

Guidance on when to send animal research studies to the Institutional Review Board (IRB)

This document provides Guidance on when to send animal studies to the Tufts Health Sciences IRB (Boston) or Tufts Social Behavioral & Educational IRB (Medford) for review:

- When an animal study includes a component in which humans are the subjects of the inquiry:
 - Obtaining information via interviews, surveys, questionnaires, diaries, etc. about the opinions or behaviors of human subjects (this may also include indirectly collecting information about humans, as a result of their animal(s) participating in a research study).
 - Collecting biological specimens from human subjects or obtaining data about human subjects as part of the research (e.g. collecting blood or saliva, measuring weight or height, evaluating performance of a task)
 - Collecting private information from an identifiable source, such as information contained in medical, veterinary or billing records; including employment, place of residence, or other demographic information.

- Examples of when an animal study should be submitted to the IRB:
 - Investigators are proposing to test backyard chickens for lead exposure, and to inspect the coops of the owners in order to find a correlation between communities and the prevalence of chickens whose blood contains significant amounts of lead. The owners complete a questionnaire that asks for the City they live in and contains questions pertaining to coop maintenance.
 - A questionnaire is administered to dog owners about how often they walk their dog, and the owners' opinions about how often their dog should be walked. Body Mass Index of both pets and owners is measured.
 - The correlation between a dog owner's behavior and the type of dog food they eat is being studied. The research proposes to interview dog owners about not only their dog's behavior, but also the impact this behavior has on the dog owner's sleeping habits, stress levels, etc.

Please do not hesitate to contact the IRB office if you ever have questions, or if you would like to consult with a member of the IRB staff about whether an animal study should be reviewed by the IRB.

In addition, even if there is no human subject component to your study, if your study includes an Informed Consent Form (ICF), feel free to email a word version of the document to the IRB, and we would be happy to provide you with our comments and the things we would point out when reviewing an ICF.

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- [Office for Human Research Protections \(OHRP Website\)](#)