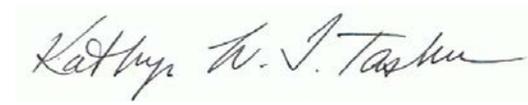


Policy for Telephone Contact with Research Participants

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Title:	Telephone Contact with Research Participants
Responsible Officer:	Pamela Richmond
Effective Date:	12/28/16
Revised Date:	11/18/16
Supersedes:	
Approved By:	

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**1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to research staff in proper communication with research participants over the telephone (e.g. recruitment, consent, data collection, scheduling, etc). Many research staff at HSL who communicate by telephone do not have private offices in which to conduct private conversations with research participants. However, when proper privacy practices are observed, the information obtained from research participants by telephone can remain private and confidential between the parties. This policy provides proper steps to insuring privacy and confidentiality for research participants who are contacted by HSL staff by telephone for research purposes.

**2 Scope**

This policy is applicable to all HSL personnel who conduct research interactions and interventions with human subjects by telephone. The policy is applicable to those who are calling participants or potential participants to recruit and consent, schedule or remind participants of

study visits and those who are collecting data for research purposes, including screening prior to study enrollment.

### 3 Definitions

**Human Subject:** A living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through Intervention or Interaction with the individual, or (2) information that is both Private Information and Identifiable Information. For the purpose of this definition:

- **Intervention** means physical procedures by which data are gathered (for example, venipuncture) and manipulations of the subject or the subject's environment that are performed for research purposes.
- **Interaction** means communication or interpersonal contact between investigator and subject.
- **Private Information** means information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (for example, a medical record).
- **Identifiable Information** means information that is individually identifiable (i.e., the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information).

**Legally Authorized Representative:** An individual or judicial or other body authorized under applicable law to consent on behalf of a prospective subject to the subject's participation in the procedure(s) involved in the research.

**Protected Health Information (or PHI)** - Individually identifiable health information transmitted or maintained in any form. PHI as used in this policy, consists of any information about an individual, including very basic information such as their name or their age, that

- (1) relates to the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of the individual, the provision of health care to the individual, or the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the individual, and
- (2) either identifies the individual, or could reasonably be used to identify the individual. Protected health information may be in any form, including spoken, written, or electronic form. Examples of protected health information include, but are not limited to, medical records, medical data on information systems, and applications for health or disability benefits.

**Research:** A systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.

#### **4 Policy Statement**

HSL research staff are expected to conduct all research with human subjects with the utmost integrity. This integrity includes adhering to the research rules and guidance in place that is intended to protect the welfare and safety of HSL research participants or those being recruited to participate in research at HSL or by HSL Investigators.

#### **5 Procedures**

Research staff can employ several measures to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of research participants whom they contact by telephone:

1. Do not use a speakerphone - the respondent should not be heard by anyone other than the research staff person to whom they are speaking.
2. Confirm that you are speaking to the right person - ask the participant (or the participant's legally authorized representative) only their first name, and then ask them to verify their last name for you. If the person answering the phone is not the person to whom you wish to speak, ask for the person to whom you do want to speak by their first name (e.g. "May I speak with John", etc). Once 'John' comes to the phone, identify yourself and the reason you are calling, and then ask 'John' to verify his last name for you.
3. Ask if it is a good time to speak with that person and if they are comfortable at the current time to answer your questions (demographic or otherwise).
4. If you have demographics to confirm, ask questions so that the person can respond to you (e.g. Please tell me your last name, please tell me your date of birth, please tell me your home address, etc.) rather than you providing the information to them to confirm (e.g. Please confirm that your last name is Smith, that your birthdate is January 1, 1950, that you live at 123 A Street Boston, MA, etc.).

#### **6 Document Properties**

Title:	Telephone Contact with Research Participants
Author:	pamelarichmond
Version:	