Northwestern | INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

IRB Bulletin: December 2025

Announcements

As a part of the Northwestern University IRB Office's initiative to share timely resources and information with the research community, the IRB publishes the Bulletin at the beginning of each month, which contains relevant updates from the IRB Office. You can also find the IRB Bulletin on the **IRB News & Announcements webpage**. Please keep reading for this month's updates.

Top 5 IRB Pages to Bookmark Before Year End!

As the year wraps up, take a minute to refresh your IRB know-how. These five pages can save time and keep your studies compliant:

1. **Consent & Waiver of Consent** - Learn how to obtain and document informed consent, including standard, electronic, verbal, or online consent, and when waivers or alterations are allowed. *Consent is a process that starts at recruitment, not just a signature on a form.*
2. **Continuing Review & Closure** - Find guidance on submitting continuing reviews, closing studies, and handling expired studies in eIRB+. *All open, non-exempt studies are subject to routine post-approval monitoring, so use our tools to assess your study for closure today!*
3. **Guidance Regarding Requirements for Federal Grants** - Follow for advice on what to include in your eIRB+ application when starting a new federally funded study or adding federal funding to an existing study. *Federal funding and IRB submission and documentation requirements are linked – get both aligned early to avoid delays.*
4. **News** - Stay current on new resources, updates, regulatory changes, training opportunities, and past announcements from the IRB Office. *Sign up for our listserv to get the latest IRB news and resources delivered directly to your inbox.*
5. **Checklists & Worksheets** - Review topic-specific checklists and worksheets used by IRB staff and panel members to help ensure your study protocol addresses all criteria for approval. *Use our post-approval monitoring checklists to regularly monitor your research compliance.*

IRB Compliance Team: Supporting Researchers Through Collaboration and Guidance

The Compliance Team at the Northwestern University IRB Office helps investigators conduct high-quality, ethically sound research. Our goal is to strengthen the University's Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) through supportive oversight, clear education and training, and proactive outreach.

We work closely with researchers to navigate federal regulations, state laws, and institutional policies, ensuring studies meet all requirements to protect human participants. This partnership approach reflects our belief that safeguarding research participants is a shared responsibility across the HRPP, the IRB Office, and our research community.

Our team is here to help—whether you have a quick question or need more in-depth guidance. We are always available for a one-on-one Zoom or phone consultation.

Email the Compliance Team at irbcompliance@northwestern.edu to schedule an appointment anytime.

STAFF EVENT SPOTLIGHT

Northwestern IRB Staff Attend PRIM&R 2025 Conference

Northwestern University's IRB Office proudly represented the University at this year's Annual Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIM&R) Conference. IRB Office staff shared their expertise through multiple presentations and a poster session, highlighting Northwestern's leadership and innovation in human research protections, single IRB processes, and research oversight.

Pranjal Patankar, MBBS, MPH, CIP

Workshop Speaker – *Biomedical IRB: The Basics and More*
Pranjal co-presented on common challenges in biomedical IRB review, including FDA regulations, distinguishing QA/QI from human subjects research, reviewing unfamiliar study designs, and developing corrective action plans. The session focused on practical strategies to enhance collaboration, efficiency, and overall review quality.

Marcella Cooks, MS, CIP

Seminar Speaker – *Spotlight on Post-Approval Monitoring & Single IRB: What's Working Now?*
Marcella's seminar highlighted how QA/QI programs can adapt their post-approval monitoring to the single IRB (sIRB) model. Her co-presenters discussed lessons learned from audits and Marcella shared effective strategies for integrating studies that rely on External IRBs and sIRB studies into monitoring programs.

Monica Kane, MPH & Logan Clary, MS

Poster Presentation – *Single IRB Consultation: A Solution to Researcher Support at Grant Time*
Monica and Logan's accepted poster showcased how sIRB consultation at grant proposal time aides proposal readiness, streamlines sIRB planning, and allows for budgeting of sIRB fees.

Pictured from left to right: Laura Loeb, Pranjal Patankar, Monica Kane, and Marcella Cooks

UPDATED DOCUMENTS

The following was updated and is now available on the **Protocol Templates & Forms** Page:

- Data and Specimen Analysis Protocol (HRP-413)
- Biomedical Protocol (HRP-593)

For more information on updated documents, reach out to irb@northwestern.edu

UPCOMING BROWN BAG

IRB Brown Bag Recordings Now Available!
We have added recordings of our recent Brown Bag sessions to the **Brown Bag** page. This new feature lets you catch up on presentations you may have missed and access valuable content at your convenience, enhancing accessibility and helping us better support the research community. Attending sessions live, however, allows you to ask questions and interact directly with our speakers, so we recommend participating in real time whenever possible.

Please view the **Events Page** for details and registration information for upcoming **Brown Bag** informational sessions.

In case you missed last month's Brown Bag session, Identifying and Managing Conflicts of Interest in Human Research, the slides and recording are now available on our **IRB Brown Bag** webpage. This session highlighted the historical roots of conflict of interest (COI) regulations and how COI is reviewed and managed at Northwestern, including key policies, processes, and resources available to researchers.

The IRB Brown Bag series will pause in December and resume on January 21, 2026, with a special session featuring the Office for Research Integrity (ORI) at Northwestern University, who will share their expertise on research integrity and compliance. Additional details and registration for the January session will be communicated in an upcoming IRB Bulletin.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!

IRB Office - Contact Us

IRB Office Unit	Email/Phone	Virtual Office Hours
Biomedical Research/General	**irb@northwestern.edu** 312-503-9338	Monthly - Every 3rd Wednesday 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **Register**
Social and Behavioral Research	**sbirb@northwestern.edu** 847-467-1723	Weekly - Every Wednesday 2:30 - 3:30 PM **Register**
Compliance	**irbcompliance@northwestern.edu** 312-503-1376	Appointment Available Upon Request **Email Compliance**
Reliance	**irbreliance@northwestern.edu**	Weekly - Every Tuesday 3:00 - 4:00 PM **Register**

Training and Education	**irbtraining@northwestern.edu**	---
eIRB+ Technical	**eIRB+ Support Form**	---

Please use the Northwestern University IRB Office Website
as your primary source of information and resources on human research protections

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