

Section 14: Behavioral/Social Science Research

Behavioral and social science research involves the study of human behavior, quality of life, anthropology, epidemiology, and the effects of educational and interventional efforts. In order to collect behavioral data, researchers employ such study methods as surveys, interviews, questionnaires, review of existing records, observation and/or psychological and social interventions.

The utilization of these research methods may present some ethical concerns such as psychological and social risks, deception and confidentiality. All of this is taken into account during the IRB review.

When designing and conducting behavioral and social science research, investigators should:

1. Minimize the potential for stress, discomfort or other harms
2. Respect participants' privacy and minimize intrusion
3. Design mechanisms to protect confidentiality of data
4. Guard against factors leading to undue influence

Behavioral and social science research may present more than minimal risk and thus be subject to review by the convened IRB. Some behavioral and social science research may be exempt from IRB review under [45 CFR 46.101\(b\)](#) or may be eligible for expedited IRB review pursuant to [45 CFR 46.110](#).