

Continuous Quality Improvement: Creative Compliance

The USC Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) creates many resources to facilitate compliance in the USC research community, avoid unnecessary burdens and remain accredited and a national leader on innovative ideas.

- Audits
 - OPRS conducts not-for-cause audits of research studies; IRB conducts for-cause audits
 - OPRS conducts monthly iStar audits such as review projects that took 90+ days to obtain IRB approval, investigate delays, and determine whether IRB related issues or investigator issues
- Listerv Newsletter
 - OPRS distributes a periodic newsletter in order to inform the USC research community of updates in federal and university policies and relevant news
 - Several issues are sent yearly to over 8K recipients
- Human Subjects Teleconferences
 - Each month OPRS chairs a teleconference for the Health Science and University Park IRB Directors and Chairs to share ideas and discuss problems/solutions facing any or all on the call
- Annual IRB/iStar Survey
 - Each year, users of the IRB application system are asked to complete an online anonymous survey on IRB system likes and dislikes and provide suggestions on how to improve the review process
- Education Sessions
 - OPRS and the IRB offer an introduction to human subjects training, guidance on how to use the IRB application system (on an ad hoc basis)
- Booklets
 - OPRS creates many written guides in the form of booklets that are also available online to educate student and researchers on a range of topics
- IRB Student Mentor
 - OPRS provides graduate assistantships to students to serve as UPIRB liaisons by meeting with student researchers and by providing one-on-one assistance and training. The student mentors are full voting IRB members and represent USC students in IRB deliberations. The student mentors bring student concerns to policy meetings and also review OPRS documents for student perspective.
- Classroom Education Sessions
 - OPRS and IRB Student Mentors are often invited as guest lecturers to discuss human subjects protections with students (e.g., incoming PhD students, medical students, undergrad scholars)
- Website
 - Receives thousands of visits per month and provides a wealth of information to all stakeholders in human subjects research. Website analytics are reviewed periodically to determine web traffic, reader interest and improve website.

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- Research Coordinator Bulletin
 - Information specific for coordinators and research support staff is communicated through a coordinator bulletin. Featured topics include educational sessions, coordinator events and networking opportunities, coordinator FAQs, national coordinator resources and articles of interest.
- Community Member Teleconference
 - OPRS hosts annual meetings with community IRB members from many Southern California institutions to discuss emerging issues and to share information
- National Connections
 - Continuous networking and collaboration with other institutions
 - Request for distribution of educational materials
- National Meeting Attendance
 - Prominence in Human Subject Research protections national meetings
 - Nationally recognized for leadership/excellence
 - Speaking roles at local, regional, and national events
- Executive Committee
 - Monthly meeting amongst OPRS Executive Director and IRB Chairs and Directors from both campuses to discuss updates to regulations, implementation of new procedures, and best research practices
- iStar Development Team
 - Monthly in-person meeting and monthly teleconference to address iStar upgrades, problems, glitches and solutions