



Guidance on the Submission of Research Site Letters for Alabama A&M University Researchers

To ensure that a research site has given permission for Alabama A&M University investigators (faculty, staff or students) to recruit subjects or conduct research involving human subjects, a permission letter from the site may be required. Different types of locations require different levels of documentation. Obtaining and documenting appropriate permission helps to ensure public trust in research endeavors and maintains positive relationships with our community.

Alabama A&M University campus – Research site letters are generally not required when conducting research on AAMU’s campus. The AAMU IRB-approved protocol is sufficient for research conducted on Campus.

Other Universities or Colleges – It is always recommended that the principal investigator contact the IRB or ethics committee at the institution to discuss the project and any necessary approvals. If a member of the research team is from the university or college and is “engaged in research,” IRB approval or deferral from that institution is required. If a member of the research team is from the university or college but is not “engaged in research,” it is assumed that person will advise the PI regarding any necessary approvals and those approvals will be obtained before research begins.

Off Campus Site – When an AAMU investigator is conducting research involving human subjects at an off-campus site, the AAMU IRB may require the investigator to submit a research site letter, which provides documentation of permission to recruit subjects and/or conduct research at that location. Examples of off-campus locations include: schools, churches, civic organizations, and businesses.

Format and content of site letter – Research site letters may be submitted in the form of a traditional letter, an email, or a signed permission form, and should include the following:

- The name of the Principal Investigator
- The name of the research study to be conducted
- A brief description of the nature and purpose of the research study to be conducted
- The name, title, and signature (if submitted in hardcopy) of the authorizing individual
- The name of the institution/research site with which the authorizing individual is affiliated

If a contract or Memorandum of Understanding exists between the research site and Alabama A&M University for the research, no site letter is required. A copy of this agreement should be included with the IRB application.

Research site letters should be submitted along with the appropriate IRB application form to the IRB staff or Alabama A&M University's Office of Research Compliance.