompliance to the IRB. In such cases, the reporting party is responsible for making these reports in good faith, maintaining confidentiality and cooperating with any IRB and/or institutional review of these reports.

If an individual, whether investigator, study staff or other, is uncertain whether there is cause to report noncompliance, he or she may contact the IRB Chair directly to discuss the situation informally.

Reports of non-compliance must be submitted to the IRB within 10 working days of discovery of this noncompliance. The report must include a complete description of the noncompliance, the personnel involved and a description of the non-compliance.

Complainants may choose to remain anonymous.

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### 9.2.1. Definitions

#### **Non-Compliance**

Failure to comply with any of the regulations and policies described in this document and failure to follow the determinations of the IRB. Non-compliance may be minor or sporadic or it may be serious or continuing.

#### **Serious Non-Compliance**

Failure to follow any of the regulations and policies described in this document or failure to follow the determinations of the IRB and which, in the judgment of either the IRB Chair or the convened IRB, increases risks to participants, decreases potential benefits, or compromises the integrity of the human research protection program. Research being conducted without prior IRB approval or participation of subjects in research activities without their prior consent (in studies where consent was not specifically waived by the IRB) is considered serious noncompliance.



### **Continuing Non-Compliance**

A pattern of non-compliance that, in the judgment of the IRB Chair or convened IRB, suggests a likelihood that instances of non-compliance will continue without intervention. Continuing non-compliance also includes failure to respond to a request to resolve an episode of non-compliance.

### **Allegation of Non-Compliance**

An unproved assertion of non-compliance.

### **Finding of Non-Compliance**

An allegation of non-compliance that is proven true or a report of non-compliance that is clearly true. (For example, a finding on an audit of an unsigned consent document, or an admission of an investigator of that the protocol was willfully not followed would represent reports of non-compliance that would require no further action to determine their truth and would therefore represent findings of non-compliance.) Once a finding of non-compliance is proven, it must be categorized as serious, non-serious, and/or continuing.

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## **9.2.2. IRB Review of Allegations of Non-Compliance**

All allegations of non-compliance will be reviewed by the IRB Chair or his designee, who will review:

- All documents relevant to the allegation
- The last approval letter from the IRB
- The last approved IRB application and protocol
- The last approved consent document
- The last approved Investigator's Brochure, if applicable
- The grant (if applicable)
- Any other pertinent information (e.g., questionnaires, etc.)

The IRB office will provide the investigator with notice of the allegation along with a list of the charges/allegations.

The individual has 10 days to respond in writing to the IRB Office.

The IRB Chair or designee will make a determination as to the truthfulness of the allegation and the response. They may request additional information from either party or an audit of the research in question.

When there is a determination that noncompliance did not occur because the incident was within the limits of an approved protocol for the research involved, the determination is reported in writing to the Principal Investigator and, if applicable, the reporting party. The determination letter will be copied to the Institutional Official in cases where the Institutional Official and any other parties had been notified at the outset.

If, the reported allegation of non-compliance is determined to be not true, no further action will be taken. If the reported allegation of non-compliance is determined to be true, the non-compliance will be processed according to [Review of Findings of Non-Compliance](#).

If, in the judgment of the IRB Chair, any allegation or findings of noncompliance warrants suspension of the research before completion of any review or investigation to ensure protection of the rights and welfare of participants, the IRB Chair may suspend the research as described in below in [Suspension or Termination](#) with subsequent review by the IRB.

The Chair may determine that additional expertise or assistance is required to make these determinations and may form an ad hoc committee to assist with the review and fact gathering process. When an ad hoc committee assists in the review process, the Chair is responsible for assuring that minutes of the meeting are generated and kept to help support any determinations or findings made by the ad hoc committee.

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### **9.2.3. Review of Findings of Non-Compliance**

If, in the judgment of the IRB Chair, the reported finding of non-compliance is not serious, not continuing, and the proposed corrective action plan seems adequate, no further action is required and the IRB is informed at the next convened meeting. Otherwise, the matter will be presented to the IRB at a convened meeting with a recommendation that a formal inquiry (described below) will be held.

All findings of non-compliance referred to the IRB will be reviewed at a convened meeting. All IRB members will receive:

- All documents relevant to the allegation
- All documents relevant to the response
- The last approval letter from the IRB
- The last approved IRB application
- The last approved consent document

At this stage, the IRB may:

- Find that there is no issue of non-compliance
- Find that there is noncompliance that is neither serious nor continuing and an adequate corrective action plan is in place
- Find that there may be serious or continuing noncompliance and direct that a formal inquiry (described below) be held
- Request additional information

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### **9.2.4. Inquiry Procedures**

A determination may be made by the IRB that an inquiry is necessary based on several issues that may include but are not limited to:

- Subjects' complaint(s) that rights were violated
- Report(s) that investigator is not following the protocol as approved by the IRB;
- Unusual and/or unexplained adverse events in a study
- Repeated failure of investigator to report required information to the IRB

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### 9.2.5. Final Review

If the results of the inquiry substantiate the finding of serious or continuing non-compliance, the IRB's possible actions could include, but are not limited to:

- Request a corrective action plan from the investigator
- Verification that participant selection is appropriate and observation of the actual informed consent
- Request a for-cause audit of targeted areas of concern
- Modify the continuing review cycle
- Request additional Investigator and staff education
- Notify current subjects, if the information about the non-compliance might affect their willingness to continue participation
- Modification of the protocol
- Modification of the information disclosed during the consent process
- Requiring current participants to re-consent to participation
- Suspend the study (see below)
- Terminate the study (see below)

In cases where the IRB determines that the event of noncompliance also meets the definition of unanticipated problem involving risks to subjects or others, the policy and procedure for review of such events will also be followed.

The investigator is informed of the IRB determination and the basis for the determination in writing and is given a chance to respond. If the IRB determines that the non-compliance was serious or continuing, the results of the final review will be reported as described below in [Reporting](#).

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### 9.2.6. Additional Actions

A finding of serious or continuing noncompliance may also result in the following sanctions, among others:

- Suspension or termination of IRB approval of specific research protocols or of all research involving human subjects in which the investigator participates
- Individual disciplinary action of the investigator or other personnel involved in a study, up to and including dismissal, pursuant to NYUAD policies and procedures.

Failure to secure necessary NYUAD IRB approval before commencing may result in disciplinary action, and/or the destruction of data collected.

Investigators should also be aware that, in general, NYUAD indemnifies them from liability for adverse events that may occur in NYUAD studies approved by the NYUAD IRB. Failure to follow approved procedures may compromise this indemnification and make the investigator personally liable in such cases.

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## 9.3. Suspension or Termination

An IRB has the authority to suspend or terminate approval of research that is not being conducted in accordance with the IRB's requirements or that has been associated with unexpected problems or causes serious harm to subjects. Suspension of IRB approval is a directive of the convened IRB or IRB Chair either to temporarily or

permanently stop some or all previously approved research activities short of permanently stopping all previously approved research activities. Suspended protocols remain open and require continuing review. Termination of IRB approval is a directive of the convened IRB to stop permanently all activities in a previously approved research protocol. Terminated protocols are considered closed and no longer require continuing review.

The IRB Chair may suspend research to ensure protection of the rights and welfare of participants. Suspension directives made by the IRB Chair must be reported to a meeting of the convened IRB.

Research may only be terminated by the convened IRB. Terminations of protocols approved under expedited review must be made by the convened IRB.

After review of the allegation and the response from the investigator, the IRB shall notify the Principal Investigator in writing of such suspensions or terminations and shall include a statement of the reasons for the IRB's actions. The terms and conditions of the suspension must be explicit. The investigator shall be provided with an opportunity to respond in person or in writing.

The convened IRB or individual ordering the suspension or termination will consider whether procedures for withdrawal of enrolled subjects are necessary to protect their rights and welfare of subjects, such as: transferring participants to another investigator; making arrangements for care or follow-up outside the research; allowing continuation of some research activities under the supervision of an independent monitor; or requiring or permitting follow-up of participants for safety reasons.

If follow-up of subjects for safety reasons is permitted/required by the convened IRB or individual ordering the suspension or termination, the convened IRB or individual ordering the suspension or termination will require that the subjects should be so informed and that any adverse events/outcomes be reported to the IRB and the sponsor.

Investigator MUST continue to provide reports on adverse events and unanticipated problems to both the IRB and sponsor just as if there had never been a suspension (i.e., all events that need to be reported during a study need to continue to be reported during the suspension period.)

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## 9.4. Reporting

Serious or continuing noncompliance with regulations or the requirements or determinations of the IRB; and suspensions or terminations of IRB approval will be reported to the appropriate regulatory agencies and institutional officials according to the procedures in [Reporting to Regulatory Agencies and Institutional Officials](#).

# 10. Reporting to Regulatory Agencies and Institutional Officials

Federal regulations require prompt reporting to appropriate institutional officials, OHRP, and the department or agency head of (i) any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others; (ii) any serious or continuing noncompliance with this policy or the requirements or determinations of the IRB; and (iii) any suspension or termination of IRB approval. The IRB will comply with this requirement and the following procedures describe how these reports are handled.

The IRB staff will initiate these procedures as soon as the IRB takes any of the following actions:

- Determines that an event may be considered an unanticipated problem involving risks to participants or others
- Determines that non-compliance was serious or continuing
- Suspends or terminates approval of research

The IRB Administrator or designee prepares a letter that contains the following information:

- The nature of the event (Unanticipated problem involving risks to participants or others, serious or continuing non-compliance, suspension or termination of approval of research)
- Name of the institution conducting the research
- Title of the research project and/or grant proposal in which the problem occurred
- Name of the principal investigator on the protocol
- Number of the research project assigned by the IRB and the number of any applicable federal award(s) (grant, contract, or cooperative agreement)
- A detailed description of the problem including the findings of the organization and the reasons for the IRB's decision
- Actions the institution is taking or plans to take to address the problem (e.g., revise the protocol, suspend subject enrollment, terminate the research, revise the informed consent document, inform enrolled subjects, increase monitoring of subjects, etc.)
- Plans, if any, to send a follow-up or final report by the earlier of
  - A specific date
  - When an investigation has been completed or a corrective action plan has been implemented
- The IRB Chair and the Institutional Official review the letter and modify the letter as needed
- The Institutional Official signs the letter and returns it to the IRB Administrator or designee
- The IRB Administrator or designee sends a copy of the report to:
  - The IRB by including the letter in the next agenda packet as an information item
  - The Institutional Official
  - If the study is conducted or funded by any Federal Agency other than DHHS that is subject to "The Common Rule", the report is sent to OHRP or the head of the agency as required by the agency
  - Reporting to a regulatory agency is not required if the event occurred at a site that was not subject to the direct oversight of the organization, and the agency has been notified of the event by the investigator, sponsor, another organization, or other mechanisms.
  - Principal investigator
  - Sponsor, if the study is sponsored
  - Chairman or supervisor of the principal investigator
  - Others as deemed appropriate by the Institutional Official
- The IRB Administrator ensures that all steps of this policy are completed within 10 days of the initiating action. For more serious actions, the IRB Administrator will expedite reporting.

# 11. Investigator Responsibilities

Principal Investigators are ultimately responsible for the conduct of research. Principal Investigators may delegate research responsibility. However, investigators must maintain oversight and retain ultimate responsibility for the conduct of those to whom they delegate responsibility.

In order to satisfy the requirements of this policy, investigators who conduct research involving human subjects must:

- Develop and conduct research that is in accordance with the ethical principles in the *Belmont Report*
- Develop a research plan that is scientifically sound and minimizes risk to the subjects
- Have sufficient resources necessary to protect human subjects, including:
  - Access to a population that would allow recruitment of the required number of subjects
  - Sufficient time to conduct and complete the research
  - Adequate numbers of qualified staff
  - Adequate facilities
  - A process to ensure that all persons assisting with the research are adequately informed about the protocol and their research-related duties and functions
  - Availability of medical or psychological resources that subjects might require as a consequence of the research
- Assure that all procedures in a study are performed with the appropriate level of supervision and only by individuals who are licensed or otherwise qualified to perform such under the laws of the UAE and the policies of NYUAD
- Assure that all key personnel are educated in the regulatory requirements regarding the conduct of research and the ethical principles upon which they are based
- Protect the rights and welfare of prospective subjects
- Ensure that risks to subjects are minimized:
  - By using procedures which are consistent with sound research design and which do not unnecessarily expose subjects to risk, and
  - Whenever appropriate, by using procedures already being performed on the subjects for diagnostic or treatment purposes
- Recruit subjects in a fair and equitable manner
- Have plans to monitor the data collected for the safety of research subjects
- Protect the privacy of subjects and maintain the confidentiality of data
- Have a procedure to receive complaints or requests for additional information from subjects and respond appropriately
- Ensure that pertinent laws, regulations, and institution procedures and guidelines are observed by participating faculty and research staff
- Obtain and document informed consent as required by the IRB and ensuring that no human subject is involved in the research prior to obtaining their consent, unless IRB has approved exception to elements of informed consent or waiver of the documentation requirement
- Ensure that all research involving human subjects receives IRB review and approval in writing before commencement of the research
- Comply with all IRB decisions, conditions, and requirements

- Ensure that submissions for IRB review are submitted in a timely manner
- Report problems that require prompt reporting to the IRB
- Obtain IRB review and approval in writing before changes (i.e. amendments) are made to approved protocols or consent forms
- Seek IRB assistance when in doubt about whether proposed research requires IRB review

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## 11.1. Investigator Classifications

### Principal Investigators<sup>6</sup>

At NYUAD only faculty with institutional-paid appointments may serve as the Principal Investigator or as the faculty sponsor on a research project involving human subjects.

Adjunct faculty of the institution and any investigator whose status is considered to be “in training” (i.e. students and medical residents) may not serve as a Principal Investigator but may serve as a co-investigator.

The IRB recognizes one Principal Investigator (PI) for each study. The Principal Investigator has ultimate responsibility for the research activities.

Protocols that require skills beyond those held by the Principal Investigator must be modified to meet the investigator's skills or have one or more additional qualified faculty as Co-investigator(s).

### Student Investigators

Students may not serve as Principal Investigators. They must have a faculty sponsor who fulfills the Principal Investigator eligibility criteria and who will serve as Principal Investigator and faculty advisor on the study.

### Research Team

The Principal Investigator and other individuals (also known as key personnel) who contribute to the scientific development or execution of a project in a substantive, measurable way, whether or not they receive salaries or compensation under the protocol. The research team also consists of individuals who intervene or interact directly with human subjects (including the recruitment or consenting thereof), or who analyze data and/or tissue derived from humans for the purposes of the activity in question.

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## 11.2. Protocol Development

When developing a protocol, the Principal Investigator or a member of the protocol research team may contact the IRB Administrator for advice regarding whether the proposed project constitutes human subjects research, and if so, what level of review would be required.

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<sup>6</sup> April 22, 2013 a memo was added to the file by the IRB which states that those individuals who are PIs on an NYUAD Institute Grant but who are not regular faculty are subject to NYUAD institutional authority including IRB authority and therefore, they can serve as PI or Faculty Sponsor.

Investigators must provide complete answers to all questions on the *Application for New Protocol Review* and make certain that consent information is in agreement with the research plan.

Proposed consent/assent form (if applicable) must include or address:

- The required elements of informed consent
- Translated consent documents, as necessary, considering likely subject population(s)
- NYUAD IRB-approved formats for consent forms and assent forms
- Rationale for waiver of consent, if applicable.

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### **11.3. Continuing Review after Protocol Approval**

It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator (PI) to submit a timely continuing review application. The investigator should allow sufficient time for development and review of renewal submissions. By federal regulation, no extension to that date can be granted.

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### **11.4. Required Reports to the IRB**

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#### **11.4.1. Unanticipated Problems**

Principal investigators must report to the IRB as soon as possible of any:

- Adverse events involving direct harm to participants which in the opinion of the principal investigator are both unexpected and related
- An unanticipated event related to the research that exposes individuals other than the research participants (e.g., investigators, research assistants, students, the public, etc.) to potential risk but that does not involve direct harm to participants
- New information that indicates a change to the risks, conduct of the trial or potential benefits of the research. For example:
  - An interim analysis or safety monitoring report indicates that frequency or magnitude of harms or benefits may be different than initially presented to the IRB
  - A paper is published from another study that shows that the risks or potential benefits of your research may be different than initially presented to the IRB
  - A breach of confidentiality
  - Incarceration of a participant in a protocol not approved to enroll prisoners
  - Changes increasing the risk to subjects and/or affecting significantly the conduct of the trial
  - Change to the protocol taken without prior IRB review to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to a research participant
  - Complaint of a participant when the complaint indicates unexpected risks or cannot be resolved by the research team
  - Protocol violation (meaning an accidental or unintentional change to the IRB approved protocol) that harmed participants or others or that indicates participants or others may be at increased risk of harm
  - Event that requires prompt reporting to the sponsor



- Sponsor imposed suspension for risk
- Any other event that indicates participant or others might be at risk of serious, unanticipated harms that are reasonably related to the research

The IRB will accept other reports when the investigator is unsure whether the event should be reported. The investigator may first contact the IRB Office by email or telephone to determine if the reporting is necessary.

Principal Investigators should report the above events using the *Unanticipated Event Report*. Reports may be accepted by other means such as e-mail, or phone.

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### **11.4.2. Submission of Reports**

Investigators must report possible unanticipated problems to the IRB promptly.

Investigators must report possible unanticipated problems to the IRB Office in writing. The written report should contain the following:

- Detailed information about the possible unanticipated problems, including relevant dates
- Any corrective action, planned or already taken, to ensure that the possible unanticipated problems is corrected and will not occur again
- An assessment of whether any subjects or others were placed at risk as a result of the event or suffered any physical, social, or psychological harm and any plan to address these consequences
- Any other relevant information
- Any other information requested by the IRB Office

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### **11.4.3. Complaints and Non-Compliance**

Investigators must report all complaints and concerns from subjects, non-compliance by research staff, and any protocol deviations to the IRB promptly as described in [Unanticipated Problem Involving Risks to Participants or Others \(Unanticipated Problem\)](#) for evaluation as possible unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

The following procedures describe how protocol exceptions and deviations are reported to the IRB.

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## **11.5. Investigator-Required Record Keeping**

Investigators must retain copies of approved IRB documents, and implement a system to comply with approval expiration dates.

In addition to providing a copy of the signed and dated consent form to each subject, a copy must be stored securely by the Principal Investigator for a minimum of 3 years after completion of the research.

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## **11.6. Training & Ongoing Education of Principal Investigator and Research Team**

As stated above, one component of a comprehensive human research protection program is an education program for all individuals involved with research subjects. NYUAD is committed to providing training and an on-going educational process for investigators and members of their research team related to ethical concerns and regulatory and institutional requirements for the protection of human subjects.

### **Orientation**

All Principal Investigators and members of their research team (also known as “key personnel”) must review core training documentation including the *NYUAD IRB Procedures for Human Subjects Research Protection*, and the “*Belmont Report: Ethical Principals and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research*”

### **Initial Education**

The investigators must complete the appropriate CITI course.

New research protocols and applications for continuing review will not be accepted from Principal Investigators who have not completed the initial education requirement.

While research protocols and applications for continuing review will be accepted and reviewed if the Principal Investigator holds a current certification of training, final approval will not be granted until all co-investigators and members of the research team have completed the initial education requirement (or the continuing education requirement once the initial education requirement has been satisfied).

### **Waiver of Initial Education**

If investigators or members of their research team can verify that they have successfully completed human subjects’ research training equivalent to that required by the NYUAD, they may request a waiver of the requirement for initial education. However, all investigators or members of their research team must complete the requirements of continuing education.

### **Continuing Education and Recertification**

All investigators and members of their research teams must meet NYUAD continuing education requirement every four (4) years after certification of Initial Education for as long as they are involved in human subject research. There is no exception to this requirement. Acceptable training includes attendance at PRIM&R or OHRP seminars and conferences, attendance at an IRB office human subjects research presentation, or review of appropriate refresher modules at the CITI web-based training site. Other training may be acceptable. In these cases the researcher should check with the IRB Office for a determination. Investigators must submit evidence of continuing education prior to the expiration of their training certification. New research protocols and applications for continuing review will not be accepted from principal investigators who have not submitted satisfactory evidence of continuing education.

Investigators who are also IRB Chair, IRB members, or IRB staff will satisfy the training requirements for IRB members and staff described in this policy under [Training & Ongoing Education of Chair and IRB Members in Regulations, Procedures](#).

### **Additional Resources**

Human research protection information will be made available on the IRB website on an ongoing basis to ensure that the NYUAD research community is apprised of current regulatory and policy requirements and training opportunities.

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## **11.7. Investigator Conflict of Interest**

Conflicts of interest at NYUAD are subject to the “NYU Policy on Academic Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment” (<http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-conflict-of-interest-and-conflict-of-commitment.html>).

Undisclosed or inappropriate conflicts of interest can compromise the integrity of NYUAD, can reflect negatively on faculty and investigators, and can result in financial and other sanctions on the University. It is therefore the policy of NYUAD that conflicts of interest, including both actual and potential conflicts, be disclosed and permitted only in appropriate cases, after being evaluated in accordance with this policy and managed to the extent determined advisable. Faculty or investigators who are unclear as to whether a matter must be disclosed should err on the side of disclosure.

Research activities are subject to the University’s broad policies regarding conflicts of interest. Human subjects research is the most sensitive area of research. Accordingly, the disclosures and review in this area include additional requirements and determinations as to whether to proceed and under what conditions are held to an even higher standard. For that reason, the scientific objectivity of an investigator may be reasonably questioned in those cases where the investigator has *any* personal interests which could be affected by the research -- no matter what positions or dollar amounts are involved.

A “conflict of interest” means any circumstance in which the personal, professional, financial or other interests of an individual (including the immediate family members of the individual) may potentially or actually diverge from, or may be reasonably perceived as potentially or actually diverging from, his or her professional obligations. A conflict of interest may exist whenever an independent observer might reasonably question whether the individual's professional actions or decisions are determined by considerations of personal gain, financial or otherwise.

NYUAD has broad power to require disclosures of conflicts of interest to determine whether a conflict exists, to manage or eliminate conflicts of interest, to impose appropriate sanctions on faculty and investigators who violate this policy, to release information about conflicts of interest and to require faculty and investigators to take conflict of interest training.

Investigators carrying out research involving human subjects or applying for IRB approval of research protocols must disclose conflicts of interest to the IRB, and must promptly disclose any changes in circumstances regarding conflicts of interest.

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## **11.8. Subject Recruitment**

Investigators are responsible for recruiting research subjects in a manner that is fair, ethical and equitable. IRB approval is required for all recruitment procedures and materials. Recruitment materials must be consistent with the approved IRB protocol, accurate, and not coercive. Advertisements may state that subjects will be paid but should not be coercive by emphasizing the payment or the amount to be paid by such means as larger or in bold font.

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### **11.8.1. Recruitment Incentives**

Payment arrangements among sponsors, organizations, investigators, and those referring research participants may place participants at risk of coercion or undue influence or cause inequitable selection. Payment in exchange for referrals of prospective participants from researchers (“finder’s fees”) is not permitted. Similarly, payments designed to accelerate recruitment that are tied to the rate or timing of enrollment (“bonus payments”) are also not permitted.

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### **11.8.2. Payment to Subjects**

Payment to research subjects may be an incentive for participation or a way to reimburse a subject for travel and other experiences incurred due to participation. However, payment for participation is not considered a research benefit. Regardless of the form of remuneration, investigators must take care to avoid coercion of subjects. Payments should reflect the degree of risk, inconvenience, or discomfort associated with participation. The amount of compensation must be proportional to the risks and inconveniences posed by participation in the study.

Investigators who wish to pay research subjects must indicate in their research project application the justification for such payment. Such justification should:

- Substantiate that proposed payments are reasonable and commensurate with the expected contributions of the subject;
- State the terms of the subject participation agreement and the amount of payment in the informed consent form; and
- Substantiate that subject payments are fair and appropriate, and that they do not constitute (or appear to constitute) undue pressure on the subject to volunteer for the research study.

The IRB must review both the amount of payment and the proposed method of disbursement to assure that neither entails problems of coercion or undue influence. Any amount paid as bonus for completion of the entire study should not be so great that it becomes coercive.

The consent form must describe the terms of payment and the conditions under which subjects would receive partial payment or no payment (e.g., if they withdraw from the study before their participation is completed).

In accordance with Abu Dhabi Department of Health Policy, payment of incentives to research participants cannot be approved by the IRB. However providing a subsistence or meals and travel allowance is acceptable.

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## **11.9. Investigator Concerns**

Investigators who have concerns or suggestions regarding NYUAD's human research protection program should convey them to the Institutional Official or other responsible parties regarding the issue, when appropriate. The Institutional Official will research the issue, and when deemed necessary, convene the parties involved to form a response for the investigator or make necessary procedural or policy modifications, as warranted. In addition, the Chair of the IRB or the IRB Administrator will be available to address investigators' questions, concerns and suggestions.

## **12. Special Topics**

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### **12.1. NYUAD Students and Employees as Subjects**

When NYUAD students and/or employees are being recruited as potential subjects, researchers must ensure that there are additional safeguards for these subjects. The voluntary nature of their participation must be primary and without undue influence on their decision. Researchers must emphasize to subjects that neither their academic status or grades, or their employment, will be affected by their participation decision. Record of the participation cannot be linked to an academic record. The IRB also ensures when necessary a certificate of confidentiality is sought in sensitive research topics such as mental health, drug/alcohol abuse, sexual behavior, or others that fall into this category.

To minimize coercion, investigators should avoid, whenever possible, the use of their students and employees in procedures which are neither therapeutic nor diagnostic. In these latter situations, investigators should solicit subjects through means such as bulletin board notices, flyers, advertisements in newspapers, and announcements in classes other than their own.

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### **12.2. Oral History and Other Activities deemed not to be research<sup>7</sup>**

For purposes of these procedures and per federal regulations, the following activities are deemed not to be research:

- (1) Scholarly and journalistic activities (*e.g.*, oral history, journalism, biography, literary criticism, legal research, and historical scholarship), including the collection and use of information, that focus directly on the specific individuals about whom the information is collected.

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<sup>7</sup> This section has been changed in accordance with revised common rule (January 21st, 2019)

- (2) Public health surveillance activities, including the collection and testing of information or biospecimens, conducted, supported, requested, ordered, required, or authorized by a public health authority. Such activities are limited to those necessary to allow a public health authority to identify, monitor, assess, or investigate potential public health signals, onsets of disease outbreaks, or conditions of public health importance (including trends, signals, risk factors, patterns in diseases, or increases in injuries from using consumer products). Such activities include those associated with providing timely situational awareness and priority setting during the course of an event or crisis that threatens public health (including natural or man-made disasters).
- (3) Collection and analysis of information, biospecimens, or records by or for a criminal justice agency for activities authorized by law or court order solely for criminal justice or criminal investigative purposes.
- (4) Authorized operational activities (as determined by each agency) in support of intelligence, homeland security, defense, or other national security missions.

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## **12.3. International Research**

International research projects conducted in collaboration with another institution outside of the United Arab Emirates must be approved by the local equivalent of an IRB or Research Ethics Committee before they are presented to the NYUAD IRB. Where there is no equivalent board or group, it is the responsibility of investigators to provide documentation in the IRB application of the steps that will be taken to ensure appropriate understanding of and sensitivity to local customs, language and mores where the research will be conducted. Researchers must provide a description of past experience in the communities to be studied, as well as a description of the specific steps that will be taken to obtain permissions and consent from community members prior to initiating research procedures. In some cases the IRB may ask for authorization letter from collaborating governmental agencies or ministries, organizations, and the like.

While we cannot impose our standards for written documentation on other cultures, we do not relax our standards for ethical conduct of research or for a meaningful consent process. Special attention should be given to local customs and to local cultural and religious norms in drafting written consent documents or proposing alternative consent formats.

In some instances it may be appropriate for the IRB to waive some or all requirements for written consent. Research proposals for which this may be reasonable should include explanations of cultural norms or conditions requiring such a waiver, e.g., societies where no written language is used, societies where signatures represent the surrender of spirit or soul to the researcher, or where a signed consent could place the subject at risk for retribution.