

Vulnerable Populations

These groups of potential participants may be vulnerable to undue influence or coercion that would undermine true voluntary informed consent.

Students or employees of the investigator(s): Research involving persons under the direct supervision of any researchers. “Students” only applies when a researcher has specific academic authority over the potential participant (i.e. students in the investigator’s class or student-employees).

Students in their educational setting (in class or at school): Research involving persons recruited or participating as part of non-research academic activities or settings. This group is distinct from the “Students or employees of the investigators” because they might not have academic authority over participants. However, both categories are possible for the same group.

- This refers to students recruited in class or by their teacher where there may be a perceived authority, grade pressure, and/or inability of the students to not participate in the research study.

Patients of the investigator(s): Research involving the recruitment of patients from an investigator’s clinical practice.

Children/Minors (under the age of 18): Research involving persons under the age of eighteen who are not emancipated.

Cognitively impaired, or otherwise unable to consent for themselves: Research involving persons with temporary or permanent condition(s) that affects their mental or physical ability to provide informed consent.

Wards of the State: Research involving children/minors who are under the custody of government departments, which act as their legal guardians (i.e., foster care).

Prisoners: Research involving persons involuntarily confined or detained in a penal institution.

Women of child-bearing potential (are/may become pregnant and selected for that reason): Research involving persons who are or may become pregnant, and whose inclusion in the study is based upon this criteria.

Others vulnerable to coercion: Research involving other groups that may have particular characteristics that may make them vulnerable to coercion (i.e., terminally ill patients, persons of disadvantaged socioeconomic status, persons with limited literacy, etc.).