

University of Maryland School of Nursing

Updated Guidance on Involvement of Students as Research Team Members in In-Person Contact
Human Subjects Research (and Non-Human Subjects Research Projects that
Involve Participant Contact) with Respect to COVID-19

9-9-21

The University of Maryland School of Nursing (UMSON) has updated guidance related to student education in both human subjects research and non-human subjects research (NHSR). Students will be permitted to participate as team members in NHSR and human subjects research that requires contact with participants and has been approved for initiation or resumption after July 1, 2021, by the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) Institutional Review Board/Human Research Protections Office (IRB/HRPO). This guidance applies to all projects involving contact with participants, whether they are human subjects research or NHSR projects. DNP students are advised to follow the in-person contact guidance specific to their program/site.

The principal investigator (PI) or NHSR project mentor must follow the UMB-approved COVID-19 precautions for in-person research, including, but not limited to, providing the student research team members with personal protective equipment and arranging for and monitoring use of appropriate COVID-19 precautions such as social distancing, symptom screening, COVID-19 testing, and contact tracing as needed. The PI/mentor is responsible for complying with the COVID-19 policies of the facility where the research/NHSR takes place. PhD students with UMB-approved exemptions must be provided with the opportunity to opt out of participation in research/NHSR activities with direct human participant contact, and students may not be penalized or delayed in their educational programs for opting out. Students with approved COVID-19 vaccine exemptions who wish to participate in direct-contact research activities may have additional site requirements. Students must consult with their mentor and site representatives to ensure compliance with local policy.

As per UMB IRB/HRPO requirements, students must be added to protocols and receive approval from the IRB/HRPO prior to participation in the research. Advice about special COVID-19-related requirements for initiation/resumption of human subjects research that involves in-person contact (and NHSR projects that involve participant contact) is available on the UMSON COVID-19 webpages at [UMSON Application to Initiate/Resume In-Person Contact Human Subjects Research](#)¹. It is the responsibility of the PI/mentor to keep abreast of the ever-changing COVID-19 precautions and requirements at the research site(s).

Students are encouraged to engage in human subjects and NHSR. It is advised to minimize in-person contact to the greatest extent possible when designing research studies.

If you have any questions, please contact the UMSON Research Resumption Committee (DL-NRSResearchResumptionCommittee@umaryland.edu).

¹ <https://www.nursing.umaryland.edu/media/son/covid19/SON-HS-Research-Resumption-Process7-1-21FINAL.pdf>