

Langara Research Ethics Board Delegated Review Guideline

Approved 24-June-2015

A. What is the Purpose of this Guideline?

This guideline describes a process for timely ethical review of research involving humans where the nature of the minimal risk research is such that full board Langara Research Ethics Board (LREB) review of its ethical content is not required. The guideline follows recognition in the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#) (TCPS2 2014) that REBs shall adopt a proportionate approach to research ethics review so that the level of REB scrutiny is determined by the level of risk presented by the research (Article 2.9).

B. What Is Delegated Review?

Research that meets criteria for delegated review may be reviewed for its ethical content by the LREB chair or someone designated by the chair.

Applications that meet criteria for delegated review can be submitted and reviewed at any time. The LREB will endeavour to complete an initial delegated review within 10 working days of receipt of the application for ethical review.

C. What Research Is Eligible for Delegated Review?

The default review mechanism for research involving humans is full board LREB review. However, some minimal risk studies may be eligible for delegated review, provided that they meet the following criteria:

1. The study is minimal risk according the definition of minimal risk as set out in *TCPS2 2014*, as follows:

“[R]esearch in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research is no greater than those encountered by participants in those aspects of their everyday life that relate to the research.” (p. 22)

2. The research is not focused on populations of vulnerable individuals. *TCPS2* defines vulnerability as:

“A diminished ability to fully safeguard one’s own interests in the context of a specific research project. This may be caused by limited capacity or limited access to social goods, such as rights, opportunities and power. Individuals or groups may experience vulnerability to different degrees and at different times, depending on their circumstances.” (p. 210)

Examples of vulnerable populations include:

- individuals lacking capacity to consent
- children
- mental health patients
- institutionalized persons (e.g. those living in institutional care or prisoners)
- individuals in power over or dependency relations
- individuals from marginalized social groups
- individuals with low socio-economic status

D. What Is the Process for Delegated Review?

Researchers may request delegated review when submitting their applications for ethical review. They are encouraged to approach the LREB chair prior to completing their applications to confirm whether this is appropriate. If the LREB chair agrees, the research will be reviewed by the LREB chair or designate.

The LREB chair may also determine that any submitted research ethics application meets criteria for delegated review and conduct a delegated review according to the procedures outlined in this guideline.

Exceptions: The chair or designate shall have discretion to refer any delegated review to the full LREB or raise questions about the ethical content of the proposed research with the full LREB or members of the LREB.
