

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, DC

Dear Colleague:

Since 1991, the *Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects*, also known as the Common Rule, has applied to research studies sponsored by many Federal agencies. The policy is designed to ensure that human subjects in research are treated with respect, and that they are protected from exploitation and unnecessary risks of harm. Social and behavioral research studies have greatly improved our understanding of human behavior in many areas, including health, education, economics, and crime, strengthening the available evidence for the development of better policies and practices. The *Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects* ensures that important research can go forward in an ethical manner.

This document explains how the *Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects* allows for the review of many types of social and behavioral research studies under an *expedited review procedure*, allowed by law but not taken to full advantage. It offers suggestions as to how institutions might implement successful expedited review procedures, identifies various types of common social and behavioral research studies that fall within the categories of research eligible for expedited review, and offers some illustrations of those types. The goal of the document is to help researchers, administrators, and reviewers recognize research activities that are eligible for expedited review so that they may avoid needless misunderstanding and delays in the review process.

This report will contribute to the understanding of when proposed social and behavioral studies qualify for expedited review under the *Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects*, and enable researchers and institutional officials to improve the process of appropriate review for such studies, enhancing their effectiveness, while preserving the highest protections for human subjects in research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Marburger, III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

John H. Marburger, III