

IRB Bulletin: February 2026

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.

Updated IRB Reporting thresholds for Research Participant Payments

There have been changes to U.S. IRS reporting requirements that affect the reporting of research participant payments. Effective January 1, 2026, the IRS increased the reporting threshold for institutions from \$600 or more in a calendar year to \$2,000 or more in a calendar year. As a result, our research consent forms have been updated to reflect this change – see the [Updated Documents section below](#). Research participants currently enrolled in active, ongoing studies should be notified of relevant updates at their next scheduled study visit or contact. The revised consent template language should be incorporated at the next planned modification submission.

Biomedical Office hours

We're excited to launch a new process for our [Office Hours](#), which occurs on the second Wednesday of each month from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM CST. You can now use our [Calendly link](#) to reserve a 15-minute time slot to join the Zoom meeting and ask your study questions.



NIH Prohibits Use of Federal Funds for Research Involving Human Fetal Tissue from Elective Abortions

On January 22, 2026, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) issued **NOT-OD-26-028**, which prohibits the use of NIH funds for research involving human fetal tissue (HFT) obtained from elective abortions. This policy applies to all NIH-funded research and may affect ongoing or planned studies involving HFT.

NOT-OD-26-028: NIH Policy on Research Involving Human Fetal Tissue

Investigators whose research may be impacted are encouraged to contact the IRB Office at irb@northwestern.edu for guidance and next steps.

UPDATED DOCUMENTS

The following was updated and is now available on the **Biomedical & Social Behavioral Consent Templates** Page:

- Biomedical Consent Document (HRP-592)
 - Updated to:
 - Include the HIPAA term “use or” in the disclosure language for substance use disorder information
 - Add instructions to include Institutional-COI language in the financial disclosure section
 - Revise IRS language reflecting the \$2,000 reporting threshold
 - Add National Institute of Justice (NIJ) instructional language clarifying that NIJ does not accept NIH/HHS Certificates of Confidentiality (CoC); CoC language should not be included in the consent forms for NIJ-funded studies
- Social Behavioral Consent Document with HIPAA Authorization (HRP-1721)
 - Updated to:
 - Include the HIPAA term “use or” in the disclosure language for substance use disorder information
 - Add instructions to include Institutional-COI (I-COI) language in the financial disclosure section.
- Supplemental Social and Behavioral Consent (HRP-1722)
 - Updated to:
 - Revise IRS language reflecting the \$2,000 reporting threshold
 - Add National Institute of Justice (NIJ) instructional language clarifying that NIJ does not accept NIH/HHS Certificates of Confidentiality (CoC); CoC language should not be included in the consent forms for NIJ-funded studies
- Emergency Use Consent Document (HRP-506)
 - Added HIPAA authorization

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

[Consent Form Implementation Guidance](#)

Participants currently enrolled in active, ongoing studies should be notified of relevant updates at their next scheduled study visit or contact. The applicable revised consent template language should be incorporated at the next planned modification submission

UPCOMING BROWN BAG

Ask the IRB!

Wednesday February 18, 2026 | 12:00 - 1:00 PM

REGISTER HERE



Have IRB questions? Bring them!

This *Ask the IRB* session is all about you. Whether you're navigating submissions, compliance questions, or IRB policies, bring your questions and get answers straight from the source.

Meet the Northwestern University IRB Office team reps who will be on hand to answer your questions in real time:

- Biomedical Team: [John Munoz and Heather Yates](#)
- Social Behavioral Team: [Laura Loeb](#)
- Compliance Team: [Angela Baumgartner](#)
- Reliance Team: [Logan Clary](#)
- Education Team: [Kim Rowan](#)

Don't miss this chance to connect, ask, and learn directly from the IRB experts who support the Northwestern research community. We can't wait to see you there!

Register and submit your questions to the IRB here!

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, Where Human Research Meets Integrity - What You Need to Know, the slides and recording are now available on our [IRB Brown Bag](#) webpage. This session highlighted the office for Research Integrity and how their work overlaps with the IRB.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Meet Heather Yates!

Hi! I have been a member of the IRB Biomedical Team for over 5 years. As an IRB Lead Analyst, I support the professional development of Biomedical IRB Analysts, review complex submissions, and attend Biomedical Panel meetings. I also lead the IRB Advisory Committee, a collaborative group made up of IRB staff and research community partners, because I believe it is important to encourage open and strong communication between the IRB and research community! Before joining the IRB Office at Northwestern, I was an IRB Analyst at Emory University, so I have over 7 years of IRB experience. Before that, I was a graduate research assistant while pursuing my Master of Public Health.

I live in St. Louis, but I still love to travel to Chicago to see my friends and to Atlanta to see my family. I love trying new restaurants, reading, going to workout classes, and painting in my free time!



IRB Office - Contact Us

IRB Office Unit	Email/Phone	Virtual Office Hours
Biomedical Research/General	irb@northwestern.edu 312-503-9338	Monthly - Every Second 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	Appointment Available Upon Request

	312-503-1376	Email Compliance
Reliance	irbreliance@northwestern.edu	Weekly - Every Tuesday 3:00 - 4:00 PM Register
Training and Education	irbtraining@northwestern.edu	Appointment Available Upon Request Email Training/Education
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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