

TABLE 4 TO PARAGRAPH (d)(1)

Commodity	Parts per million
Barley, hay .....	0.40
Barley, straw .....	0.40
Buckwheat, fodder .....	0.40
Buckwheat, forage .....	0.40
Oat, forage .....	0.40
Oat, hay .....	0.40
Oat, straw .....	0.40
Rye, forage .....	0.40
Rye, straw .....	0.40
Teosinte .....	0.40
Triticale .....	0.40
Wheat, forage .....	0.40
Wheat, hay .....	0.40
Wheat, straw .....	0.40

(2) Tolerances are established for indirect or inadvertent residues of glufosinate-P, including its metabolites and degradates, in or on the commodities in table 5 to paragraph (d)(2), as a result of the application of glufosinate-P or glufosinate-P-ammonium to crops listed in paragraph (a)(2) of this section. Compliance with the tolerance levels specified in table 5 to paragraph (d)(2) is to be determined by measuring the sum of glufosinate (2-amino-4-(hydroxymethylphosphinyl) butanoic acid) and its metabolite, 3-(hydroxymethylphosphinyl) propanoic acid, expressed as 2-amino-4-(hydroxymethylphosphinyl)butanoic acid equivalents.”

TABLE 5 TO PARAGRAPH (d)(2)

Commodity	Parts per million
Barley, hay .....	0.4
Barley, straw .....	0.4
Buckwheat, fodder .....	0.4
Buckwheat, forage .....	0.4
Oat, forage .....	0.4
Oat, hay .....	0.4
Oat, straw .....	0.4
Rye, forage .....	0.4
Rye, straw .....	0.4
Teosinte .....	0.4
Triticale .....	0.4
Wheat, forage .....	0.4
Wheat, hay .....	0.4
Wheat, straw .....	0.4

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## CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

### 45 CFR Part 2584

RIN 3045–AA60

### Protection of Human Subjects

**AGENCY:** Corporation for National and Community Service.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Corporation for National and Community Service (operating as AmeriCorps) is finalizing its adoption of the Federal Policy for Protection of Human Subjects (referred to as the Common Rule). The Common Rule outlines the basic ethical principles and procedures that an agency will abide by when conducting or sponsoring research involving human subjects. Among the procedures required by the Common Rule are use of institutional review boards (IRBs), obtaining informed consent of research subjects, and requiring submission of assurances of compliance with the rule. AmeriCorps is making the Common Rule applicable to itself, meaning that all research involving human subjects conducted, supported, or otherwise subject to regulation by AmeriCorps will be subject to the Common Rule’s ethical principles and procedures.

**DATES:** This rule is effective on November 29, 2024.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

- I. Background
- II. This Final Rule
- III. Comments on and Finalization of the Proposed Rule
- IV. Regulatory Analyses
  - A. Executive Orders 12866 and 13563
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#### I. Background

On June 18, 1991, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a rule setting forth the Common Rule requirements for the protection of human subjects. (56 FR 28003). The HHS regulations are codified at 45 CFR part 46. At that time, 15 other agencies joined HHS in adopting a uniform set of rules for the protection of human subjects, identical to subpart A of 45 CFR part 46. The basic provisions of the Common Rule include, among other things, requirements related to the review of human subjects research by an IRB, obtaining and documenting informed consent of human subjects, and submitting written assurance of institutional compliance with the Common Rule. On January 19, 2017 (82

FR 7149), HHS issued a final rule revising the Common Rule, which, among other things, established new requirements regarding the information that must be given to prospective research subjects as part of the informed consent process.

At the time the Common Rule was first adopted in 1991, AmeriCorps had just been established as the Corporation for National and Community Service under the National and Community Service Act of 1990. AmeriCorps was not a participating agency in either that 1991 Common Rule rulemaking or in the subsequent amendments to the Common Rule; however, AmeriCorps believes it is important to adopt this standard framework for AmeriCorps research professionals, prospective and participating human subjects, and consistency among Federal agencies, as described above. This final rule provides the incentives of a mandatory procedural framework and provides human research subjects the assurance of protection offered by the Common Rule.

#### II. Final Rule

AmeriCorps is codifying the text of the revised Common Rule in its regulations at 45 CFR part 2584 (the proposed rule projected its placement at 45 CFR part 2558, but AmeriCorps has since determined that part 2584 is more appropriate given a planned improvement of chapter 25’s organization). This rule is substantively identical to the HHS regulations in 45 CFR part 46, subpart A, ensuring consistency across Federal agencies. With this codification, AmeriCorps would be subject to the same ethical principles and procedures that other agencies who have adopted the Common Rule are subject to when conducting or supporting research involving human subjects. The rule applies broadly; most relevant to AmeriCorps, it covers instances when an investigator conducting research obtains information through interaction with the individual and uses, studies, or analyzes the information. The rule also sets out certain research that is exempt from the rule. For any non-exempt research, under this rule AmeriCorps would:

- Conduct or support non-exempt research only if the institution engaged in the research has provided an assurance that it will comply with the Common Rule, and
- Conduct or support non-exempt research only if (when required by the rule) the institution has certified to AmeriCorps that the research has been reviewed and approved by an IRB.

The rule also sets out requirements applicable to the IRBs, including requirements for the IRB membership, IRB functions and operations, IRB review of research and criteria for IRB approval of research, IRB authority to suspend or terminate approval of research that is not being conducted in accordance with the IRB's requirements or has been associated with unexpected serious harm to subjects, and IRB records. The rule also sets out the requirements for investigators to obtain the legally effective informed consent of the subject before involving the subject in any non-exempt research. For example, the investigator must seek informed consent only under circumstances that provide sufficient opportunity to discuss and consider whether to participate in the research (to minimize the possibility of coercion or undue influence), and the investigator must provide the prospective subject with information a reasonable person would want to have in order to make an informed decision as to whether to participate in the research and provide the information in language understandable to the prospective subject. The rule also sets out the basic elements of what information must be provided to each prospective subject and how informed consent must be documented.

AmeriCorps at times undertakes research that would be considered non-exempt research under the Common Rule. The Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE), within AmeriCorps, furthers AmeriCorps' mission by providing accurate and timely research on national service, social innovation, volunteering, and civic engagement. ORE conducts original and sponsored research and evaluations, among other activities, to infuse data into AmeriCorps' programs and contribute to the public's understanding of national service. For example, AmeriCorps surveys members/volunteers to inform recruitment and improve member/volunteer experience. ORE uses the survey responses to identify national service trends, such as trends in program participation, motivations, and outcomes. As another example, AmeriCorps sponsors evaluations of national service interventions (*e.g.*, Recovery Coach Programs, Tutoring Programs) that collect information from program participants about their experiences and outcomes.

ORE staff consists of professional social scientists and research analysts who abide by their professions' codes of ethics, including but not limited to those relating to integrity, respect for people's rights, dignity, and diversity,

non-exploitation, and informed consent. AmeriCorps' research is therefore already guided by these codes of ethics, and the agency typically engages in practices such as ensuring that informed consent of human subjects is properly obtained and, when supporting research is conducted by universities and other research partners, ensuring that the research is reviewed and approved by an IRB.

Issuance of this rule will not result in major changes in research conducted and supported by AmeriCorps, but it will provide a more concrete framework for AmeriCorps staff to follow to ensure protection of human research subjects. While AmeriCorps may currently avail itself of the broad range of HHS guidance documents on the Common Rule, adopting the Common Rule itself will ensure that it is interpreting those guidance documents in a manner consistent with the regulatory requirements of the Common Rule. HHS guidance includes decisions charts to guide everything from the analysis of whether an activity is covered by the Common Rule to whether documentation of informed consent can be waived, frequently asked question (FAQ) documents, and various other guidance documents—all of which will assist AmeriCorps in ensuring that its research protects human subjects. AmeriCorps' adoption of the Common Rule also provides assurance to individuals who are prospective and participating human research subjects for AmeriCorps-conducted or supported research that AmeriCorps abides by the same ethical and procedural provisions that HHS and 19 other agencies do. Finally, AmeriCorps' adoption of the Common Rule will ensure consistency across agencies in their approach to protecting human subjects in research.

### III. Comments on and Finalization of the Proposed Rule

AmeriCorps proposed adoption of the Common Rule on September 20, 2022, at 87 FR 57435 and invited public comment on the advisability or inadvisability of adopting the Common Rule in whole or in part. In response, AmeriCorps received seven public comments on the proposed rule, all of which expressed support for the rule. Several noted that the rule would provide a more standardized way of conducting ethical research to protect subjects from harm, following the same processes as the other Federal agencies that have adopted the common rule. Several also specifically expressed support for the requirement for informed consent. Several also specifically expressed support for IRB

review. AmeriCorps has reviewed these comments and determined that it is appropriate to finalize the proposed rule without change, with one exception. The Agency is removing the provisions that transition research projects from the pre-2018 requirements to current requirements because the Agency has no pre-2018 requirements to transition away from. AmeriCorps is publishing this final rule after a delay of over a year because the Agency first finalized internal guidance to ensure compliance with the Common Rule before finalizing it.

### IV. Regulatory Analyses

#### A. Executive Orders 12866 and 13563

Executive Orders (E.O.) 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess all costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits (including potential economic, environmental, public health and safety effects, distributive impacts, and equity). E.O. 13563 emphasizes the importance of quantifying both costs and benefits, of reducing costs, of harmonizing rules, and of promoting flexibility. The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Office of Management and Budget has determined that this is not a significant regulatory action and, therefore, was not subject to review under section 6(b) of E.O. 12866.

#### B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

As required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*), AmeriCorps certifies that this rule does not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. Therefore, AmeriCorps has not performed the initial regulatory flexibility analysis that is required under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) for rules that are expected to have such results.

#### C. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995

For purposes of Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, 2 U.S.C. 1531–1538, as well as Executive Order 12875, this regulatory action does not contain any Federal mandate that may result in increased expenditures in either Federal, State, local, or Tribal governments in the aggregate, or impose an annual burden exceeding \$100 million on the private sector.

#### D. Paperwork Reduction Act

Under the PRA, an agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of

information unless the collections of information display valid control numbers. The information collections in this rule at sections 2584.103, 2584.104, 2584.108, 2584.109, 2584.113, and 2584.115–2584.17 are approved by the Office of Management and Budget under Control Number 0990–0260.

#### *E. Federalism (E.O. 13132)*

Executive Order 13132, Federalism, prohibits an agency from publishing any rule that has federalism implications if the rule imposes substantial direct compliance costs on State and local governments and is not required by statute, or the rule preempts State law, unless the agency meets the consultation and funding requirements of section 6 of the Executive Order. This rule does not have any federalism implications, as described above.

#### *F. Takings (E.O. 12630)*

This rule does not affect a taking of private property or otherwise have taking implications under Executive Order 12630 because this rule does not affect individual property rights protected by the Fifth Amendment or involve a compensable “taking.” A takings implication assessment is not required.

#### *G. Civil Justice Reform (E.O. 12988)*

This rule complies with the requirements of Executive Order 12988. Specifically, this rule: (a) meets the criteria of section 3(a) requiring that all regulations be reviewed to eliminate errors and ambiguity and be written to minimize litigation; and (b) meets the criteria of section 3(b)(2) requiring that all regulations be written in clear language and contain clear legal standards.

#### *H. Consultation With Indian Tribes (E.O. 13175)*

AmeriCorps recognizes the inherent sovereignty of Indian Tribes and their right to self-governance. We have evaluated this rule under our consultation policy and the criteria in E.O. 13175 and determined that this rule does not impose substantial direct effects on federally recognized Tribes.

#### **List of Subjects in 45 CFR Part 2584**

Human research subjects, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Research.

■ For the reasons stated in the preamble, the Corporation for National and Community Service amends title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations by adding part 2584 to read as follows:

### **PART 2584—PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS**

Sec.

- 2584.101 To what does this part apply?
- 2584.102 Definitions for purposes of this part.
- 2584.103 Assuring compliance with this part—research conducted or supported by any Federal department or agency.
- 2584.104 Exempt research.
- 2584.105–2584.106 [Reserved]
- 2584.107 IRB membership.
- 2584.108 IRB functions and operations.
- 2584.109 IRB review of research.
- 2584.110 Expedited review procedures for certain kinds of research involving no more than minimal risk, and for minor changes in approved research.
- 2584.111 Criteria for IRB approval of research.
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- 2584.115 IRB records.
- 2584.116 General requirements for informed consent.
- 2584.117 Documentation of informed consent.
- 2584.118 Applications and proposals lacking definite plans for involvement of human subjects.
- 2584.119 Research undertaken without the intention of involving human subjects.
- 2584.120 Evaluation and disposition of applications and proposals for research to be conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency.
- 2584.121 [Reserved]
- 2584.122 Use of Federal funds.
- 2584.123 Early termination of research support: Evaluation of applications and proposals.
- 2584.124 Conditions.

**Authority:** 42 U.S.C. 12651c(c).

#### **§ 2584.101 To what does this part apply?**

(a) Except as detailed in § 2584.104, this part applies to all research involving human subjects conducted, supported, or otherwise subject to regulation by any Federal department or agency that takes appropriate administrative action to make the policy applicable to such research. This includes research conducted by Federal civilian employees or military personnel, except that each department or agency head may adopt such procedural modifications as may be appropriate from an administrative standpoint. It also includes research conducted, supported, or otherwise subject to regulation by the Federal Government outside the United States. Institutions that are engaged in research described in this paragraph and institutional review boards (IRBs) reviewing research that is subject to this policy must comply with this part.

(b) [Reserved]

(c) Department or agency heads retain final judgment as to whether a particular activity is covered by this part and this judgment shall be exercised consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report.<sup>1</sup>

(d) Department or agency heads may require that specific research activities or classes of research activities conducted, supported, or otherwise subject to regulation by the Federal department or agency but not otherwise covered by this part comply with some or all of the requirements of this part.

(e) Compliance with this part requires compliance with pertinent Federal laws or regulations that provide additional protections for human subjects.

(f) This part does not affect any state or local laws or regulations (including Tribal law passed by the official governing body of an American Indian or Alaska Native Tribe) that may otherwise be applicable and that provide additional protections for human subjects.

(g) This part does not affect any foreign laws or regulations that may otherwise be applicable and that provide additional protections to human subjects of research.

(h) When research covered by this part takes place in foreign countries, procedures normally followed in the foreign countries to protect human subjects may differ from those set forth in this part. In these circumstances, if a department or agency head determines that the procedures prescribed by the institution afford protections that are at least equivalent to those provided in this part, the department or agency head may approve the substitution of the foreign procedures in lieu of the procedural requirements provided in this part. Except when otherwise required by statute, Executive order, or the department or agency head, notices of these actions as they occur will be published in the **Federal Register** or will be otherwise published as provided in department or agency procedures.

(i) Unless otherwise required by law, the department or agency head may waive the applicability of some or all of the provisions of this part to specific research activities or classes of research activities otherwise covered by this part, provided the alternative procedures to be followed are consistent with the principles of the Belmont Report.<sup>2</sup> Except when otherwise required by statute or Executive Order, the

<sup>1</sup> The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, *The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research* (Apr. 18, 1979).

<sup>2</sup> Id.

department or agency head shall forward advance notices of these actions to the Office for Human Research Protections, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), or any successor office, or to the equivalent office within the appropriate Federal department or agency, and shall also publish them in the **Federal Register** or in such other manner as provided in department or agency procedures. The waiver notice must include a statement that identifies the conditions under which the waiver will be applied and a justification as to why the waiver is appropriate for the research, including how the decision is consistent with the principles of the Belmont Report.

(j) Federal guidance on the requirements of this part shall be issued only after consultation, for the purpose of harmonization (to the extent appropriate), with other Federal departments and agencies that have adopted this policy, unless such consultation is not feasible.

(k)–(l) [Reserved]

(m) **Severability:** Any provision of this part held to be invalid or unenforceable by its terms, or as applied to any person or circumstance, shall be construed so as to continue to give maximum effect to the provision permitted by law, unless such holding shall be one of utter invalidity or unenforceability, in which event the provision shall be severable from this part and shall not affect the remainder thereof or the application of the provision to other persons not similarly situated or to other dissimilar circumstances.

#### **§ 2584.102 Definitions for purposes of this part.**

**Certification** means the official notification by the institution to the supporting Federal department or agency component, in accordance with the requirements of this part, that a research project or activity involving human subjects has been reviewed and approved by an IRB in accordance with an approved assurance.

**Clinical trial** means research study in which one or more human subjects are prospectively assigned to one or more interventions (which may include placebo or other control) to evaluate the effects of the interventions on biomedical or behavioral health-related outcomes.

**Department or agency head** means the head of any Federal department or agency, for example, the Secretary of HHS, and any other officer or employee of any Federal department or agency to whom the authority provided by these regulations to the department or agency head has been delegated.

**Federal department or agency** refers to a Federal department or agency (the department or agency itself rather than its bureaus, offices or divisions) that takes appropriate administrative action to make this part applicable to the research involving human subjects it conducts, supports, or otherwise regulates (e.g., the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the Central Intelligence Agency).

**Human subject** means:

(1) A living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research:

(i) Obtains information or biospecimens through intervention or interaction with the individual, and uses, studies, or analyzes the information or biospecimens; or

(ii) Obtains, uses, studies, analyzes, or generates identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.

(2) Intervention includes both physical procedures by which information or biospecimens are gathered (e.g., venipuncture) and manipulations of the subject or the subject's environment that are performed for research purposes.

(3) Interaction includes communication or interpersonal contact between investigator and subject.

(4) Private information includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information that has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and that the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (e.g., a medical record).

(5) Identifiable private information is private information for which the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information.

(6) An identifiable biospecimen is a biospecimen for which the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the biospecimen.

(7) Federal departments or agencies implementing this policy shall:

(i) Upon consultation with appropriate experts (including experts in data matching and re-identification), reexamine the meaning of “identifiable private information,” as defined in paragraph (5) of this definition, and “identifiable biospecimen,” as defined in paragraph (6) of this definition. This reexamination shall take place within 1 year and regularly thereafter (at least every 4 years). This process will be conducted by collaboration among the

Federal departments and agencies implementing this policy. If appropriate and permitted by law, such Federal departments and agencies may alter the interpretation of these terms, including through the use of guidance.

(ii) Upon consultation with appropriate experts, assess whether there are analytic technologies or techniques that should be considered by investigators to generate “identifiable private information,” as defined in paragraph (5) of this definition, or an “identifiable biospecimen,” as defined in paragraph (6) of this definition. This assessment shall take place within 1 year and regularly thereafter (at least every 4 years). This process will be conducted by collaboration among the Federal departments and agencies implementing this policy. Any such technologies or techniques will be included on a list of technologies or techniques that produce identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens. This list will be published in the **Federal Register** after notice and an opportunity for public comment. The Secretary, HHS, shall maintain the list on a publicly accessible website.

(f) **Institution** means any public or private entity, or department or agency (including Federal, state, and other agencies).

(g) **IRB** means an institutional review board established in accord with and for the purposes expressed in this part.

(h) **IRB approval** means the determination of the IRB that the research has been reviewed and may be conducted at an institution within the constraints set forth by the IRB and by other institutional and Federal requirements.

(i) **Legally authorized representative** means an individual or judicial or other body authorized under applicable law to consent on behalf of a prospective subject to the subject's participation in the procedure(s) involved in the research. If there is no applicable law addressing this issue, legally authorized representative means an individual recognized by institutional policy as acceptable for providing consent in the nonresearch context on behalf of the prospective subject to the subject's participation in the procedure(s) involved in the research.

(j) **Minimal risk** means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

(k) *Public health authority* means an agency or authority of the United States, a state, a territory, a political subdivision of a state or territory, an Indian Tribe, or a foreign government, or a person or entity acting under a grant of authority from or contract with such public agency, including the employees or agents of such public agency or its contractors or persons or entities to whom it has granted authority, that is responsible for public health matters as part of its official mandate.

(l) *Research* means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this part, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities. For purposes of this part, the following activities are deemed not to be research:

(1) Scholarly and journalistic activities (e.g., oral history, journalism, biography, literary criticism, legal research, and historical scholarship), including the collection and use of information, that focus directly on the specific individuals about whom the information is collected.

(2) Public health surveillance activities, including the collection and testing of information or biospecimens, conducted, supported, requested, ordered, required, or authorized by a public health authority. Such activities are limited to those necessary to allow a public health authority to identify, monitor, assess, or investigate potential public health signals, onsets of disease outbreaks, or conditions of public health importance (including trends, signals, risk factors, patterns in diseases, or increases in injuries from using consumer products). Such activities include those associated with providing timely situational awareness and priority setting during the course of an event or crisis that threatens public health (including natural or man-made disasters).

(3) Collection and analysis of information, biospecimens, or records by or for a criminal justice agency for activities authorized by law or court order solely for criminal justice or criminal investigative purposes.

(4) Authorized operational activities (as determined by each agency) in support of intelligence, homeland security, defense, or other national security missions.

(m) *Written*, or *in writing*, for purposes of this part, refers to writing on a tangible medium (e.g., paper) or in an electronic format.

**§ 2558.103 Assuring compliance with this part—research conducted or supported by any Federal department or agency.**

(a) Each institution engaged in research that is covered by this part, with the exception of research eligible for exemption under § 2584.104, and that is conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency, shall provide written assurance satisfactory to the department or agency head that it will comply with the requirements of this part. In lieu of requiring submission of an assurance, the department or agency head shall accept the existence of a current assurance, appropriate for the research in question, on file with the Office for Human Research Protections, HHS, or any successor office, and approved for Federal-wide use by that office. When the existence of an HHS-approved assurance is accepted in lieu of requiring submission of an assurance, reports (except certification) required by this part to be made to department and agency heads shall also be made to the Office for Human Research Protections, HHS, or any successor office. Federal departments and agencies will conduct or support research covered by this policy only if the institution has provided an assurance that it will comply with the requirements of this part, as provided in this section, and only if the institution has certified to the department or agency head that the research has been reviewed and approved by an IRB (if such certification is required by paragraph (d) of this section).

(b) The assurance shall be executed by an individual authorized to act for the institution and to assume on behalf of the institution the obligations imposed by this part and shall be filed in such form and manner as the department or agency head prescribes.

(c) The department or agency head may limit the period during which any assurance shall remain effective or otherwise condition or restrict the assurance.

(d) Certification is required when the research is supported by a Federal department or agency and not otherwise waived under § 2584.101(i) or exempted under § 2584.104. For such research, institutions shall certify that each proposed research study covered by the assurance and this section has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. Such certification must be submitted as prescribed by the Federal department or agency component supporting the

research. Under no condition shall research covered by this section be initiated prior to receipt of the certification that the research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB.

(e) For nonexempt research involving human subjects covered by this part (or exempt research for which limited IRB review takes place pursuant to § 2584.104(d)(2)(iii), (d)(3)(i)(C), or (d)(7) or (8)) that takes place at an institution in which IRB oversight is conducted by an IRB that is not operated by the institution, the institution and the organization operating the IRB shall document the institution's reliance on the IRB for oversight of the research and the responsibilities that each entity will undertake to ensure compliance with the requirements of this part (e.g., in a written agreement between the institution and the IRB, by implementation of an institution-wide policy directive providing the allocation of responsibilities between the institution and an IRB that is not affiliated with the institution, or as set forth in a research protocol).

**§ 2584.104 Exempt research.**

(a) Unless otherwise required by law or by the department or agency head, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the categories in paragraph (d) of this section are exempt from the requirements of this part, except that such activities must comply with the requirements of this section and as specified in each category.

(b) Use of the exemption categories for research subject to the requirements of 45 CFR part 46, subparts B, C, and D. Application of the exemption categories to research subject to the requirements of subparts B, C, and D, is as follows:

(1) *Subpart B.* Each of the exemptions at this section may be applied to research subject to 45 CFR part 46, subpart B, if the conditions of the exemption are met.

(2) *Subpart C.* The exemptions at this section do not apply to research subject to 45 CFR part 46, subpart C, except for research aimed at involving a broader subject population that only incidentally includes prisoners.

(3) *Subpart D.* The exemptions at paragraphs (d)(1), (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8) of this section may be applied to research subject to 45 CFR part 46, subpart D, if the conditions of the exemption are met. Paragraphs (d)(2)(i) and (ii) of this section only may apply to research subject to subpart D involving educational tests or the observation of public behavior when the investigator(s) do not participate in the

activities being observed. Paragraph (d)(2)(iii) of this section may not be applied to research subject to subpart D.

(c) [Reserved]

(d) Except as described in paragraph (a) of this section, the following categories of human subjects research are exempt from this part:

(1) Research, conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

(ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or

(iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by § 2584.111(a)(7).

(3)(i) Research involving benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection and at least one of the following criteria is met:

(A) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

(B) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or

(C) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by § 2584.111(a)(7).

(ii) For the purpose of this provision, benign behavioral interventions are brief in duration, harmless, painless, not physically invasive, not likely to have a significant adverse lasting impact on the subjects, and the investigator has no reason to think the subjects will find the interventions offensive or embarrassing. Provided all such criteria are met, examples of such benign behavioral interventions would include having the subjects play an online game, having them solve puzzles under various noise conditions, or having them decide how to allocate a nominal amount of received cash between themselves and someone else.

(iii) If the research involves deceiving the subjects regarding the nature or purposes of the research, this exemption is not applicable unless the subject authorizes the deception through a prospective agreement to participate in research in circumstances in which the subject is informed that he or she will be unaware of or misled regarding the nature or purposes of the research.

(4) Secondary research for which consent is not required: Secondary research uses of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(i) The identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens are publicly available;

(ii) Information, which may include information about biospecimens, is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, the investigator does not contact the subjects, and the investigator will not re-identify subjects;

(iii) The research involves only information collection and analysis involving the investigator's use of identifiable health information when that use is regulated under 45 CFR part 160 and part 164, subparts A and E, for the purposes of "health care operations" or "research" as those terms are defined

at 45 CFR 164.501 or for "public health activities and purposes" as described under 45 CFR 164.512(b); or

(iv) The research is conducted by, or on behalf of, a Federal department or agency using government-generated or government-collected information obtained for nonresearch activities, if the research generates identifiable private information that is or will be maintained on information technology that is subject to and in compliance with section 208(b) of the E-Government Act of 2002, 44 U.S.C. 3501 note, if all of the identifiable private information collected, used, or generated as part of the activity will be maintained in systems of records subject to the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, and, if applicable, the information used in the research was collected subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*

(5) Research and demonstration projects that are conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency, or otherwise subject to the approval of the department or agency head (or the approval of the heads of bureaus or other subordinate agencies that have been delegated authority to conduct the research and demonstration projects), and that are designed to study, evaluate, improve, or otherwise examine public benefit or service programs, including procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs, possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures, or possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs. Such projects include, but are not limited to, internal studies by Federal employees, and studies under contracts or consulting arrangements, cooperative agreements, or grants. Exempt projects also include waivers of otherwise mandatory requirements using authorities such as sections 1115 and 1115A of the Social Security Act, as amended.

(i) Each Federal department or agency conducting or supporting the research and demonstration projects must establish, on a publicly accessible Federal website or in such other manner as the department or agency head may determine, a list of the research and demonstration projects that the Federal department or agency conducts or supports under this provision. The research or demonstration project must be published on this list prior to commencing the research involving human subjects.

(ii) [Reserved]

(6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies:

(i) If wholesome foods without additives are consumed, or

(ii) If a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

(7) Storage or maintenance for secondary research for which broad consent is required: Storage or maintenance of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for potential secondary research use if an IRB conducts a limited IRB review and makes the determinations required by § 2584.111(a)(8).

(8) Secondary research for which broad consent is required: Research involving the use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for secondary research use, if the following criteria are met:

(i) Broad consent for the storage, maintenance, and secondary research use of the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens was obtained in accordance with § 2584.116(a)(1) through (4) and (6) and (d);

(ii) Documentation of informed consent or waiver of documentation of consent was obtained in accordance with § 2584.117;

(iii) An IRB conducts a limited IRB review and makes the determination required by § 2584.111(a)(7) and makes the determination that the research to be conducted is within the scope of the broad consent referenced in paragraph (d)(8)(i) of this section; and

(iv) The investigator does not include returning individual research results to subjects as part of the study plan. This provision does not prevent an investigator from abiding by any legal requirements to return individual research results.

#### **§§ 2584.105–2584.106 [Reserved]**

#### **§ 2584.107 IRB membership.**

(a) Each IRB shall have at least five members, with varying backgrounds to promote complete and adequate review of research activities commonly conducted by the institution. The IRB shall be sufficiently qualified through the experience and expertise of its members (professional competence), and the diversity of its members, including race, gender, and cultural backgrounds and sensitivity to such issues as community attitudes, to

promote respect for its advice and counsel in safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects. The IRB shall be able to ascertain the acceptability of proposed research in terms of institutional commitments (including policies and resources) and regulations, applicable law, and standards of professional conduct and practice. The IRB shall therefore include persons knowledgeable in these areas. If an IRB regularly reviews research that involves a category of subjects that is vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, such as children, prisoners, individuals with impaired decision-making capacity, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons, consideration shall be given to the inclusion of one or more individuals who are knowledgeable about and experienced in working with these categories of subjects.

(b) Each IRB shall include at least one member whose primary concerns are in scientific areas and at least one member whose primary concerns are in nonscientific areas.

(c) Each IRB shall include at least one member who is not otherwise affiliated with the institution and who is not part of the immediate family of a person who is affiliated with the institution.

(d) No IRB may have a member participate in the IRB's initial or continuing review of any project in which the member has a conflicting interest, except to provide information requested by the IRB.

(e) An IRB may, in its discretion, invite individuals with competence in special areas to assist in the review of issues that require expertise beyond or in addition to that available on the IRB. These individuals may not vote with the IRB.

#### **§ 2584.108 IRB functions and operations.**

(a) In order to fulfill the requirements of this part each IRB shall:

(1) Have access to meeting space and sufficient staff to support the IRB's review and recordkeeping duties;

(2) Prepare and maintain a current list of the IRB members identified by name; earned degrees; representative capacity; indications of experience such as board certifications or licenses sufficient to describe each member's chief anticipated contributions to IRB deliberations; and any employment or other relationship between each member and the institution, for example, full-time employee, part-time employee, member of governing panel or board, stockholder, paid or unpaid consultant;

(3) Establish and follow written procedures for:

(i) Conducting its initial and continuing review of research and for reporting its findings and actions to the investigator and the institution;

(ii) Determining which projects require review more often than annually and which projects need verification from sources other than the investigators that no material changes have occurred since previous IRB review; and

(iii) Ensuring prompt reporting to the IRB of proposed changes in a research activity, and for ensuring that investigators will conduct the research activity in accordance with the terms of the IRB approval until any proposed changes have been reviewed and approved by the IRB, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject.

(4) Established and follow written procedures for ensuring prompt reporting to the IRB; appropriate institutional officials; the department or agency head; and the Office for Human Research Protections, HHS, or any successor office, or the equivalent office within the appropriate Federal department or agency of

(i) Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others or any serious or continuing noncompliance with this part or the requirements or determinations of the IRB; and

(ii) Any suspension or termination of IRB approval

(b) Except when an expedited review procedure is used (as described in § 2584.110), an IRB must review proposed research at convened meetings at which a majority of the members of the IRB are present, including at least one member whose primary concerns are in nonscientific areas. In order for the research to be approved, it shall receive the approval of a majority of those members present at the meeting.

#### **§ 2584.109 IRB review of research.**

(a) An IRB shall review and have authority to approve, require modifications in (to secure approval), or disapprove all research activities covered by this part, including exempt research activities under § 2584.104 for which limited IRB review is a condition of exemption (under § 2584.104(d)(2)(iii), (d)(3)(i)(C), and (d)(7) and (8)).

(b) An IRB shall require that information given to subjects (or legally authorized representatives, when appropriate) as part of informed consent is in accordance with § 2584.116. The IRB may require that information, in addition to that specifically mentioned in § 2584.116, be given to the subjects



when in the IRB's judgment the information would meaningfully add to the protection of the rights and welfare of subjects.

(c) An IRB shall require documentation of informed consent or may waive documentation in accordance with § 2584.117.

(d) An IRB shall notify investigators and the institution in writing of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed research activity, or of modifications required to secure IRB approval of the research activity. If the IRB decides to disapprove a research activity, it shall include in its written notification a statement of the reasons for its decision and give the investigator an opportunity to respond in person or in writing.

(e) An IRB shall conduct continuing review of research requiring review by the convened IRB at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk, not less than once per year, except as described in paragraph (f) of this section.

(f)(1) Unless an IRB determines otherwise, continuing review of research is not required in the following circumstances:

(i) Research eligible for expedited review in accordance with § 2584.110;

(ii) Research reviewed by the IRB in accordance with the limited IRB review described in § 2584.104(d)(2)(iii), (d)(3)(i)(C), or (d)(7) or (8);

(iii) Research that has progressed to the point that it involves only one or both of the following, which are part of the IRB-approved study:

(A) Data analysis, including analysis of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, or

(B) Accessing follow-up clinical data from procedures that subjects would undergo as part of clinical care.

(2) [Reserved]

(g) An IRB shall have authority to observe or have a third party observe the consent process and the research.

**§ 2584.110 Expedited review procedures for certain kinds of research involving no more than minimal risk, and for minor changes in approved research.**

(a) The Secretary of HHS has established, and published as a notice in the **Federal Register**, a list of categories of research that may be reviewed by the IRB through an expedited review procedure. The Secretary will evaluate the list at least every 8 years and amend it, as appropriate, after consultation with other Federal departments and agencies and after publication in the **Federal Register** for public comment. A copy of the list is available from the Office for Human Research Protections, HHS, or any successor office.

(b)(1) An IRB may use the expedited review procedure to review the following:

(i) Some or all of the research appearing on the list described in paragraph (a) of this section, unless the reviewer determines that the study involves more than minimal risk;

(ii) Minor changes in previously approved research during the period for which approval is authorized; or

(iii) Research for which limited IRB review is a condition of exemption under § 2584.104(d)(2)(iii), (d)(3)(i)(C), and (d)(7) and (8)

(2) Under an expedited review procedure, the review may be carried out by the IRB chairperson or by one or more experienced reviewers designated by the chairperson from among members of the IRB. In reviewing the research, the reviewers may exercise all of the authorities of the IRB except that the reviewers may not disapprove the research. A research activity may be disapproved only after review in accordance with the non-expedited procedure set forth in § 2584.108(b).

(c) Each IRB that uses an expedited review procedure shall adopt a method for keeping all members advised of research proposals that have been approved under the procedure.

(d) The department or agency head may restrict, suspend, terminate, or choose not to authorize an institution's or IRB's use of the expedited review procedure.

**§ 2258.111 Criteria for IRB approval of research.**

(a) In order to approve research covered by this part the IRB shall determine that all of the following requirements are satisfied:

(1) Risks to subjects are minimized:

(i) By using procedures that are consistent with sound research design and that do not unnecessarily expose subjects to risk, and

(ii) Whenever appropriate, by using procedures already being performed on the subjects for diagnostic or treatment purposes.

(2) Risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to subjects, and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result. In evaluating risks and benefits, the IRB should consider only those risks and benefits that may result from the research (as distinguished from risks and benefits of therapies subjects would receive even if not participating in the research). The IRB should not consider possible long-range effects of applying knowledge gained in the research (e.g., the possible effects of the research on public policy)

as among those research risks that fall within the purview of its responsibility.

(3) Selection of subjects is equitable.

In making this assessment the IRB should take into account the purposes of the research and the setting in which the research will be conducted. The IRB should be particularly cognizant of the special problems of research that involves a category of subjects who are vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, such as children, prisoners, individuals with impaired decision-making capacity, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons.

(4) Informed consent will be sought from each prospective subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, in accordance with, and to the extent required by, § 2584.116.

(5) Informed consent will be appropriately documented or appropriately waived in accordance with § 2584.117.

(6) When appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provision for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of subjects.

(7) When appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of data.

(i) The Secretary of HHS will, after consultation with the Office of Management and Budget's privacy office and other Federal departments and agencies that have adopted this policy, issue guidance to assist IRBs in assessing what provisions are adequate to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of data.

(ii) [Reserved]

(8) For purposes of conducting the limited IRB review required by § 2584.104(d)(7)), the IRB need not make the determinations at paragraphs (a)(1) through (7) of this section, and shall make the following determinations:

(i) Broad consent for storage, maintenance, and secondary research use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens is obtained in accordance with the requirements of § 2584.116(a)(1) through (4) and (6) and (d);

(ii) Broad consent is appropriately documented or waiver of documentation is appropriate, in accordance with § 2584.117; and

(iii) If there is a change made for research purposes in the way the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens are stored or maintained, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of data.

(b) When some or all of the subjects are likely to be vulnerable to coercion or



undue influence, such as children, prisoners, individuals with impaired decision-making capacity, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons, additional safeguards have been included in the study to protect the rights and welfare of these subjects.

#### **§ 2584.112 Review by institution.**

Research covered by this part that has been approved by an IRB may be subject to further appropriate review and approval or disapproval by officials of the institution. However, those officials may not approve the research if it has not been approved by an IRB.

#### **§ 2258.113 Suspension or termination of IRB approval of research.**

An IRB shall have authority to suspend or terminate approval of research that is not being conducted in accordance with the IRB's requirements or that has been associated with unexpected serious harm to subjects. Any suspension or termination of approval shall include a statement of the reasons for the IRB's action and shall be reported promptly to the investigator, appropriate institutional officials, and the department or agency head.

#### **§ 2584.114 Cooperative research.**

(a) Cooperative research projects are those projects covered by this part that involve more than one institution. In the conduct of cooperative research projects, each institution is responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects and for complying with this policy.

(b)(1) Any institution located in the United States that is engaged in cooperative research must rely upon approval by a single IRB for that portion of the research that is conducted in the United States. The reviewing IRB will be identified by the Federal department or agency supporting or conducting the research or proposed by the lead institution subject to the acceptance of the Federal department or agency supporting the research.

(2) The following research is not subject to this provision:

(i) Cooperative research for which more than single IRB review is required by law (including Tribal law passed by the official governing body of an American Indian or Alaska Native Tribe); or

(ii) Research for which any Federal department or agency supporting or conducting the research determines and documents that the use of a single IRB is not appropriate for the particular context.

(c) For research not subject to paragraph (b) of this section, an institution participating in a cooperative project may enter into a joint review arrangement, rely on the review of another IRB, or make similar arrangements for avoiding duplication of effort.

#### **§ 2584.115 IRB records.**

(a) An institution, or when appropriate an IRB, shall prepare and maintain adequate documentation of IRB activities, including the following:

(1) Copies of all research proposals reviewed, scientific evaluations, if any, that accompany the proposals, approved sample consent forms, progress reports submitted by investigators, and reports of injuries to subjects.

(2) Minutes of IRB meetings which shall be in sufficient detail to show attendance at the meetings; actions taken by the IRB; the vote on these actions including the number of members voting for, against, and abstaining; the basis for requiring changes in or disapproving research; and a written summary of the discussion of controverted issues and their resolution.

(3) Records of continuing review activities, including the rationale for conducting continuing review of research that otherwise would not require continuing review as described in § 2584.109(f)(1).

(4) Copies of all correspondence between the IRB and the investigators.

(5) A list of IRB members in the same detail as described in § 2584.108(a)(2).

(6) Written procedures for the IRB in the same detail as described in § 2584.108(a)(3) and (4).

(7) Statements of significant new findings provided to subjects, as required by § 2584.116(c)(5).

(8) The rationale for an expedited reviewer's determination under § 2584.110(b)(1)(i) that research appearing on the expedited review list described in § 2584.110(a) is more than minimal risk.

(9) Documentation specifying the responsibilities that an institution and an organization operating an IRB each will undertake to ensure compliance with the requirements of this part, as described in § 2584.103(e).

(b) The records required by this part shall be retained for at least 3 years, and records relating to research that is conducted shall be retained for at least 3 years after completion of the research. The institution or IRB may maintain the records in printed form, or electronically. All records shall be accessible for inspection and copying by authorized representatives of the

Federal department or agency at reasonable times and in a reasonable manner.

#### **§ 2584.116 General requirements for informed consent.**

(a) *General.* General requirements for informed consent, whether written or oral, are set forth in this paragraph and apply to consent obtained in accordance with the requirements set forth in paragraphs (b) through (d) of this section. Broad consent may be obtained in lieu of informed consent obtained in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section only with respect to the storage, maintenance, and secondary research uses of identifiable private information and identifiable biospecimens. Waiver or alteration of consent in research involving public benefit and service programs conducted by or subject to the approval of state or local officials is described in paragraph (e) of this section. General waiver or alteration of informed consent is described in paragraph (f) of this section. Except as provided elsewhere in this part:

(1) Before involving a human subject in research covered by this part, an investigator shall obtain the legally effective informed consent of the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative.

(2) An investigator shall seek informed consent only under circumstances that provide the prospective subject or the legally authorized representative sufficient opportunity to discuss and consider whether or not to participate and that minimize the possibility of coercion or undue influence.

(3) The information that is given to the subject or the legally authorized representative shall be in language understandable to the subject or the legally authorized representative.

(4) The prospective subject or the legally authorized representative must be provided with the information that a reasonable person would want to have in order to make an informed decision about whether to participate, and an opportunity to discuss that information.

(5) Except for broad consent obtained in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section:

(i) Informed consent must begin with a concise and focused presentation of the key information that is most likely to assist a prospective subject or legally authorized representative in understanding the reasons why one might or might not want to participate in the research. This part of the informed consent must be organized

and presented in a way that facilitates comprehension.

(ii) Informed consent as a whole must present information in sufficient detail relating to the research and must be organized and presented in a way that does not merely provide lists of isolated facts, but rather facilitates the prospective subject's or legally authorized representative's understanding of the reasons why one might or might not want to participate.

(6) No informed consent may include any exculpatory language through which the subject or the legally authorized representative is made to waive or appear to waive any of the subject's legal rights, or releases or appears to release the investigator, the sponsor, the institution, or its agents from liability for negligence.

(b) *Basic elements of informed consent.* Except as provided in paragraph (d), (e), or (f) of this section, in seeking informed consent the following information shall be provided to each subject or the legally authorized representative:

(1) A statement that the study involves research, an explanation of the purposes of the research and the expected duration of the subject's participation, a description of the procedures to be followed, and identification of any procedures that are experimental;

(2) A description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts to the subject;

(3) A description of any benefits to the subject or to others that may reasonably be expected from the research;

(4) A disclosure of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to the subject;

(5) A statement describing the extent, if any, to which confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained;

(6) For research involving more than minimal risk, an explanation as to whether any compensation and an explanation as to whether any medical treatments are available if injury occurs and, if so, what they consist of, or where further information may be obtained;

(7) An explanation of whom to contact for answers to pertinent questions about the research and research subjects' rights, and whom to contact in the event of a research-related injury to the subject;

(8) A statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without

penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled; and

(9) One of the following statements about any research that involves the collection of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens:

(i) A statement that identifiers might be removed from the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens and that, after such removal, the information or biospecimens could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without additional informed consent from the subject or the legally authorized representative, if this might be a possibility; or

(ii) A statement that the subject's information or biospecimens collected as part of the research, even if identifiers are removed, will not be used or distributed for future research studies.

(c) *Additional elements of informed consent.* Except as provided in paragraph (d), (e), or (f) of this section, one or more of the following elements of information, when appropriate, shall also be provided to each subject or the legally authorized representative:

(1) A statement that the particular treatment or procedure may involve risks to the subject (or to the embryo or fetus, if the subject is or may become pregnant) that are currently unforeseeable;

(2) Anticipated circumstances under which the subject's participation may be terminated by the investigator without regard to the subject's or the legally authorized representative's consent;

(3) Any additional costs to the subject that may result from participation in the research;

(4) The consequences of a subject's decision to withdraw from the research and procedures for orderly termination of participation by the subject;

(5) A statement that significant new findings developed during the course of the research that may relate to the subject's willingness to continue participation will be provided to the subject;

(6) The approximate number of subjects involved in the study;

(7) A statement that the subject's biospecimens (even if identifiers are removed) may be used for commercial profit and whether the subject will or will not share in this commercial profit;

(8) A statement regarding whether clinically relevant research results, including individual research results, will be disclosed to subjects, and if so, under what conditions; and

(9) For research involving biospecimens, whether the research will (if known) or might include whole genome sequencing (*i.e.*, sequencing of a human germline or somatic specimen with the intent to generate the genome or exome sequence of that specimen).

(d) *Elements of broad consent for the storage, maintenance, and secondary research use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.* Broad consent for the storage, maintenance, and secondary research use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens (collected for either research studies other than the proposed research or nonresearch purposes) is permitted as an alternative to the informed consent requirements in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section. If the subject or the legally authorized representative is asked to provide broad consent, the following shall be provided to each subject or the subject's legally authorized representative:

(1) The information required in paragraphs (b)(2), (3), (5), and (8) of this section and, when appropriate, paragraphs (c)(7) and (9) of this section;

(2) A general description of the types of research that may be conducted with the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens. This description must include sufficient information such that a reasonable person would expect that the broad consent would permit the types of research conducted;

(3) A description of the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens that might be used in research, whether sharing of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens might occur, and the types of institutions or researchers that might conduct research with the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens;

(4) A description of the period of time that the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens may be stored and maintained (which period of time could be indefinite), and a description of the period of time that the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens may be used for research purposes (which period of time could be indefinite);

(5) Unless the subject or legally authorized representative will be provided details about specific research studies, a statement that they will not be informed of the details of any specific research studies that might be conducted using the subject's identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, including the purposes of the research, and that they

might have chosen not to consent to some of those specific research studies;

(6) Unless it is known that clinically relevant research results, including individual research results, will be disclosed to the subject in all circumstances, a statement that such results may not be disclosed to the subject; and

(7) An explanation of whom to contact for answers to questions about the subject's rights and about storage and use of the subject's identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, and whom to contact in the event of a research-related harm.

(e) *Waiver or alteration of consent in research involving public benefit and service programs conducted by or subject to the approval of state or local officials*—(1) *Waiver*. An IRB may waive the requirement to obtain informed consent for research under paragraphs (a) through (c) of this section, provided the IRB satisfies the requirements of paragraph (e)(3) of this section. If an individual was asked to provide broad consent for the storage, maintenance, and secondary research use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens in accordance with the requirements at paragraph (d) of this section, and refused to consent, an IRB cannot waive consent for the storage, maintenance, or secondary research use of the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.

(2) *Alteration*. An IRB may approve a consent procedure that omits some, or alters some or all, of the elements of informed consent set forth in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section provided the IRB satisfies the requirements of paragraph (e)(3) of this section. An IRB may not omit or alter any of the requirements described in paragraph (a) of this section. If a broad consent procedure is used, an IRB may not omit or alter any of the elements required under paragraph (d) of this section.

(3) *Requirements for waiver and alteration*. In order for an IRB to waive or alter consent as described in this subsection, the IRB must find and document that:

(i) The research or demonstration project is to be conducted by or subject to the approval of state or local government officials and is designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine:

(A) Public benefit or service programs;

(B) Procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs;

(C) Possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or

(D) Possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs; and

(ii) The research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration.

(f) *General waiver or alteration of consent*—(1) *Waiver*. An IRB may waive the requirement to obtain informed consent for research under paragraphs (a) through (c) of this section, provided the IRB satisfies the requirements of paragraph (f)(3) of this section. If an individual was asked to provide broad consent for the storage, maintenance, and secondary research use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens in accordance with the requirements at paragraph (d) of this section, and refused to consent, an IRB cannot waive consent for the storage, maintenance, or secondary research use of the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.

(2) *Alteration*. An IRB may approve a consent procedure that omits some, or alters some or all, of the elements of informed consent set forth in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section provided the IRB satisfies the requirements of paragraph (f)(3) of this section. An IRB may not omit or alter any of the requirements described in paragraph (a) of this section. If a broad consent procedure is used, an IRB may not omit or alter any of the elements required under paragraph (d) of this section.

(3) *Requirements for waiver and alteration*. In order for an IRB to waive or alter consent as described in this subsection, the IRB must find and document that:

(i) The research involves no more than minimal risk to the subjects;

(ii) The research could not practicably be carried out without the requested waiver or alteration;

(iii) If the research involves using identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, the research could not practicably be carried out without using such information or biospecimens in an identifiable format;

(iv) The waiver or alteration will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects; and

(v) Whenever appropriate, the subjects or legally authorized representatives will be provided with additional pertinent information after participation.

(g) *Screening, recruiting, or determining eligibility*. An IRB may approve a research proposal in which an investigator will obtain information or biospecimens for the purpose of screening, recruiting, or determining the eligibility of prospective subjects without the informed consent of the prospective subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, if

either of the following conditions are met:

(1) The investigator will obtain information through oral or written communication with the prospective subject or legally authorized representative, or

(2) The investigator will obtain identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens by accessing records or stored identifiable biospecimens.

(h) *Posting of clinical trial consent form*. (1) For each clinical trial conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency, one IRB-approved informed consent form used to enroll subjects must be posted by the awardee or the Federal department or agency component conducting the trial on a publicly available Federal website that will be established as a repository for such informed consent forms.

(2) If the Federal department or agency supporting or conducting the clinical trial determines that certain information should not be made publicly available on a Federal website (e.g., confidential commercial information), such Federal department or agency may permit or require redactions to the information posted.

(3) The informed consent form must be posted on the Federal website after the clinical trial is closed to recruitment, and no later than 60 days after the last study visit by any subject, as required by the protocol.

(i) *Preemption*. The informed consent requirements in this part are not intended to preempt any applicable Federal, state, or local laws (including Tribal laws passed by the official governing body of an American Indian or Alaska Native Tribe) that require additional information to be disclosed in order for informed consent to be legally effective.

(j) *Emergency medical care*. Nothing in this part is intended to limit the authority of a physician to provide emergency medical care, to the extent the physician is permitted to do so under applicable Federal, state, or local law (including Tribal law passed by the official governing body of an American Indian or Alaska Native Tribe).

#### **§ 2584.117 Documentation of informed consent.**

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, informed consent shall be documented by the use of a written informed consent form approved by the IRB and signed (including in an electronic format) by the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. A written

copy shall be given to the person signing the informed consent form.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, the informed consent form may be either of the following:

(1) A written informed consent form that meets the requirements of § 2584.116. The investigator shall give either the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative adequate opportunity to read the informed consent form before it is signed; alternatively, this form may be read to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative.

(2) A short form written informed consent form stating that the elements of informed consent required by § 2584.116 have been presented orally to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, and that the key information required by § 2584.116(a)(5)(i) was presented first to the subject, before other information, if any, was provided. The IRB shall approve a written summary of what is to be said to the subject or the legally authorized representative. When this method is used, there shall be a witness to the oral presentation. Only the short form itself is to be signed by the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. However, the witness shall sign both the short form and a copy of the summary, and the person actually obtaining consent shall sign a copy of the summary. A copy of the summary shall be given to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, in addition to a copy of the short form.

(c)(1) An IRB may waive the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed informed consent form for some or all subjects if it finds any of the following:

(i) That the only record linking the subject and the research would be the informed consent form and the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. Each subject (or legally authorized representative) will be asked whether the subject wants documentation linking the subject with the research, and the subject's wishes will govern;

(ii) That the research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context; or

(iii) If the subjects or legally authorized representatives are members of a distinct cultural group or community in which signing forms is not the norm, that the research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to

subjects and provided there is an appropriate alternative mechanism for documenting that informed consent was obtained.

(2) In cases in which the documentation requirement is waived, the IRB may require the investigator to provide subjects or legally authorized representatives with a written statement regarding the research.

#### **§ 2584.118 Applications and proposals lacking definite plans for involvement of human subjects.**

Certain types of applications for grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts are submitted to Federal departments or agencies with the knowledge that subjects may be involved within the period of support, but definite plans would not normally be set forth in the application or proposal. These include activities such as institutional type grants when selection of specific projects is the institution's responsibility; research training grants in which the activities involving subjects remain to be selected; and projects in which human subjects' involvement will depend upon completion of instruments, prior animal studies, or purification of compounds. Except for research waived under § 2584.101(i) or exempted under § 2584.104, no human subjects may be involved in any project supported by these awards until the project has been reviewed and approved by the IRB, as provided in this part, and certification submitted, by the institution, to the Federal department or agency component supporting the research.

#### **§ 2584.119 Research undertaken without the intention of involving human subjects.**

Except for research waived under § 2584.101(i) or exempted under § 2584.104, in the event research is undertaken without the intention of involving human subjects, but it is later proposed to involve human subjects in the research, the research shall first be reviewed and approved by an IRB, as provided in this part, a certification submitted by the institution to the Federal department or agency component supporting the research, and final approval given to the proposed change by the Federal department or agency component.

#### **§ 2584.120 Evaluation and disposition of applications and proposals for research to be conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency.**

(a) The department or agency head will evaluate all applications and proposals involving human subjects submitted to the Federal department or agency through such officers and

employees of the Federal department or agency and such experts and consultants as the department or agency head determines to be appropriate. This evaluation will take into consideration the risks to the subjects, the adequacy of protection against these risks, the potential benefits of the research to the subjects and others, and the importance of the knowledge gained or to be gained.

(b) On the basis of this evaluation, the department or agency head may approve or disapprove the application or proposal or enter into negotiations to develop an approvable one.

#### **§ 2584.121 [Reserved]**

#### **§ 2584.122 Use of Federal funds.**

Federal funds administered by a Federal department or agency may not be expended for research involving human subjects unless the requirements of this part have been satisfied.

#### **§ 2584.123 Early termination of research support: Evaluation of applications and proposals.**

(a) The department or agency head may require that Federal department or agency support for any project be terminated or suspended in the manner prescribed in applicable program requirements, when the department or agency head finds an institution has materially failed to comply with the terms of this part.

(b) In making decisions about supporting or approving applications or proposals covered by this part the department or agency head may take into account, in addition to all other eligibility requirements and program criteria, factors such as whether the applicant has been subject to a termination or suspension under paragraph (a) of this section and whether the applicant or the person or persons who would direct or has/have directed the scientific and technical aspects of an activity has/have, in the judgment of the department or agency head, materially failed to discharge responsibility for the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects (whether or not the research was subject to Federal regulation).

#### **§ 2584.124 Conditions.**

With respect to any research project or any class of research projects the department or agency head of either the conducting or supporting Federal department or agency may impose additional conditions prior to or at the time of approval when in the judgment of the department or agency head

additional conditions are necessary for the protection of human subjects.

**Andrea Grill,**

*Acting General Counsel.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 635

[Docket No. 241010-0271]

RIN 0648-BK89

#### Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Updates Regarding Sea Turtle Careful Release Equipment and Techniques

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** In this final rule, NMFS updates the Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS) regulations regarding the sea turtle safe handling and release requirements and equipment in the HMS pelagic and bottom longline fisheries. This action is based in part on two technical memoranda published by NMFS' Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC). The regulatory updates replace some of the more technical terms with those that are more commonly used, add more detail to make the regulations more understandable, and add additional tools or options for fishermen to use to safely handle and release sea turtles. In addition, this final rule simplifies the regulations by removing redundancies, making minor changes in formatting, and revising wording to clarify responsibility of implementation.

**DATES:** This final rule is effective November 29, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Additional information related to this final rule, including electronic copies of the supporting documents are available from the HMS Management Division website at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species>, at: <https://www.regulations.gov> (enter "NOAA-NMFS-2024-0046" in the Search box), or by contacting Becky Curtis at [becky.curtis@noaa.gov](mailto:becky.curtis@noaa.gov). The referenced technical memoranda are available from the HMS Management Division website at: [https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/outreach-materials/atlantic-highly-](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/outreach-materials/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-safe-handling-release-and)

*migratory-species-safe-handling-release-and*. These documents are also available upon request from the HMS Management Division by phone at 301-427-8503.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Becky Curtis, [becky.curtis@noaa.gov](mailto:becky.curtis@noaa.gov), Steve Durkee, [steve.durkee@noaa.gov](mailto:steve.durkee@noaa.gov) or Karyl Brewster-Geisz, [karyl.brewster-geisz@noaa.gov](mailto:karyl.brewster-geisz@noaa.gov); 301-427-8503.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

Atlantic HMS fisheries are managed under the 2006 Consolidated HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and its amendments, pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) and consistent with the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA) (16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*). HMS implementing regulations are at 50 CFR part 635. The sea turtle handling and release requirements and equipment are located at § 635.21(b) through (d).

This final rule is issued pursuant to, and subject to requirements of, the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Specifically in regard to the sea turtle safe handling and release measures implemented in this rule, 16 U.S.C. 1851(a)(9) requires NMFS to implement fishery management measures that minimize bycatch, and to the extent bycatch cannot be avoided, minimize the mortality of bycatch. The Magnuson-Stevens Act defines bycatch as fish which are harvested but which are not sold or kept for personal use at 16 U.S.C. 1802(2) (see also 16 U.S.C. 1802(12) (defining "fish")). Sea turtles are listed and protected under the Endangered Species Act and cannot be sold or kept for personal use (see 16 U.S.C. 1538(a)(1) and 16 U.S.C. 1533(d)).

Background information about the need for regulatory updates to modify the sea turtle handling and release requirements and equipment and specific examples of updates made under this action were provided in the preamble to the proposed rule (89 FR 24416, April 8, 2024) and are not repeated here. In summary, two technical memoranda were published by the SEFSC in 2019: NMFS-SEFSC TM735: "Careful Release Protocols for Sea Turtle Release with Minimal Injury," and NMFS-SEFSC TM738: "Design Standards and Equipment for Careful Release of Sea Turtles Caught in Hook-and-Line Fisheries." NMFS decided that it would be helpful to revise the existing regulations in light of the 2019 technical memoranda. Based in

part on those memoranda, this final rule modifies the regulations by: (1) adding additional options for tools and procedures for fishermen to use to safely handle and release sea turtles; (2) replacing some of the more technical terms with those that are more commonly used; (3) adding more detail to make the regulations more understandable; and (4) simplifying the regulations by removing redundancies. NMFS received five written comments during the public comment period for the proposed rule, which closed on May 8, 2024. The comments received, and responses to those comments, are summarized in the Response to Comments section. No changes to the final rule are planned in response to the comments received. However, one minor change from the proposed rule is outlined in the Changes from Proposed Rule section.

Under this final rule, fishermen are able to continue using existing, approved sea turtle bycatch mitigation equipment. The final rule also provides additional tool and procedural options that fishermen may use to meet the sea turtle safe handling and release requirements.

##### Response to Comments

Written comments can be found at: <https://www.regulations.gov>; type "NOAA-NMFS-2024-0046" in the Search box. Below, NMFS summarizes and responds to the comments made on the proposed rule during the comment period. Comments covering the same topics were consolidated.

**Comment 1:** NMFS received multiple comments expressing support for the proposed update of sea turtle careful handling and release regulations. Commenters noted that the updates would improve outcomes for incidentally-caught sea turtles released by fishermen and improve clarity of the sea turtle safe handling and release regulations, improve awareness of and confidence in sea turtle release techniques, and, due to the additional approved tools, reduce instances where the required tools are forgotten or not on hand.

**Response:** NMFS agrees that the proposed changes would provide clarity regarding sea turtle safe handling and release requirements. Additionally, the proposed changes will increase flexibility for complying with these requirements.

**Comment 2:** NMFS received one comment expressing concerns about the cost of the new, optional tools that would be authorized for sea turtle safe handling techniques, and whether that