



Audio Recording, Video Recording, and/or Photography Research Guidance

Scope: This document is intended to guide researchers in the design of their protocol so that their research satisfies regulatory requirements and adheres to best practices related to audio recording, video recording and/or photography used for human research subjects. This document also includes instructions meant to help researchers ensure they provide sufficient information in the protocol materials so the Institutional Review Board (IRB) can fully understand how audio recording, video recording and/or photography are used throughout and after the research.

The document is organized as follows:

- I. General Considerations**
- II. Instructions for Protocol Materials**
 - A. Research Plan
 - B. Recruitment and Consent Process

I. General Considerations

When using audio, video, and/or photography in research, the following requirements and best practices should be considered when developing the protocol:

- In general, researchers are expected to record identifiable information about participants only when it is necessary for the purposes of the research. Audio or video recording, and photographing participants, typically results in gathering identifiable information about participants. The use of audio and video recording and photography therefore should be done with good reason and great care.
- Researchers must obtain explicit consent from participants to be recorded with audio or video recording devices, or to be photographed. Researchers are responsible for knowing the laws of their jurisdiction. *It is illegal in Oregon to record someone without their express permission; see [ORS 165.540](#).*
- Researchers should make it clear to prospective participants that recording devices may, or will, be used. Participants should be informed as early as recruitment if their willingness to be recorded/photographed is a requirement of participation.
- Researchers must obtain consent from participants for future use of the recordings or photographs – even for future research, education, or training activities. Such proposed uses must be clearly explained to participants.
- Even though video recording and photography may not include people's faces, individuals can still be identified by other physical features, and by places like their home or workplace. Similarly, audio recordings may pick up background noise that could be used to identify a participant. Researchers are expected to account for this by ensuring background information will not be captured, or will be removed.
- When recording in a group setting (e.g. a school classroom), researchers are expected to account for how they will exclude or otherwise respect the wishes of those in the group who do not consent to participate in the research.

**II. Instructions for Protocol Materials**

The Research Plan and the consent process should clearly explain the purpose and method of recording. The investigator should clearly explain the type of technology to be used; why the recording technology is being used; the type and extent of identifiable information that will be captured and retained; and how the recorded data will be stored, secured, used, and destroyed.

A. Research Plan**1. Section C – Methods, Materials and Analysis**

- Explain what activities will be recorded, and why. For example, are you recording an interview, focus group, or people speaking specific words and phrases? Are you recording for transcription purposes, coding purposes, for an archive, for use in presentations, etc.?
- Indicate who is recording the activity – the PI, another member of the research team, the subject, etc.
- Describe the equipment being used to record the activity, and who owns it. (Note: If using university property or other shared devices, review the usage policies and security measures so that you understand your responsibilities, as well as limitations there may be on the level of confidentiality you can offer subjects).

2. Section F – Provisions for Participant Privacy and Data Confidentiality

- Indicate whether or not subjects will be identifiable in the recording. For example, will photographs include people's faces? Will participants be asked to state (and use) their real names? And/or will they be asked to disclose identifiable information about themselves, for example, demographic information, details about their occupation, or discussion of an event/series of events that could disclose their identities?
 - Even though the video recording or photograph may not include people's faces, individuals can still be identified by other physical features, and by places like their home or workplace.
 - If recording in a group setting (e.g. a school classroom), explain measures to be taken to protect the wishes of those not participating in the research who may appear in the background, and/or those who are participating in the research but who have not given consent for the recordings.
- Indicate whether or not any identifiable information about subjects will be removed from the data, and if so, what and how.
- If maintaining identifiable data, explain why. Be sure to explain whether or not it will be stored with other identifiable information or research data, or separately (and if so, will there be a link between the identifiable information and other research data?).
- Indicate whether or not the subject, or other subjects, will be able to record the activity as well (this is possible, for example, through some online communications services like Skype).



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- Explain how the recorded material – in paper, electronic, and other format – will be transported and securely stored.
- Explain who will have access to the recordings.
- Explain how and when the recordings will be destroyed.

3. Section G – Potential Risks or Discomforts to Participants

- If participants are asked to use recording devices, explain any potential risks associated with the participant’s possession of the technology (e.g. highly valuable technology in a setting where it is rare could increase the likelihood of violence or theft.)
- Explain risks associated with a loss of privacy or breach of confidentiality that might occur from the disclosure of the audio or video recordings or photographs.
- Explain any other risks that might occur.

B. Recruitment and Consent Process

- The consent process must explain the use of the recording technology; why the recording technology is being used; the type and extent of identifiable information that will be captured and retained; and how the recorded data will be stored and secured, used, and destroyed.
- If participants must agree to be recorded or photographed in order to participate, this requirement must be made clear in the recruitment and consent process.
- If recording or photography is optional for participation, the consent process must provide explicit questions regarding consent to be recorded. The consent form should include dedicated places for the participant to specify (or for the researcher to mark) consent to the recording or photography, and any other permissions or options.

- Below are examples of what options might look like. Initials are typically used to indicate participants’ preference on written consent forms.

Example 1: ___ *I consent to this interview being audio recorded for transcription purposes*
 ___ *I do **not** consent to this interview being audio recorded for transcription purposes*

Example 2: ___ *I consent to excerpts of the audio recording being used in conference presentations or classroom education*

Yes ___ No ___ *Do you wish to review any of the audio recording prior to its transcription or use in conference presentations or classroom education? You will have the opportunity to remove or clarify any portion of it.*

___ *I do **not** consent to excerpts of the audio recording being used in conference presentations or classroom education*