IRB Guidance for Unaffiliated Investigators Interested in Recruiting UMass Boston Research Participants

Updated: 03/12/26

- Investigators who are unaffiliated with the University of Massachusetts Boston (and do not have a UMass Boston research collaborator on their study) regularly seek to recruit UMass Boston students, faculty, and staff as participants for human research studies.

- Unless the research includes a UMass Boston student, faculty, or staff member on the research team, **UMass Boston Institutional Review Board (IRB) review is not required**.

- In the interests of protecting human participants, unaffiliated researchers who wish to directly recruit UMass Boston students, faculty, and staff should consult directly with and **obtain prior permission from the appropriate UMass Boston college, department, or office**. The UMass Boston IRB does not function as the liaison in these discussions. Unaffiliated researchers should be prepared to present their own IRB approval (or exemption) letter, IRB-approved recruitment method(s)/material(s), current human subject protections training (e.g., CITI), a description and rationale for the research study, and justification for recruitment of UMass students, faculty, or staff).

- Unaffiliated investigators who wish to recruit physically on site (e.g., posting) should **consult with the UMass Boston campus affairs office** for their current policies and procedures.

- In any case, the UMass Boston departments, colleges, and offices **may or may not decide to approve the request** on their own accord. They may also request additional permission to be obtained from upper university administration.

- UMass Boston **does not permit** unaffiliated investigators to use the UMass Boston student broadcast email for the research participant recruitment. Due to the high volume of internal researcher requests, restrictions placed by the UMass Boston marketing department, and to minimize emails sent to UMass students, we are unable to accommodate requests from unaffiliated investigators.