

Procedures: Human Research Ethics

SOP 203 Duties of REB Members

Associated Policy

Human Research Ethics Policy – AR 3.0

Procedure Holder

Vice-Provost Academic and Research

Executive Lead

Research Services

Approval Authority

President

Original Date

Replaces AR-03 procedures (May 2009, Oct. 2014)

Effective Date

July 2022

1.0 PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure (SOP) describes the duties of the members of the Research Ethics Board (REB).

2.0 SCOPE

This SOP pertains to the REB that reviews human participant research in compliance with applicable regulations and guidelines.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

All REB members and REB Office Personnel are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this SOP are met.

The REB Co-Chairs are responsible for clearly articulating all required duties associated with membership on the REB to potential and current REB members.

REB members and alternates are responsible for fulfilling their duties as specified in this SOP.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

See Glossary of Terms.

5.0 PROCEDURE

Each REB member's primary duty is the protection of the rights and welfare of the individual human beings who are serving as the participants of research. In order to fulfill their duties, REB members are expected to be knowledgeable of the regulations and guidelines governing human participants' protection and research ethics, and policies of Yukon University germane to human research participant protection.

The REB must be and must be perceived to be fair and impartial, immune from pressure either by the institution's administration, the investigators whose protocols are brought before it, or other professional and nonprofessional sources.

The REB is appointed as a University Committee. The REB members serve Yukon University as a whole, rather than a particular school or department. Therefore, members must not allow their own interests or those of their departments or schools to supersede their duty to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

5.1 Attendance

- 5.1.1** Regular REB members are expected to attend regularly scheduled REB meetings. REB Members may be asked to step down if they miss more than 3 consecutive meetings or 50% of the scheduled REB meetings in a calendar year without reasonable notice to the REB Co-Chairs or Research Ethics Coordinator;
- 5.1.2** REB members must notify the Research Ethics office and/or REB Co-Chairs if they will be absent from an REB meeting to ensure that quorum can still be met and/or so that an appropriate alternate may attend in their place;
- 5.1.3** Alternate REB members are expected to attend the identified REB meetings for which they have confirmed their availability to replace a regular REB member, and/or a minimum of three REB meetings per year;
- 5.1.4** REB members are expected to be available for the entire REB meeting, not just the sections for which they may have been assigned as reviewers.

5.2 Terms of Duty

- 5.2.1** All members of the REB, including the REB Co-Chairs, will be appointed for a term as specified by the REB Terms of Reference and Human Research Ethics Policy (RS 3.0).

5.3 Duties

- 5.3.1** All REB members attending an REB meeting are expected to review the relevant materials submitted for each item under review or consideration by the REB, to be familiar with them, to submit comments in advance of the REB meeting, and to be prepared to discuss each agenda item and provide input at the Full Board meeting.
- 5.3.2** Each REB member is expected to fulfill specific duties based on the role as outlined below. More than one REB member may fulfill each role.

5.3.3 Members with relevant expertise in research disciplines, fields and methodologies

are expected to contribute to the evaluation of the research on its ethical, scientific and statistical merits and standards of practice. These members should also advise the REB if additional expertise is required to assess whether the research adequately protects the rights and welfare of human participants.

- 5.3.4 Community member(s)** are expected to provide input regarding their knowledge about the local community and be able to discuss issues and research from that perspective. The role of community members on REBs during the ethics review process is unique and at arm's length from the institution. Their primary role is to reflect the perspective of the participant. This is particularly important when participants are vulnerable and/or risks to participants are high.
- 5.3.5 Member(s) knowledgeable in relevant law** are expected to alert the REB to legal issues and their implications, but not to provide formal legal opinions nor to serve as legal counsel to the REB;
- 5.3.6 Member(s) knowledgeable in ethics** are expected to guide the REB in identifying and addressing ethics issues related to the research under review;
- 5.3.7 Ad hoc advisors** are individuals with competence in special areas who may be required to provide input on issues that require expertise beyond or in addition to that available on the REB. The ad hoc advisor may be required to submit a written report and to participate via teleconference, or to attend the REB meeting to lend their expertise to the discussions.
- 5.3.8 REB Co-Chairs:** The REB Co-Chairs provide overall leadership to the REB:
- The REB Co-Chairs can delegate any of their responsibilities, as appropriate, to other qualified individual(s),
 - Any responsibilities that are delegated by the REB Co-Chairs must be documented,
 - The REB Co-Chairs or designee facilitates the review process based on YukonU policies and procedures, SOPs, TCPS2 and other applicable regulations and guidelines. The REB Co-Chairs or designee determines the level of risk of each research project. The REB Co-Chairs or designee monitors the REB's decisions for consistency and ensures that decisions are recorded accurately and communicated to Researchers in writing in a timely fashion.
 - The REB Co-Chairs or designee ensures that all REB members are free to participate in discussions during the REB meetings. The REB Co-Chairs or designee can ask a substitute REB member to attend an REB meeting to draw on their expertise in an area that may be relevant to the REB's review and deliberations of the research.
 - The REB Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Research Ethics Office, or other voting members of the REB, determine the level of risk and the appropriateness of an application for REB Review for delegated or full review. The REB Co-Chairs may delegate this function to another REB member, or to the Research Ethics

Coordinator as appropriate; or the designee determines the appropriateness of a Full Board or delegated review of the research.

- The REB Co-Chairs or designee performs or delegates authority to (an) REB member(s) to perform a delegated review,
- The REB Co-Chairs or designee authorizes approval on all REB decisions confirmed through signature, electronic signature or official letter,
- The REB Co-Chairs or designee can suspend the conduct of any research project deemed to place participants at unacceptable risk pending discussion by the Full Board. The REB Co-Chairs or designee can suspend the conduct of the research if they determine that a Researcher is not adhering to the REB-approved protocol or to the REB's policies and procedures.
- The Research Ethics Coordinator, in consultation with the REB Co-Chairs, will report on the activities of the REB to the YukonU President and VPAR organization on an annual basis.
- The REB Co-Chairs, in conjunction with the REB Office Coordinator and other organizational representatives as applicable, are responsible for ensuring that REB members are informed of all new legislation, regulations, policies and guidelines on human participant research and shall advise the organization on policies and procedures related to research conduct and ethical requirements.
- The REB Co-Chairs, in conjunction with the Research Ethics Coordinator I, shall assess the educational and training needs of the REB members and Office Personnel, and will address any gaps identified.
- The REB Co-Chairs review and approve REB policies and procedures at set intervals, to ensure the REB SOPs meet all current standards.
- In addition to the above responsibilities (germane to the member's capacity), these individuals chair the meetings of the REB.

5.4 Primary and Secondary Reviewers

- 5.4.1** The REB may assign reviewers for studies reviewed at a full board meeting or for delegated reviews.
- 5.4.2** For delegated review: assigned reviewers present their findings resulting from review of the REB submission materials and provide an assessment of these materials, recommending specific action to the REB Co-Chairs or designee.
- 5.4.3** For full board review: If reviewers are assigned to conduct in-depth reviews of their assigned submissions, they may submit comments before the REB meeting. Reviewers may lead the discussion of the research project during the REB meeting.

5.5 Training and Education

- 5.5.1** REB members are expected to follow training and education procedures.

5.6 Conflict of Interest

5.6.1 REB members are expected to follow conflict of interest procedures.

6.0 REFERENCES

See References.

7.0 REVISION HISTORY

SOP Code	Effective Date	Summary of Changes
SOP 203	July 2022	YukonU version adapted from N2/CAREB SOP 203.003 (October 8, 2019) and CAREB SOP 203.001 (2021)
		Revisions September 2025