



# Research Ethics Board

## Standard Operating Procedure

<b>Document Number</b>	<b>REB.SOP.602</b>
<b>Title</b>	Communications – Research Participants
<b>Effective Date</b>	September 23, 2021
<b>Next Review</b>	2026
<b>Next Administrative Review</b>	2023

### 1. Purpose

This standard operating procedure (SOP) describes the Research Ethics Board's (REB) communication with research participants and members of the public.

### 2. Definitions

See the MSVU **REB Glossary of Terms (REB.INFO.001)**

### 3. Scope

This SOP pertains to REBs that review human participant research in compliance with applicable policies and guidelines.

### 4. Responsibilities

All REB members and REB Office Personnel are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this SOP are met.

### 5. Procedures and/or Specific Policies

Research participants and members of the public should be able to voice their concerns, questions and request information regarding their participation or potential participation in research, in confidence, to an informed individual on the REB or in the REB Office.

#### 5.1. Communication with Research Participants

- 5.1.1. Research participants are encouraged to contact the REB Office with questions and concerns, using the contact information provided in the informed consent document(s) or recruitment materials, or through the Organization's website or directory. If requested to remain anonymous, REB Office personnel will try to grant this request, or explain why this is not possible.
- 5.1.2. All communication with the research participant must be documented and a de-identified record of this communication maintained securely and in the relevant research file;
- 5.1.3. The REB Office Personnel will communicate participant concerns to the REB Chair or designee, where appropriate;

- 5.1.4. The REB Chair or designee will work to answer or resolve participant questions or concerns, which may include a follow-up with the Researcher or the Researcher’s supervisor or other organizational representative, or with appropriate federal agencies, as applicable;

**5.2. Communication with Members of the Public**

- 5.2.1. Members of the public may contact the REB Office with general queries, or with specific questions or concerns with respect to a research project, a Researcher or field of research they may become aware of through recruitment procedures, social networks, or the media.
- 5.2.2. REB Office Personnel should actively listen and prompt the individual for sufficient information to understand the nature of the question or concern, who should be involved in answering or resolving it, and in the case of a complaint, what the person considers to be an acceptable answer or resolution;
- 5.2.3. The REB Office Personnel will communicate the individual’s questions or concerns to the REB Chair or designee, as appropriate;
- 5.2.4. The REB Chair or designee will consult with Organizational representatives on an appropriate response as appropriate. The organization’s public relations department may be contacted if a formal response is required.

**6. References**

See References listed (if applicable)

**7. Acknowledgements**

The development of this document has benefited directly from similar documents made public by the Tri-Council, as well as several Canadian universities. In some instances, specific formulations drawn from these sources have been incorporated into this document. Specific iterations were drawn from the following:

- Standard Operating Procedures for Observational Health and Non-Clinical Trial Research Ethics Boards - [N2/CAREB-ACCER REB SOPs – Canadian Association of Research Ethics Boards](#) (retrieved July 2021)
- N2/CAREB-ACCER REB SOPs - N2 Network of Networks - [Resources - N2 Canada](#) (retrieved July 2021)

**8. SOP History**

SOP Number	Key Changes	Effective Date
REB.SOP.602	Original version	September 2021