

What can you do to move your research plan along the IRB process quickly?

The committee has a few standard recommendations:

- Write good research protocols — be clear, and don't overreach.
- Make sure the informed-consent forms you will give to your human subjects include your contact information.
- Promise confidentiality to your subjects.
- Explain clearly how you are going to guarantee confidentiality — by meeting in private places, using pseudonyms in published work, not linking to people's actual identities in the research data.
- Use passworded websites to protect the data.
- Delete the data afterward to protect the subjects from future claims (for example, in lawsuits).
- Detail your data-security plan. "Most survey software has built-in security," said Herr, the psychologist, "but that is not enough. Researchers will be downloading, copying, and sharing their data with others — all of which needs to be addressed. Having a plan for secure local storage is important."
- Don't overclaim. If your research method cannot guarantee anonymity, don't pledge it. Instead, pledge confidentiality.
- Mandatory reporting laws may conflict with confidentiality and privacy. Have a plan for that.

From article: 'Does This Have to Go through the IRB?' by Patricia Aufderheide on August 17, 2016 in The Chronicle of Higher Education