

The FWA REGISTRATION PROCESS

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The FWA registration process is relatively simple. You should read all the instructions and guidances (cited below) before starting to fill out the on-line registration site. By preparing this way, the on-line registration process is straightforward and shouldn't take more than half an hour to finish.

Beyond the time it takes to read instructions and complete the on-line registration, the other key element of the registration process is the requirement for two persons to complete on-line training about the meaning and responsibilities of the FWA. These training modules will probably take each person an hour or less to complete.

The registration process will ask you to identify two persons who represent your institution – an Institutional Official and a Human Research Protections Administrator. They can be one and the same person, or they can be two different people. The Institutional Official should be a highly placed administrator who can represent the institution.

If you identify one person who will serve as both Institutional Official and Human Research Protections Administrator, that person must complete BOTH training modules, one for each role.

DIRECTIONS

1. Use google to find “**Office of Human Research Protections**” webpage (a federal site).
2. There are eight colored buttons at the top of this page. Choose the one titled “**Register IRBs & Obtain FWAs.**”
3. On the latter page, there are six large boxes. Identify the two labeled:
 - “FWAs: Find information on obtaining an FWA”
 - “Forms”
4. When you choose the first (“FWAs: Find information...”), you are taken to a page with three large boxes. Choose the one titled “**File a new FWA.**”

This page tells you how to electronically obtain a “submission number” to submit your FWA application, and then gives you a link to the electronic FWA application form. At the bottom of this page, there are also two valuable links: one to “**Assurance Process Frequently Asked Questions**” and another to a short **YouTube tutorial on the Assurance process**. I recommend you print out the “frequently asked questions” and view the YouTube tutorial before you begin the electronic FWA application form.

5. When you choose the second (“Forms”), you are taken to a page with a list of linked forms.

One form link choice on this page is “**FWA Instructions.**” I recommend you print out this page as an important step-by-step guide.

Another form link choice on this page is “**FWA Terms of Assurance.**” I recommend you print out this page too. This page summarizes what your institution PROMISES when you register for an FWA, and spells out a few specific institutional policies your institution is required to have as a condition of the FWA. You can more or less copy these verbatim and make them your own institutional policies for research.

IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FWA REGISTRATION PROCESS, the Office of Human Research Protections encourages you to contact their Division of Policy and Assurances (DPA) at IRBorFWA@hhs.gov with questions about FWAs, or concerning technical difficulty obtaining an FWA. They prefer this email contact route to phone calls.