

Institutional Review Board Newsletter

IRB Announcement - Online Survey Tools



The IRB and ORC have recently become aware of potential security and confidentiality issues with the use of a particular online survey tool. We are working with CMU IT to develop solutions, and create clear instructions for investigators, to cope with the security issues.

In the meantime, we understand that some investigators have been caught off-guard by recent communications from the IRB or ORC. These communications have instructed investigators to meet and discuss their planned use of the survey tool with IT personnel so acceptable plans can be developed for the secure maintenance and storage of data. Potential changes to language of Informed Consent documents may also be required.

The IRB is primarily concerned with security issues related to the confidentiality of participant information. These issues have implications for **risks to subjects**, and consequently, we **cannot** ignore these matters

and permit business as usual, even in the short term. The IRB understands and appreciates that this may present substantial inconvenience for investigators. Therefore, we encourage researchers to reach out to IRB and IT for help with any necessary changes.

We appreciate your patience while we develop appropriate strategies and guidance for investigators, and we regret any delay that dealing with the security threats may cause. We encourage investigators who are preparing new IRB applications, for research that will employ an online survey tool, to consult with IT before initial submission – this will speed the process.

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This Newsletter is produced by the Office of Research Compliance.
Comments and suggestions are welcome and can be sent to cmuirb@cmich.edu

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