

Required Changes to Research Protocols in Response to COVID-19 as of March 22, 2020

City University of Seattle is committed to protecting the rights and welfare of all individuals who participate as subjects in research, as well as, researchers.

COVID-19 refers to the Coronavirus that is being spread across people in our communities. We need to provide you with important information about your responsibility to eliminate potential COVID-19 risks to research participants and yourself.

Given the real or perceived risk of exposure to COVID-19, the risk/benefit ratio for research participation must be reassessed for each protocol. Ethical principles of research and federal regulations for the protection of human research participants require an acceptable risk/benefit ratio.

The following mandatory changes in research protocols are required because of COVID-19 related risks:

1. All current City U research involving face-to-face interviews, including focus groups and observation of individual behavior in group setting, must be paused. Research studies that do not have any in person interaction with research participants and have been approved to use telephone, video and/or online data collection protocols may continue.

Researchers can request to change their face-to-face interview protocol to telephone and/or video interviews by sending the IRB an amendment to their interview protocol.

Notification of changes to research interview protocols can be submitted via email to the IRB (IRB@cityu.edu) describing the changes made. You will need to provide sufficient detail for the IRB to assess risk.

The IRB will immediately review requests to change face-to-face interview protocols to telephone and/or video interviews.

2. If, as the researcher, you have determined that face-to-face interviews are integral to the outcomes of your study then you will need to postpone any further face-to-face interviews until respective government and public health agencies have terminated the social/physical distancing requirements as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the researcher you will need to notify the IRB that your study data collection, face-to-face interviews, has been cancelled and then notify the IRB of the date you will be commencing face-to-face interviews. The identified commencement date is required to be congruent with government and public health determined date(s).

3. All new City U research submitted to the IRB for approval will need to clearly and specifically state that research participant interviews will be conducted via telephone or video interview processes.

No research that includes face-to-face interview protocols will be approved until the respective government and public health agencies state that social/physical distancing is no longer required.

Informed Consent to Participate in Research Forms will need to include the following statement in the risk section:

COVID-19 refers to the Coronavirus that is being spread across people in our communities. We need to provide you with important information about COVID-19 (direct individuals to local Department of Health information on Covid-19), and to review your study participation because of COVID-19 related risks. To minimize risk, contact with the researcher will only be conducted by telephone and/or video interviews. You will not be asked to meet with the researcher in person.

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