

1. Where is the Research Oversight and Compliance Office - Human Research Ethics Program office (formerly ORE) located?

We are located on the 2nd floor of the McMurrich Building, 12 Queen's Park Crescent West. If you are approaching us from Queen's Park Crescent, we can be found just north of the Medical Sciences Building (MSB) and just south of the Canadiana building. If you are approaching us from King's College Circle, take the stairs at MSB to the courtyard. We are just beyond and to the right of the McLeod Auditorium. Please note: Google Maps does not provide accurate directions to our office.

2. Who should I contact for information?

[The Research Ethics and Protections](#) website has been designed to handle the majority of general questions. If you cannot find an answer to your **general question**, please phone the main number, at 416-946-3273 or email ethics.review@utoronto.ca.

If your question is regarding the status of your new submission, normal processing timelines of approximately 4-5 weeks should be anticipated prior to contacting us.

For Continuing Ethics Review (CER) inquiries (Study Completions, Annual Renewals, or Amendments), please contact Shantel Walcott at 416-978-3165 or shantel.walcott@utoronto.ca. If your question is regarding the status of your CER submission, normal processing timelines of 2 weeks should be anticipated prior to contacting us.

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Questions about **pre-submission ethics consultations, ethics education, and the HIV REB** should be directed to Dario Kuzmanović at 416-946-3608 or dario.kuzmanovic@utoronto.ca.

Questions about the **Social Sciences, Humanities and Education REB** should be directed to Dean Sharpe at 416-978-5585 or dean.sharpe@utoronto.ca.

Questions about the **Health Sciences REB** should be directed to Daniel Gyewu at 416-946-5606 or d.gyewu@utoronto.ca.

Questions about **University policies and procedures** should be directed to Rachel Zand at 416-946-3389 or rachel.zand@utoronto.ca.

3. How do I submit a new ethics application for review by the REB?

A link to the submission instructions is in the forms toward the end of the application. For both delegated and full reviews (SSH&E, HS, or HIV), please submit one electronic copy of your application and all appendices (e.g., recruitment, information/consent and

debriefing materials, and study instruments) as a *single* Word document or a PDF. Answer all the questions on the application form and do not submit your entire research proposal and refer the reviewer to it. Please ensure that the electronic signatures are in place and e-mail to new.ethics.protocols@utoronto.ca. REB application forms can be found [here](#). Instructions for filling out the REB application form are [here](#). TCPS2 is the Canadian federal guidance policy for all research and it can be found [here](#).

4. How do I know if my protocol should go for delegated review or full review? What's the difference between full and delegated review?

Please complete the risk matrix on the application form to determine which process of review should be used. Instructions can be found on the “Forms and Templates” page of the website. If you still have difficulty making this assessment, please contact the representative from the respective REB. Applications submitted for full review (risk level 2 or 3) will be reviewed by a panel of the full Research Ethics Board (REB) at a monthly [scheduled](#) meeting; whereas delegated submissions (risk level 1) usually will be reviewed by one member (or a delegated sub-group) of the REB.

5. I have an urgent request for review. Can you provide a fast turn-around?

While we try to accommodate reasonable requests, ethics review is not a quick process. The REB is responsible for conducting proportionate review (in relation to level of risk) and full board reviews are conducted according to specific deadlines and [scheduled](#) meetings. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure sufficient time for review, prior to the commencement of the research activity. We have over 3,000 active applications which demand a significant time commitment and effort by HREP staff and many REB members.

6. I need to have some of my funds released to pay my student/purchase equipment. I am not starting my human research for a while and will not be submitting an ethics application until closer to my start date. Can I have a part of my funds released?

Please contact Research Services Office (RSO) for a [pre-release form](#). By submitting the form, the ROCO and RSO can approve the release of sufficient funds for activities not involving human research.

7. How do I e-mail electronic signatures as a single document?

It is preferred that all the electronic signatures are already in place when the ethics application is submitted. Scanned signatures are also accepted but the whole application should be submitted as a single document. Under certain circumstances, an email from the researcher's institutional account may be accepted in lieu of an e-signature. Please note we do not accept verbal assurances, phone calls, or names typed out on the application.

8. Who signs in section G of the ethics application if my research supervisor is also the Chair/Dean of the department/faculty?

The person who is the next level up in authority from the Chair/Dean should sign in that case. Applications cannot be approved without all signatures in place.

9. What happens if I submit my protocol for delegated review but the REB decides full board review is required?

Researchers should make every attempt to be fair in their risk matrix assessment. If you are unsure how to correctly fill out the matrix, please consult the HREP staff. If a protocol is deemed to require full board review once it has been submitted for delegated, then we will notify you and the protocol will be reviewed at the next full board REB meeting – either SSH&E, HS or HIV REB – depending on the protocol.

10. I am a UofT researcher (faculty or graduate student) but will be conducting research at a TAHSN hospital and have their REB approval; do I also need approval from UofT?

You will require ‘administrative approval’ if UofT plays a peripheral role in your study. This could be storage or analysis of data, involvement of a graduate student, or administration of funds through UofT. If the role is collection of data or recruitment on UofT property, the review type will be delegated.

11. My study involves several TAHSN hospitals. Can I submit an application to UofT to cover all these institutions?

No, we are not a central REB for TAHSN institutions. Check with each institution you plan to involve in your study for their ethics review requirement. You only need to involve us if UofT has a role in your study (e.g., collection of data or recruitment at U of T).

12. Can I submit a protocol for administrative review if my study has been approved by another REB?

You would only qualify for administrative review if your study was approved by a TAHSN institution and you will not be collecting data or recruiting participants on UofT property. UofT-affiliated TAHSN institutions: Baycrest, CAMH, Holland Bloorview, Mt. Sinai, St. Michael’s, Sunnybrook, SickKids, UHN, Women’s College Hospital, Credit Valley Hospital / Trillium HC, NYGH, St. Joseph’s HC, and Toronto East General Hospital.

13. What are your guidelines on how long research data should be stored?

We do not have standard guidelines on how long to retain research data. The retention period depends on how long you expect to use the data, as well as its sensitivity. The

main concern in retaining data for a long time is the risk of a breach in confidentiality potentially leading to identification of participants. If data is stripped of all identifiers and it becomes impossible to identify individuals, it could be kept for a very long time or indefinitely without any concerns. Data from Division 5 regulated clinical trials have to be kept for 25 years as per Health Canada regulations. For other studies, follow any applicable requirements by professional governing bodies, journals, research disciplines or your department.

14. When should I submit a study completion report?

If the main objectives of the study have been met and participant involvement, data collection and the primary analysis of study data are complete, the study may be closed in good standing by submitting a study completion report.

15. What are your normal processing times for new ethics application?

For **delegated** submissions you can expect to hear back within four weeks of the weekly submission deadline (i.e., first business day of the week). The response is sometimes an approval without need for changes, but more commonly you will receive review comments to which you will need to respond. Once we receive the revised submission you will hear back on average within a week.

For **full board** submissions you can expect to hear back within two weeks after the meeting takes place. Full submissions are rarely approved without need for changes. Sometimes revised full submissions will need to be reviewed by the REB at the next scheduled meeting but in most cases they will be reviewed through the delegated process. It is always best to submit your application as early as possible.

For **administrative reviews**, you can expect to hear back within 10 business days of the submission (which is always the first business day of the week – usually a Monday).

16. What are your normal processing times for continuing ethics review (annual renewals, amendments, study completions, etc.)?

It usually takes around 2 business days to process an annual renewal application for review. You should only follow up with us if you continue to receive reminders after 2-3 business days of e-mailing it to us. Most annual renewals take around 10 business days to review so you should submit at least 30-15 days in advance of your expiry date.

Most amendments are reviewed by delegated review and take approximately 10-15 business days to review. If an amendment needs to go to the full board, you will be notified prior to the meeting and you will receive comments approximately 2 weeks after the REB meeting. Study completion reports usually take 10-15 business days to approve.

17. I received REB comments to my submission but now want to make additional changes. How should I proceed?

Since the application has not yet been approved, make any additional changes along with the required revisions, bold them and mention them in the covering letter and they will be reviewed along with your responses.