

Exempt from Research Ethics Board Review

Some research is exempt from REB review. These exemptions include:

Research using Publicly Available Information

Research that relies exclusively on publicly available information where (TCPS 2, 2014, Article 2.2):

- the information is legally accessible to the public and appropriately protected by law
- the information is publically accessible and there is no reasonable expectation of privacy

Publicly available information: any existing stored documentary material, records, or publications, which may or may not include identifiable information.

Research involving Observation of People in Public Places

Research involving the observation of people in public places where (TCPS 2, 2014, Article 2.3):

- it does not involve any intervention staged by the researcher, or direct interaction with the individual or groups
- individuals or groups targeted for observation have no reasonable expectation of privacy
- any dissemination of research results does not allow identification of specific individuals

Research involving Secondary Use of Anonymous Information

Research relying exclusively on secondary use of anonymous information does not require ethics review, so long as the process of data linkage or recording or dissemination of results does not generate identifiable information (TCPS 2, 2014, Article 2.4).

Secondary use: the use in research of information or human biological materials originally collected for a purpose other than the current research purpose.



Non-Research Activities

Non-research activities that may employ methods and techniques similar to those employed in research but are not subject to ethics review, including (TCPS 2, 2014, Article 2.5):

- Quality assurance and quality improvement studies; program evaluation activities; performance reviews; testing within normal education requirements when used exclusively for assessment, management, or improvement purposes
 - If data are collected for purposes of such activities but later proposed for research purposes, it would be considered secondary use of information not originally intended for research, and that the time may require REB review.
- Creative practice activities (where an artist makes or interprets work(s) of art or may also include a study of the process of how a work of art is generated) (TCPS 2, 2010, Article 2.6).

Examples

- Using publicly available statistics from Statistics Canada for a research project concerning immigrant migration patterns in Canada.
- Taking a collection of televised interviews from Stephen Harper and conducting a speech analysis on them
- A course evaluation that analyzes students' grades to determine progress and program success

For more information on research or research activities that may be exempt from research ethics board review, please see the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (2010), available at http://www.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf.