

Research Memo # 7 – Research Ethics Processes during COVID-19 Update

New research projects are permitted under the auspices of The University of Winnipeg during COVID as of September 28, 2020.

There are specific protocols and approvals required for new applications, as well as the resumption of research, that must be followed before an ethics application, amendment or renewal will be considered by UHREB.

Please see Research Memo 6 at <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/covid-19/docs/research-guideline-memo-6.pdf> and COVID Research FAQ at <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/covid-19/research.html> and follow those procedures that have been put in place.

UHREB cannot approve research ethics applications that are not in compliance with University policies.

Research Not Involving In-Person Contact

For research that is planned to resume on-line to remove in-person contact with participants and other research personnel, the researcher will need to file an **amendment** to their ethics application.

Consideration should be provided to ensure participant equity in having access to technology and the potential for changed personal circumstances due to COVID, as well as consideration for data safety and security on new digital platforms.

An amendment can be submitted as soon as practical as an update if no substantive change of considerations is required.

If new considerations impact participants, an amendment must be approved prior to resuming research.

Research with In-Person Contact:

While remote research methods are encouraged when possible, at times, in-person methods might be required during COVID. When submitting a new application, amendment or renewal that involves research with any in-person contact with participants or other researcher personnel, researchers will need to attach plans

that have been approved via the University and Research Office, as well as the Face to Face Checklist available here: <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/research/docs/face-to-face-checklist-oct15-2020.pdf>

The clauses below should be embedded, as relevant, in the various sections of consent documents or through a stand-alone section:

- Research site is located [insert], under the jurisdiction of [location] public health. We are taking all safety precautions to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 and expect you to follow public health directives as well.
- If you feel that you are from a vulnerable group with respect to COVID-19 effects (e.g., senior, immuno-compromised), please discuss your participation with the research team before consenting. You are under no obligation to participate and nothing bad will happen if you change your mind about participating in the research.
- Because you are coming onto campus, the following safety protocols must be followed, as per University policy:
 - Screening – as per requirements for persons coming onto campus.
 - Take appropriate precautions (e.g. face covering / cloth mask) if taking public transportation and entering public indoor spaces.
 - Wash your hands upon coming onto campus / entrance to building. Hand sanitizer will be made available to you.
 - Physical distancing will be maintained, at all times, and if not possible wear a face covering / cloth mask. Otherwise we will provide you with PPE.
- We will be collecting personal contact information that we must retain in order to follow up with you and/or conduct contact tracing if you may have been exposed to COVID-19 in coming to the research site.
- Contact information will be kept separate from data collected through the research study to allow for de-identification of the research data (if applicable, as detailed in the protocol).
- You maintain your right to withdraw from the study at any time, including research data (if applicable). If you do withdraw, we will continue to maintain your contact information and will only give it to Occupational Health if required for contact tracing.

- We cannot guarantee anonymity as the personal contact information identifies you as a participant.

If you have any questions, please email ethics@uwinnipeg.ca