

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How long will it take for my submission to receive approval?

Submission review times can vary depending on several factors such as the time of year, the number of submissions, and the quality of your submission. While we cannot provide exact timeframes, the quality of your submission plays a significant role in determining the review time. By submitting a comprehensive and well-prepared application, you can help minimize the need for revisions. Kindly refer to [The Dos of IRB Submissions](#) for a list of common concerns that PIs commonly address after a review.

What is the duration of my research?

If your submission was approved through Administrative or Exempt Review, it will not have an expiration date. However, if your minimal risk research was approved via Expedited Review, it will expire one year after the IRB approval date if no Annual Check-In is submitted. Similarly, greater than minimal risk research approved via Standard Review must submit a Continuing Review before the expiration date.

If my research is just for class, do I need to provide a submission to the IRB?

Data collection for instructional purposes does not require IRB review because the data collection is meant to teach research methods rather than contribute to “generalizable knowledge.”

My research is exempt, what does this mean?

IRB exempt means that many federal regulations do not apply to your research. Exempt research still must comply with CSULB IRB policies, meaning the IRB must review and approve the activities prior to beginning the research. If your submission involves research with human subjects, the IRB will confirm your research affords the same rights and protections to subjects as any other research. The difference between exempt and non-exempt is that the IRB review is less stringent. Only one IRB member or IRB administrator is required to make an exempt determination. Additionally, the IRB approval does not expire.

My amendment is acknowledged, what does this mean?

If you submit an amendment application, the IRB Office will issue an Acknowledgement letter. This is considered an administrative approval, permitting you to resume your research activities with the requested amendment to the approved protocol.

Can someone in the IRB Office review my submission to confirm I have everything required before submitting through IRBNet?

Investigators are encouraged to reach out to the IRB Office with any specific questions they may have regarding completion of the IRB Application or the required documents for their submission. All submissions through IRBNet will undergo an administrative pre-review, which ensures completeness and check for any missing documents. During this

pre-review process, the reviewer may provide recommendations for clarifying the purpose of the research and procedures to facilitate a smoother review.

Why is the IRB sending me A “Request for Modifications” Letter after my submission underwent an administrative pre-review?

The Pre-review helps identify and resolve major issues before the formal IRB review. During the Pre-review, the IRB staff may unlock your submission and provide recommendations for revisions.

The "Request for Modifications" Letter is the IRB official decision that lists required revisions needed for approval. Following a formal IRB review, each revision must be addressed before final approval.