Re-opening Research due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Modified: June 8, 2020

Background:

As the University phases in its re-opening, UF Research along with the IRB and OCR have provided a re-open guideline. If you have any questions, please email irb@ufl.edu.

1) Q: How do I know if my research protocol can resume?


2) Q: What changes to my protocol require pre-approval from the IRB before the change is made?

   For changes resulting from the COVID crisis to already IRB approved protocols, any research activity that can be changed to a remote activity does not require approval from the IRB (see http://irb.ufl.edu/index/covid-19-resources.html). Any change to a research activity that cannot be conducted remotely must have pre-approval from the IRB before the change can be made. Also, any change to the informed consent process must be submitted and approved by the IRB prior to making the change.

3) Q: Is there anything specific we should tell study subjects as we contact them to re-start their research involvement?

   Yes, the IRB has provided template language that can be adjusted to fit any research protocol. This should be used regardless of the type of study subject contact (e.g. phone, email, letter). See http://irb.ufl.edu/index/covid-19-resources.html for template.

4) Q: What if I am allowed to resume my research and subjects who have already consented want to delay their involvement?

   If a study subject does not want to come on site, and there cannot be an accommodation that allows them to continue (e.g. remote visits, further delay in restarting for an individual subject), then the PI should inform the study subject that he/she will be withdrawn from the protocol.