

Recruitment Guide: Site, Organization, and External IRB Permissions


Conducting research that involves people connected to organizations (employees, students, members, patients, etc.) often requires special permissions. This guide explains **what permissions are needed, when they are required, and how to submit them to the Edgewood IRB.**

Step 1: Contact the Organization Early

- Before submitting any IRB application (exempt, expedited, or standard), reach out to the organization where you plan to recruit or conduct research.
- Ask:
 - What is their policy on allowing research?
 - Who is authorized to grant permission?
 - Do they require their own IRB review in addition to Edgewood's?

Step 2: Understand the Types of Permissions

- **Recruitment Permission**
 - Needed to access or sample participants affiliated with an organization (employees, students, members, etc.).
 - Example: Sending an online survey link to staff at a local nonprofit.
- **Site Permission**
 - Needed to physically conduct research at a location.
 - Example: Conducting interviews at a hospital facility.
- **Both Permissions**
 - If your study involves recruiting participants from an organization **and** collecting data at their site, you must obtain both.

 *Be precise about what you request. Using the wrong type of letter can delay your IRB approval.*

Step 3: Know the Organization's Requirements

- **School Districts:**
 - Usually require superintendent or district office approval before contacting teachers, staff, or students.
 - Some districts may also have their own IRB-like process.
- **Healthcare Organizations:**
 - Often require both administrative approval and IRB approval.
 - Hospital/clinic IRBs may want Edgewood's conditional approval before they review.
- **Universities and Colleges:**
 - May require approval through their own research office or IRB, especially if you are recruiting students or faculty.

Step 4: Handling External IRB Requirements

- If the organization requires their own IRB approval:
 1. Submit your application to the Edgewood IRB.
 2. Edgewood IRB may issue a **conditional approval letter** first.
 3. Use that letter to apply to the external organization's IRB.
 4. Upload external IRB approval letters to IRBNet.
 5. Edgewood IRB will issue **full approval** once all documents are received
- **Important:**
 - You cannot begin research at that site until you have full approval from **both** IRBs.
 - Failure to follow this process can invalidate your study.

Quick Checklist for Researchers

- ☐ Contact organization before IRB application submission
- ☐ Identify what type(s) of permission are required (recruitment, site, or both)
- ☐ Determine if the organization requires its own IRB approval
- ☐ Collect required letters on organizational letterhead and signed by an authorized official
- ☐ Upload permissions to IRBNet
- ☐ If external IRB is needed: obtain conditional approval from Edgewood, then seek external IRB approval
- ☐ Upload all external IRB approvals to IRBNet before starting research
- ☐ Await Edgewood's full approval letter before beginning your study