**Which Consent Document Do I Use? - Guidance for Researchers**

Federal regulations require that all participants in research consent prior to engaging in research activities. As part of the consent process, you must provide potential participants with information about the research, including its purpose, the procedures involved, how long participation will take, possible risks and benefits and data security and confidentiality practices.

In some research, informed consent must be documented by having each participant sign the consent form. In other research, consent does not require a signed document; instead, you obtain consent in other ways (electronically, verbally, etc.). The OU-Norman IRB provides templates for you to use when obtaining informed consent. There are three templates for use in specific types of research (described below). Most research designs require the use of only one template. Unless you have different types of research participants for whom different consent documents are required or face to face recording AND online surveys, it is **not** necessary to submit multiple consent documents. No matter which template is approved by the IRB, you are responsible for making a copy of the stamped consent document available to all research participants.

**Signed Informed Consent**: The Signed Informed Consent is used in research requiring documentation of consent. Examples of research requiring documentation of consent include research: 1) with elevated risks to participants, 2) with minor children, 3) with the elderly or those who are cognitively diminished, 4) studying Indian Tribes, 5) asking for access to confidential records of the participant, 6) involving audio or video recording or photography of participants, or 7) asking permission for participants to be quoted directly or identified in any way in research reports.

**Unsigned Informed Consent**: The Unsigned Informed Consent provides participants with the same information about the research as the Signed Informed Consent but does not require a signature. The Unsigned Informed Consent is appropriate in minimal risks studies involving activities that would normally not require consent outside of the research context or in studies where the primary potential harm is a breach of confidentiality from requiring signed consent linking a participant to the research.

There is a second consent form for online studies: Unsigned Online Informed Consent. To obtain consent electronically for online studies, the Unsigned Informed Consent must appear as the first page of the website with the potential participant required to indicate if they Accept or Decline participation. If the potential participant selects Decline, they should be directed to a Thank You website. *NOTE: The Accept or Decline options are the only mandatory responses required from the participant in the online survey unless you seek IRB approval for mandatory responses to other survey questions.*

**Oral Consent Script**: The Oral Consent Script provides participants with the same information as the other consent documents, but can be used in research settings where privacy may not be assured (such as public or outdoor spaces) and the research tasks are very brief and low-risk.

*NOTE: You must request Waiver of Signed Consent in the online application document to be allowed to use the Unsigned Informed Consent or the Oral Consent Script.*

For studies that include concealment, deception or require referral to counseling resources, we have developed a **debriefing template**.

For studies that involved children as research participants, there are three additional templates that researchers can use. 1. **Parental Permission** 2. **Child assent** – for children 12 -18 years old. 3. **Child assent** – for children 7-11 years old