

## GUIDENCE DOCUMENT FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING STVHCS EMPLOYEES AS POTENTIAL RESEARCH SUBJECTS

All surveys and/or questionnaires involving STVHCS employees must be cleared through the STVHCS Office of Labor Relations and the appropriate Union(s). In addition, all surveys and/or questionnaires involving the general public must be cleared through the STVHCS Office of Labor Relations and the appropriate Union(s), if identifiable information about STVHCS providers is being collected.

If your study involves surveys and/or questionnaires for STVHCS employees or collection of identifiable information about STVHCS providers, the following steps must be completed:

1. Provide a request to the Office of Labor Relations for appropriate Union(s) review.
2. This request should be titled, "Request for Union Review of Research Involving Bargaining Unit Employees" sent by email to Blas Ortiz ([blas.ortiz@va.gov](mailto:blas.ortiz@va.gov)) in the Office of Labor Relations.
3. The email request must include the following information:
  - a. Protocol Name
  - b. Principal Investigator (PI) Name
  - c. Point of contact name, email, and phone number for all correspondence related to request (**Note: include only ONE point of contact**)
  - d. Titles of **all** persons who will potentially be interviewed (i.e. Physicians, Nurses, Unit Clerks)
  - e. Location of recruitment (including outlying clinics)
  - f. Time when the survey or questionnaire will be completed by the participants (**Note: if on break time, lunch time, or after regularly scheduled tours of duty additional approvals will be required.**)
4. The following questions must be included and answered in the email correspondence:
  - a. Will enrollment be voluntary for all participants? **YES or NO**
  - b. Will the Union be provided a copy of any results if requested? **YES or NO**
  - c. Will the participants be compensated in any way for their participation? **YES or NO; if yes, specify:**
5. The following must be attached to the email correspondence:
  - a. Protocol
  - b. Survey or questionnaire that will be administered to employees (**Note: provide as a separate document**)

Once Labor Relations is in receipt of your request the following will occur:

1. The Labor Relations office will forward your email request to the appropriate Union representative with a copy to the point of contact (**Note: do not attempt to contact the Union representatives directly work only through the Labor Relations office**).
2. Each Union representative has **14 calendar days** to respond if they have concerns. If no response is received within this time frame it is **an automatic Union acknowledgement with no concerns**. (**Note: Maintain accounting of the time line; if you have not received any feedback on the 15<sup>th</sup> day contact Labor Relations to confirm Union acknowledgement with no concerns**).
3. A final email will be forwarded from Labor Relations to the point of contact indicating when the project has been cleared from the stand point of Labor Relations and the Union.
4. The investigator must maintain all correspondence related to this request in the appropriate research study regulatory binder.

**Note: Final approval from STVHCS Research and Development Committee to initiate your project will not be granted until documentation of clearing by Labor Relations and the Union is provided to the R&D office.**