



## Letters of Support for Research (Institutional Cooperation)

### Permission Obtained When Conducting Research at an Outside Site or Department

When research is being conducted at an outside institution or organization of any kind, or when the investigator is otherwise relying on the cooperation of another institution, a letter from that institution acknowledging and supporting that relationship is required. A letter of support may also be required when an investigator conducts research in a department other than their own. The organization's administration should be contacted to determine who is authorized to provide permission. When accessing sites within a larger organization, permission may be required from more than one level of authority.

### About the Letter

It must be clearly documented for the IRB that someone authorized within the organization (or department or community within a foreign country) is both aware of the research and has granted permission and support for the research. The following is offered as guidance for how a letter can appropriately demonstrate that permission and support for the research has been obtained.

- The letter should be on letter head stationary of the organization when possible and must be signed by an appropriate signatory official who is qualified to provide permission for the research within the organization.
- The letter should refer to the author's authority to grant support or permission per their role in the organization, if not otherwise apparent.
- If an email is provided in lieu of a formal letter, the email must be sent from an institutional e-mail address and from an appropriate signatory official.
- The letter should reference the name of the Principal Investigator and the title of research study.
- The letter should in some manner refer to the research activities that will be allowed at the site.
- The letter should reference how the site will specifically assist with the project or what resources will be provided, if applicable. For example, a site may send a Research Information Sheet and survey via the organization's e-mail list; provide data that has been extracted from the organization's database for the research, send out recruitment notices, or hang flyers in their facilities and etc.
- When appropriate, the letter should indicate that the research is acceptable given the cultural norms and ethical beliefs of the site.