

Research Ethics Podcast

Seven Questions to Ask Yourself:

1. Does my research category fall under 45 CFR 46.306(a)(2)?
2. Are the advantages of participating greater when compared to general living conditions that they might impact individuals' ability to make a rational choice?
3. Are the risks involved in the research commensurate with risks that would be accepted by non-prisoner volunteers?
4. Are the selection procedures fair and immune from arbitrary intervention by prison authorities or prisoners?
5. Is the study information presented in language which is understandable to the subject population?
6. Are the individuals aware that the parole board will not consider research participation in making decisions regarding parole?
7. If the study requires follow-up, do I have a way to do that with *all* participants?

TAKE-AWAYS

- ✓ **Incarcerated populations** are more **vulnerable to coercion**.
- ✓ Use a **flexible consent process** that promotes **dialogue and understanding** to help ensure participants know the risks and benefits.
- ✓ Consider participants' access to **confidential space**; populations face limited autonomy and freedom in their daily lives.
- ✓ While incarcerated groups have vulnerabilities that should be protected, they should also **have access to research and its benefits**.
- ✓ Our understandings of ethics evolve with societal changes. Staying up-to-date is crucial to protect participants.

SOURCES

- Dresler-Hawke, E & Vaccarino, F. (2010). The ethics of focus groups in correctional settings. *The International Journal of Learning: Annual Review*, 16.
- Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Ethical Considerations for Revisions to DHHS Regulations for Protection of Prisoners Involved in Research; Gostin LO, Vanchieri C, Pope A, editors. Ethical Considerations for Research Involving Prisoners. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2007. 5, The Ethical Framework for Research Involving Prisoners. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK19885/>
- Wang, E., Zenilman, J., Brinkley-Rubinstein, L. (2020). Ethical considerations for COVID-19 vaccine trials in correctional facilities. *Jama*, 324(11).