

	POLICY: Minors Acting as Research Study Team Members		
	NUMBER	APPROVED BY	EFFECTIVE DATE
	HRP-1004	Executive Director, IRB Office Northwestern University	11/01/2024
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy statement addresses minors, i.e., persons who are under age 18, as research interns or volunteers for human participant research studies at Northwestern University. This policy statement addresses minors as study team members on human research studies and is not intended to limit or prohibit minors as human research participants. For IRB Office guidance on studies involving minors as research participants, please see the [Resources & Guidance](#) page for Guidance on Children as Research Participants, Parental Permission, and Child Assent (HRP-1903).

2 PREVIOUS VERSION

- 2.1 Revised from previous version dated: 2/28/2022

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Northwestern University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office restricts the involvement of minors in the conduct of human participant research.

4 POLICY

- 4.1 The IRB Office prohibits the engagement of minors in human participant research, which means minors may not obtain:
- 4.1.1 (1) data about the participants of the research through intervention or interaction with them;
 - 4.1.2 (2) identifiable private information about the participants of the research; or
 - 4.1.3 (3) the informed consent of human participants for the research.
- 4.2 Minors should not be appointed as study team members nor included on the study's personnel list.
- 4.3 Furthermore, please note that Northwestern's clinical affiliates, Northwestern Memorial Healthcare Corporation, Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, and the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, do not allow minors to have access to systems, facilities, and/or patients for research purposes.
- 4.4 A minor may, subject to University requirements, serve as a research intern or volunteer, and in that capacity, analyze de-identified data sets and/or perform other administrative tasks.

5 REFERENCES

Northwestern University Policies/Guidance

- 5.1 [Non-Employee Research Procedures Manual](#)
- 5.2 [Minors at Northwestern Policy](#)
- 5.3 [Youth On Campus](#)
- 5.4 [Minors in Labs](#)
- 5.5 [Hiring Unpaid Interns & Volunteers](#)
 - 5.5.1 [Unpaid Intern and Volunteer Criteria](#)
 - 5.5.2 [Example Intern/Volunteer Arrangements](#)
 - 5.5.3 [Additional Considerations for Minors](#)