

**Institutional Review Board**

<b>Title:</b>	Communications
<b>Version:</b>	1.00
<b>Effective Date:</b>	February 3, 2025
<b>Responsible Office:</b>	Institutional Review Office (IRO)
<b>Responsible Official / Approved By:</b>	Meghan Scott, IRO Director

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**POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center (Fred Hutch) that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) will communicate expectations to stakeholders in a timely and accurate manner and inform of appropriate mechanisms for external media inquiries. The IRB will conduct appropriate levels of communication in compliance with the federal regulation, institutional policy, and other applicable laws and regulations relating to research involving human subjects. Confidential information will be protected and not obtained, disclosed or used for any unauthorized purpose.

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**DEFINITIONS**

None

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**PRINCIPLES/OVERVIEW**

This policy describes the methods used by the Institutional Review Office (IRO) to communicate information to investigators and other members of the Fred Hutch Human Research Protection Program.

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**INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY**

The contents of this policy apply to IRO staff, IRB members, employees of Fred Hutch and investigators from other institutions who submit research studies to the Fred Hutch IRB for review and approval.

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**PROCEDURES****1. Handling media relations**

Any media inquiries should be directed to the Fred Hutch Communications Department, Media Line at 206.667.2210 or [media@fredhutch.org](mailto:media@fredhutch.org).

Study specific information cannot be provided by the IRO staff. All records are treated as confidential and it is the responsibility of the Communications Department to make the appropriate authorizations for release of study information.

**2. Referencing Fred Hutch in publication or other research related correspondence**

All external facing communications, including brochures, fliers, articles, and press releases, should use the full legal name "Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center" on first reference. The short form name, "Fred Hutch," can be used for subsequent references. "Fred Hutch Cancer Center", "The Hutch", "the center", or "FHCC," should *not* be used. See the Marketing & Communications [Brand Writing Style Guide](#) for more details.

### 3. IRO Newsletter

- a. The IRO Newsletter provides “real time” information and updates relevant to the human subjects research protection program to Fred Hutch Investigators and the research community.
- b. Disseminating the Newsletter
  - The IRO newsletter is automatically sent to all Principal Investigators, Primary Contacts, and PI Proxies. Other individuals can sign up for the IRO News Listserv through CenterNet or ExtraNet.
  - Current and past editions of the Newsletter are posted to CenterNet and ExtraNet.
- c. Timing of the Newsletter

The Newsletter is generally published once a quarter, or more frequently if required.

### 4. CenterNet

CenterNet, Fred Hutch’s intranet, allows the IRO to maintain and update webpages as a resource for online information and updates pertinent to the Human Research Protection Program for Fred Hutch investigators and the research community. The IRO CenterNet pages provide Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), instructions for completion of forms, IRB meeting information, past newsletters, IRB Policies, information about training requirements, and other content relevant to the Human Research Protection Program as needed.

See the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) webpage on Centernet. Information on CenterNet is duplicated on ExtraNet (<https://extranet.fredhutch.org>) for viewing by those outside of Fred Hutch.

### 5. Subpoenas or Other Request for Production of IRO Records

IRO records may be the subject of a subpoena or other legal process. The following guidelines have been developed with input from the Fred Hutch Office of General Counsel (OGC) to assist IRO staff.

- a. All subpoenas or other requests for production of IRO records from a court, attorney, or governmental or administrative agency should be immediately referred to OGC. If a process server is attempting to serve a subpoena, or other request, they should be directed to OGC. If a subpoena, or other document requiring production of IRO records, is received by IRO staff it should be hand-delivered promptly (the same day) to OGC.
- b. After a subpoena is received by OGC, that office will advise the IRO staff if records are required from the IRO. Typically, IRO records such as meeting minutes and related IRO documents must be produced.
- c. When reproducing IRO documents, IRO staff should identify any documents for OGC that they believe may be confidential. IRO records contain confidential or proprietary information that can often be protected by a court order.
- d. If there are agreements with private sponsors, such as drug companies, OGC will review applicable contracts to determine what notice must be given to the sponsor.
- e. As a courtesy, the IRO Director or IRO Assistant Director notifies the PI of any applicable studies affected by the subpoena or other request.
- f. OGC contact information

Contact Name	Title	Phone Number	Email
Gerianne Sands	VP, General Counsel	206.667.1224 or 206.849.5104	<a href="mailto:legal@fredhutch.org">legal@fredhutch.org</a>

### 6. Doctor to Doctor Letters

Letters that are sent by Fred Hutch PIs to physicians affiliated with outside clinics or institutions providing basic information about Fred Hutch investigators’ research studies to outside physicians do not require IRB approval. For further guidance on recruitment, see *HRP-123 - POLICY - Recruitment and Compensation*.

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## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

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HRP-123 - POLICY - Recruitment and Compensation

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## **REFERENCES**

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Fred Hutch Brand Guidelines  
Fred Hutch Writing Style Sheet

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## **VERSION HISTORY**

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