



Ver. # 1.0 Effective Date: Aug 24 2021 Last updated: Aug 24 2021	Recruiting, Recruitment Materials, and Participant Compensation	Supersedes Previous Ver.: No
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I. Policy Statement

It is the policy of Ball State University’s (BSU) IRB that all research be conducted in accordance with the tenets of the Belmont Report. This includes maintaining the highest ethical standards and full respect for persons participating in human subjects research. A core principle of the regulations governing the use of human subjects in research is that each person’s participation is voluntary, based upon full and accurate information and with full informed consent.

All recruitment methods and materials, including compensation for human subjects, are required to minimize the possibility of coercion or undue influence, ensure fair and unbiased selection, and respect the privacy of prospective participants.

II. Recruitment Methods

1. Recruitment methods are materials and procedures used to inform potential participants about research, including advertisement and compensation.
2. Participants are typically recruited from various locations using various methods such as email, flyer, media announcement, online or social media advertisements, etc. Participants must be recruited fairly, informed adequately, and appropriately compensated (if applicable).
3. Recruitment methods will be designed to ensure that vulnerable subjects are not systematically selected solely due to ease of availability, compromised positions, or manipulability.
4. Researchers may not directly contact potential participants identified from private sources without the participants’ permission in order to protect participant privacy. This does not include listservs or lists allowed to use in public.
 - a. Researchers must contact the hosting source for information on how access to potential participants may be acquired, restrictions, additional requirements, etc.
 - b. If a hosting source has a “No Research/No Researcher” policy, this must be adhered to.
 - c. Personal access to a possible hosting site (ex. as a member of that site) is not allowed to be used to bypass any part of this policy or be construed as a means of otherwise gaining access to participants of a hosting site.
5. All recruitment methods must be described in the application, and all materials (flyers, letters, brochures, e-mail advertisements, radio announcements, etc.) must be submitted for review and approved by the IRB prior to use.
 - a. Alterations to approved recruiting materials is not allowed unless approved via a protocol modification (see III 2 below).

III. Advertisements and Recruitment Materials Requirements

1. Advertisements and other recruitment materials should contain information that provides enough detail to allow the prospective participant to determine eligibility and interest.
2. General requirements for recruitment materials
 - a. All materials, in final form, should be submitted to the IRB at the time of the initial submission.
 - b. Any statement of potential benefits, compensation, and/or incentives should not be coercive or misleading. Compensation and incentives should not be the leading line of an advertisement.
 - c. Font size, any graphic designs, photos, and any other visual effect should not be coercive or misleading. For example, the use of bold or enlarged print or other means to exclusively emphasize compensations or incentives should not be used.
 - d. Visual items, such as font size, should be appropriate to the target audience. For example, use of a larger font size is appropriate if the target audience is visually challenged.
 - e. If recruitment materials are revised after IRB approval, an amendment/modification must be submitted to the IRB and approved prior to use.
 - f. If pre-screening is part of the recruitment process, it should be written in the materials.
 - g. If any advertising format has a limited space/size restriction (ex. advertisement only allows 100 characters), this information must be provided to the IRB as part of the protocol submission for consideration and possible alteration of the requirements listed in item 3 below.
3. Advertisements and other recruitment materials must include the following:
 - a. The study title and the IRB protocol number;
 - b. At least a brief statement about the study's purpose and a brief description (if possible);
 - c. Summary of key criteria that will be used to determine study eligibility (or exclusion), if applicable;
 - d. The name of PI and Co-Pi (if necessary), their BSU department affiliation, and contact information;
 - e. A description of any direct benefits, if applicable;
 - f. Location and realistic time commitment;
 - g. Statement of compensation and/or incentive including the amount of compensation, if available; and
 - h. When a form of chance to receive any type of incentive (e.g., gift card) is used to recruit or retain participants, the following should be included:
 - Receiving the incentive is not guaranteed; and
 - More information about the incentive process will be available in the informed consent.

Note: If QR codes, hyperlinks, etc. are used in the advertisements or other recruitment materials, the required information should be included in the materials with the codes, hyperlinks, or messages. In addition, investigators must submit the information found "behind" the QR code, hyperlink, etc. to the IRB.
4. Advertisements and other recruitment materials must **NOT** include any of the following:
 - a. Inappropriate and/or misleading pictures or images.
 - b. Any statement of favorable outcomes or other benefits beyond what is in the informed consent form.
 - c. Any form of inappropriate language, terminology, or biasing statements.
 - This item typically includes, but may not be limited to, inappropriate racial, ethnic, gender/sexual orientation, religious, political, etc. information or statements.
 - d. Any advertisement statement designed to stir-up or instill hate, incite violence, or paint any particular group in a false light.
 - e. Gambling words like "raffle" or "lottery" and catchy words like "free" or "exciting"
Note: The BSU IRB recommends that "an equal opportunity to receive (any form of) compensation (e.g., gift card)" be used.
 - f. Deception and exculpatory language.

IV. Participant Compensation and Incentives

1. Compensation is defined as payment or non-monetary reward given to subjects as remuneration for time, expenses that may be incurred, and/or inconvenience of participation.
2. Incentives are defined as a payment or non-monetary reward given to subjects as a means of enticing them to participate.

3. Compensation and incentives can include remuneration that is monetary (cash, gift cards, vouchers, etc.) and/or non-monetary (gifts/promotional items, course credit, extra credit, etc.).
4. Compensating or incentivizing subjects for participation in studies is **NOT** considered a benefit.
5. For student participants, a reasonable research credit or extra (course) credit may be offered as an incentive for participating in research. If extra (course) credit is offered for participation, it is strongly recommended that an alternative means of obtaining the same course credit be provided for those students who do not want to participate in the research study. Alternatives must be comparable in time and effort to obtain the same extra credit.
6. Incentives may take the form of a chance to receive one of a certain number of monetary or non-monetary items. Given that the terms “lottery” and “raffle” have specific meaning under many state laws that typically do not apply to incentivizing participation in research, the BSU IRB recommends using the phrase “an equal opportunity to receive (any form of) compensation” in the application, recruitment materials, and consent materials. Additionally, the following information should be provided to the potential participants:
 - a. Description of the incentive, including estimated or actual value;
 - b. How participants can enter the incentive process;
 - c. How and when final recipients are chosen; and
 - d. How final recipients will be notified.
7. If compensations and/or incentives are pro-rated, detailed information on how this process works must be included in the informed consent and a minimum comment that incentives are pro-rated included on the advertisement(s).
8. General requirements for recruitment materials
 - a. The compensation and incentives must not constitute undue inducement.
 - b. Compensations and incentives are not stated or treated as a research benefit.
 - c. The compensation and incentive arrangements do not adversely influence subjects.
 - d. The following information is provided to the participants prior to enrollment:
 - amount of compensation and/or incentive, including the approximate value of non-cash gifts;
 - compensation schedule;
 - the approximate chance of receiving compensation (ex. an equal opportunity to receive 1 of 10 gift cards);
 - any participant requirements to receive compensation and/or incentives; and
 - conditions under which compensation and/or incentives will be reduced/pro-rated (e.g., early withdrawal, partial participation, etc.).
 - e. Recruitment materials may state that subjects will be compensated, but must not emphasize the amount to be paid or display compensation as larger or bold font.