ANNOUNCEMENT: Important Changes to Principal Investigator (PI) Eligibility

The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) and Institutional Review Board (IRB) have announced changes in the policy about the Eligibility of Principal Investigators (PIs).

Referring to the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) report recommendation and peer institutions’ practices, the Office of Research Integrity, Vice Provost for Research, and the Ball State University (BSU) IRB concluded that only BSU employees at the faculty and professional staff level would serve as the PI of record for IRB protocols.

Effective July 1, 2021, all PIs on all new IRB protocols must be BSU faculty and professional staff members. Graduate students and undergraduate students are not allowed to serve as a PI. Thus, protocols involving students or student projects must have the faculty advisor as a PI. With this change, students can still start an IRB application and fill out all the information as a point of contact. However, the PI listed on the application must take ultimate responsibility for conducting ethical research and assuring compliance with BSU IRB policies and procedures.

This policy will be implemented immediately for new IRB protocols but will not affect any protocols already approved or pending approval when this new policy takes effect.

This policy only applies to IRB protocols submitted at BSU and does not affect a designation of a PI of record on grants or grant applications, a determination of authorship, and/or an establishment of intellectual property rights.

Eligibility to Serve as a Principal Investigator on Human Subjects Research Projects

The following positions are eligible to serve as Principal Investigators (PIs).

- Tenure-track faculty
- Tenured faculty
- Non-tenure-track faculty who are paid BSU employees
- Senior administrative staff (appointment at the level of Chair/Director or more senior)
- Adjunct faculty
- Research faculty
- Professional staff
- Visiting faculty who are paid or funded by BSU to conduct research at BSU
The following positions are NOT eligible to serve as Principal Investigators (PIs).

- Undergraduate and graduate students
- Student assistants
- Research assistants
- Postdoctoral fellows
- Non-paid/funded Visiting Faculty (may be a co-investigator alongside BSU personnel as outlined above)
- Classified Staff
- Temporary employees

**Procedures**

Any BSU members listed as the PI of record on one or more active IRB protocols before June 30, 2021, will retain their eligibility to serve as PIs under the same conditions as they were approved and certified to conduct human subjects research. However, if PIs need to submit an amendment/modification form for the approved protocols, it is not mandatory but strongly recommended to change the PI of record to an eligible BSU faculty or professional staff.

Beginning July 1, 2021, all PIs on IRB protocols must be BSU faculty and professional staff members. Some exceptions will be allowed based on the situation until August 23, 2021.

Beginning August 23, 2021, all PIs on IRB protocols must be BSU faculty and professional staff members. Exceptions will only be made in rare circumstances and only on a case-by-case basis with the expressed written permission of the IRB Chairperson and the Vice Provost for Research.

**Contact Information**

If you have any questions, please contact Sena Lim, Human Protection Program Manager, at slim2@bsu.edu or 765-285-5034.