

Northwestern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Recruitment Guidelines

All materials aimed at recruiting participants into a research study (including the final copy of printed advertisements, scripts, audio or video tapes, or web sites) must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to use. You will be asked to include a description of your recruitment methods in either the protocol or the local protocol addendum to the sponsor's protocol (whichever you are submitting).

Elements needed for IRB approval include:

- Study title and IRB study number
- The word “research”
- “Northwestern University”
- The PI's name and a contact name with either a phone number or e-mail address
- Eligibility criteria, if applicable, should be noted briefly.
- State whether participants will be paid for their time and effort
 - *The amount of payment may be included but should not be the most prominent element on the page. Compensation should not be excessive considering the nature of the project. Payment should be stated as a range of amounts or stated as “at least” or “up to” for payments dependent on the amount of participation.*

Allowable Recruitment Strategies:

- Print materials such as brochures and flyers, including advertisements (i.e. CTA, Chicago Tribune, etc.)
- Online advertisements on social media (i.e. Facebook)
- EDW (via appropriate approvals or exceptions)
- Email and/or phone scripts
- Websites
- Registries (i.e. The New Normal)

Recruitment Strategies That Are **Not** Allowed:

- Recruitment incentives
- General advertisements or flyers (materials that describe more than 1 research study)

Tips when preparing your IRB submission:

- Provide copies of recruitment materials that will be used
- Changes made to recruitment materials will require IRB review prior to implementation
- When utilizing online recruitment methods, especially social media platforms, ensure that your recruitment method will protect the rights and welfare of potential participants (i.e. do not post an ad for a mental health study in a public group as

- identities are public and not kept private)
- Ensure your recruitment methods contain required elements
 - Utilize HRP-315 WORKSHEET Advertisements (Recruitment Materials) as a guide
 - Ask the IRB!

Social Media Use:

Ensure that proposed social media recruitment strategies respect all relevant ethical norms, including:

- Proposed recruitment does not involve deception or fabrication of online identities
- Research studies are accurately represented in recruitment overtures
- Proposed recruitment does not involve members of research team ‘lurking’ or ‘creeping’ social media sites in ways members are unaware of
- Recruitment will not involve advancements or contact that could embarrass or stigmatize potential participants