

Oral history activities that constitute 'research' as defined by Federal regulations governing the protection of research participants are subject to IRB review or certification of exempt status.

1.0 Applicability.

The definition of 'research', as defined by Federal regulations at 45 CFR 46, is considered when determining applicability of subject protections policy to an oral history project.

1.1 Oral history projects that constitute research.

'Research' is defined as a '*...systematic investigation....designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge*'. Application of a project's results to: other situations, groups, or sites, inform policy, or create an archive for future research would be considered evidence of generalizability. Such projects are subject to NDSU policies and procedures for the protection of research participants, and are required to be submitted to the IRB for review (or certification of exempt status).

Example: Performing oral history interviews of surviving Gulf War veterans to document their experiences and draw general conclusions about re-integration of veterans into the family unit.

Example: Conducting oral history interviews of surviving Negro League Baseball players to create an archive for future research projects.

1.2 Oral history projects that do not constitute research.

Oral history activities that are designed solely to create a record to describe specific historical events, or individual experiences, groups or sites, but are not intended to draw conclusions or generalize findings do not constitute 'research'. Such projects are outside the purview of the IRB, and do not require IRB review or certification of exempt status.

Example: Video recording interviews with Holocaust survivors to create a historical record of specific personal events and experiences related to the Holocaust and provide a venue for Holocaust survivors to tell their stories. The recordings will be available for public viewing in the Holocaust Museum. The project does NOT intend to draw conclusions, inform policy, generalize findings, or create an archive for future research. .

If at any time prior to the original collection of an oral history, it is intended that it may also be used for future research purposes, the investigator should apply for IRB review, and afford that person, as a potential research participant, the opportunity to provide their consent for the research use of his/her information.

2.0 IRB review.

Oral history research projects may be eligible for exempt certification, or may be reviewed by the IRB using the expedited method. Refer to SOP 7.1 *Exempt Determinations* and 7.3 *Expedited Review* for more information.

DEFINITIONS:

Oral history: *collects spoken memories and personal commentaries of historical significance through recorded interviews.* (D. Ritchie, "Doing Oral History", New York: Twayne Publishers)
An oral history interview is generally an open-ended exchange with the interviewer, and places importance on the identity of specific individuals, rather than recording anonymous members of a particular group. Oral history tapes are made available to the public in archives or libraries.

Research: a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.

REFERENCES:

[45 CFR 46.102](#) Definitions

RELATED FORMS:

IRB Protocol Form

IRB Protocol Form: Exempt Categories

RELATED HRPP SECTIONS:

7.1 Exempt Determinations

7.3 Expedited Review