DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
South Texas Veterans Health Care System
San Antonio, Texas 78229-4404

Research Service Policy Memorandum 10-53

March 25, 2010

RESEARCH STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)
Service Level Agreements (SLA) Between Investigators and Information Technology

1. **PURPOSE:** To outline the policy and procedures related to the processing Service Level Agreements (SLA) Between Investigators and Information Technology.

2. **POLICY:** Research data generated by VA investigators during the conduct of VA-approved research must meet all federal standards including, but not limited to Federal Information Security Management Act 2002 (FISMA), National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards for computer systems and encryption, the Privacy Act of 1974, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Establishing a research folder on the VA server for storage of research data will meet federal and local requirements.

3. **ACTION:**

a. **The Principal Investigator**:

(1) Will identify on the Data Security Checklist when a folder located on the Research server is needed.

(2) Will complete the SLA form located on the Research Service website.

(3) Will submit a signed paper copy of the completed SLA form as part of the R&D submission packet.

b. **Research Service:**

(1) The Staff Assistant for Protocol Submissions and Approvals will administratively review the completed and signed SLA. Any required changes to the completed form will be addressed at the administrative pre-review meeting with the investigator/ research coordinator.

(2) The Staff Assistant for Protocol Submissions and Approvals will place the completed SLA in a shared folder managed by the Research Service and notify the following individuals by email for electronic signatures:

(a) ACOS for Research or Deputy ACOS for Research
(b) Information Security Officer or Alternate Information Security Officer
(c) Chief, Office of Information Technology or Deputy Chief, Office of Information Technology
(d) Secretary, Office of Information Technology (electronic signature not required)
(e) Principal Investigator and/or Study Coordinator (electronic signature not required)

(3) The ACOS for Research or his/her designee will review the completed SLA and contact the Principal Investigator or Study Coordinator for any questions or clarification.

(4) Once all concerns are addressed the ACOS for Research or his/her designee will electronically sign the SLA request.

c. **Information Security Officer:**

(1) The Information Security Officer or his/her designee will review the completed SLA and contact the Principal Investigator or Study Coordinator for any questions or clarification.

(2) Once all concerns are addressed the ISO or his/her designee will electronically sign the SLA request.

d. **Office of Information Technology:**

(1) The Chief, Office of Information Technology or his/her designee will review the completed SLA and contact the Principal Investigator or Study Coordinator for any questions or clarification.

(2) Once all concerns are addressed the Chief, Office of Information Technology or his/her designee will electronically sign the SLA request and electronically forward the signed copy by email to the following individuals:

(a) Office of Information Technology personnel responsible for creating folder path
(b) Principal Investigator and/or Study Coordinator
(c) R&D Office Staff Assistant for Protocol Submissions and Approvals

(3) OIT personnel will create the Research folder on the VA server.

(4) OIT personnel will communicate electronically the folder path to the following individuals:

(a) Principal Investigator and/or Study Coordinator
(b) R&D Office Staff Assistant for Protocol Submissions and Approvals

e. **Office of Information Technology and the R&D Office** will maintain copies of the approved SLA and folder path.

4. **REFERENCES:** None

5. **RESPONSIBILITY:** Associate Chief of Staff for Research (151)

6. **RECISSIONS:** None

7. **RECISSION:** This policy will expire on March 2015

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