

# Research Recruitment Guidance during Modified Operations

## WHAT CAN I DO DURING MODIFIED OPERATIONS?

Many researchers at OHSU find themselves asking what they can do during modified operations. Perhaps their study(ies) was shut down or modified. During this time, what can teams do to help continue their research along for the future? One important step can be to focus on recruitment and retention, of both current and future studies, to be prepared for when research fully resumes.

## RETENTION OF CURRENT PARTICIPANTS

With non-essential research paused on campus, it will be important to think about participant retention. Things to consider during this time include:

- **Communication Plan:** It is important to communicate with current participants about the study being paused. Include information on such things as what the process will look like, what will happen with their collected data to date, how the research will move forward in the future, etc.
  - Tip: Communicate in an easy to understand manner, taking into consideration [health literacy](#) best practices.
- **Fostering Relationships:** Stay connected with participants throughout the length of the modified operations. Keep participants updated of the current study status, check in on how they are doing during this time, and answer any study questions they have.
  - Tip: Increased communication helps with retention and minimizes the risk of dropouts.
- **Value Added:** With any research study, it is important to consider the benefit to the participant. During a study downtime, it is no different. Consider sharing information and resources with participants that could be helpful. For example, you could share the OHSU [COVID-19 Resources for Oregon](#) page.

During modified operations, your study(ies) might be able to continue with altered activities, like moving to remote data collection by video chat. Perhaps the study can continue without change because it was already utilizing

remote contact. If the study is continuing in some way, retention is still an important consideration.

- **Communication:** It is important to inform the participant that the study will be continuing. Discuss with them how the study will be continuing, any changes they can expect, and why this is happening. Ensure that participants have the current contact information for the study team. Additionally, continue to keep in touch with the participant, keeping them updated and fostering that relationship.
- **Consent:** With remote participant contact, alternative consent options may be needed, such as telephone and electronic consent. When considering consent options, think about the entire process - how will the information be provided to participants, how and when will questions be answered, and how will consent be captured. For more information, please visit the IRB policy page on [consent forms](#).

## PLANNING FOR FUTURE RECRUITMENT

The time during modified operations can be utilized to think ahead on recruitment plans, methods and materials for paused studies or studies not yet open to enrollment. Action plans during this time can include:

- Think about how you want to expand recruitment on current studies or what studies are opening soon. What methods or materials do you plan to use? What next steps or action items do you not usually have time to focus on that you could do so now?
- Update your protocol(s) with the [IRB](#) to include updates to your recruitment and retention plan or new/updated materials.
- Create/update recruitment or other study materials.
  - Use the [Template Portal](#) to create/update flyers, brochures and other materials.
  - Work with [OHSU Social Media](#) to create a future social media campaign for your study(ies).

- Use [EHR tools](#) to identify potential participants, perform chart reviews, and create a list of those you will contact once research resumes.
  - In addition to EHR tools, you can also utilize internal repositories (ex. [OCTRI RVR](#)) and online registries (ex. [ResearchMatch](#)) to identify potential participants.
- Begin new partnerships. Now is a good time to think about and reach out to potential collaborators and community partners about future recruitment.
  - Learn more about community engagement and collaboration through OCTRI's "Recruiting in the Community" guidance document, available on the [OCTRI recruitment website](#).
- Update current study website(s). Use this time to check that information is up-to-date, the correct contact person is listed, and perform any other needed site cleanup.
- Other: Think about what can be done now recruitment related to ensure you are ready when research fully resumes at OHSU.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Other potential actions during modified operations include:

- Continuing education: Catch up on missed or needed trainings from [OCTRI Research Forum](#), the [IRB](#), [CITI](#) refreshers, and others within [Compass](#).
- Databases: Study downtime is a great time to catch up on database entry, updates and cleaning. Additionally, during this time, new databases or surveys can be built through [REDCap](#).
- Analysis: Evaluate, clean, and summarize your collected data for the study(ies) that are ready for data analysis.
- Publications: Start, finish, or follow up on publications related to your past or current research work.
- Proposals: Create new study proposals for future research and/or complete grant applications and resubmissions.
  - Learn more about funding application information and related resources through the NIH [Application Guide](#).

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OHSU O2: COVID-19 and Research

[HTTPS://O2.OHSU.EDU/COVID-19/RESEARCH.CFM](https://o2.ohsu.edu/covid-19/research.cfm)

OHSU IRB: Policies & Forms

[HTTPS://O2.OHSU.EDU/INTEGRITY-DEPARTMENT/RESEARCH/HUMAN-SUBJECTS/IRB-POLICIES-AND-FORMS.CFM](https://o2.ohsu.edu/integrity-department/research/human-subjects/irb-policies-and-forms.cfm)

OHSU O2: Telework at OHSU

[HTTPS://O2.OHSU.EDU/TELEWORK/](https://o2.ohsu.edu/telework/)

*For more information, additional resources, and to request a complimentary recruitment consultation, please visit our [website](#) or email us at [OCTRIrecruitment@ohsu.edu](mailto:OCTRIrecruitment@ohsu.edu).*

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*Please be advised, during modified operations, central research services and other departments may experience delays in response times due to their prioritization of COVID-19 related support.*

