

**Western Carolina University  
Office of Research Administration  
Institutional Review Board Standard Operating Procedures**

<b>SOP# 214.1</b>	<b>TITLE: Recruitment of Research Participants</b>	<b>Date Effective: 3/22/2023</b> <b>Last Revision Date:</b>
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## **I. Purpose**

The recruitment of research participants must be done in a way that ensures their participation is completely voluntary. The WCU research compliance office reviews and approves all recruitment methods and materials, incentives, and compensation to confirm that there is no undue influence or coercion affecting a potential participant's decision to enroll in research.

## **II. Definitions**

Recruitment materials include print and electronic advertisements (flyers, social media posts, etc.) and any written or verbal scripts used to recruit participants.

## **III. Procedure**

1. A detailed description of recruitment methods and all recruitment materials must be included in the InfoEd submission for review.
2. The research compliance office will review all recruitment materials to ensure they contain the following information:
  - a. A statement that the recruitment is for research purposes
  - b. The name and contact information for the PI
  - c. The purpose of the research
  - d. A summary of the criteria that will determine participant eligibility (inclusion/exclusion criteria)
  - e. The time or other commitment required of participants
  - f. A brief list of participation benefits, if any
    - i. Payment should not be listed as a benefit of participating
    - ii. Advertisements may state that participants will be paid, but they should not emphasize the payment by using larger or bold type
      1. Recruitment materials directed at minors should not include payment information
  - g. For research that may involve sensitive topics, a description of why the individual is receiving recruitment material and/or how the investigators got their contact information

3. If any of the elements listed above are unclear or missing, the research compliance office will instruct the investigator of necessary modifications or clarifications.
4. Recruitment cannot begin until the study has been reviewed and the research team has received an approval letter from the research compliance office.

#### **IV. Responsibilities**

1. Investigators have the responsibility to:
  - a. Include all recruitment materials in their InfoEd submission and receive approval prior to using them
  - b. Receive approval from the owners of private social media outlets (e.g., Facebook groups) prior to using them for recruitment
  - c. Include a clear and accurate description of any potential benefits and/or compensation in recruitment materials
  - d. Avoid the use of coercion in any recruitment materials
  - e. Minimize the potential undue influence on participant recruitment
    - i. The nature of the undue influence and how it will be minimized should be explained in the InfoEd submission
  - f. Seek IRB approval for any subsequent changes to recruitment materials
2. Research compliance office is responsible for:
  - a. Ensuring recruitment materials match the research being described in the proposal
  - b. Ensuring recruitment materials include the information listed above in the Procedure section
  - c. Ensuring that the recruitment materials and methods do not involve coercion, exert undue influence, or mislead potential participants
  - d. Providing feedback to investigators as they develop appropriate materials

#### **V. References**

45 CFR § 46.111