

VCU's Office of Environmental Health and Safety

Recombinant DNA Information Page

(rev. 07/02/13)

I. INTRODUCTION: At Virginia Commonwealth University all research involving the use or manipulation of recombinant DNA is subject to the oversight of the [Institutional Biosafety Committee](#) (IBC). It is the IBC's mission to ensure that all research involving rDNA is conducted in accordance with the National Institutes of Health ([NIH Guidelines](#)) and other governmental regulatory and credentialing agencies. The [NIH Guidelines](#) specify practices for constructing/handling recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) molecules and organisms and viruses containing recombinant DNA molecules, and classify rDNA experiments into two broad classes: "exempt" (not covered by NIH Guidelines) and "nonexempt" (covered under NIH Guidelines) applications.

II. ATTAINING IBC COMPLIANCE:

A. Determine if rDNA applications are "exempt" or "nonexempt": Recombinant DNA experiments have been grouped into six sections by NIH: III-A, III-B, III-C, III-D, III-E, and III-F. Refer to [Section III](#) of the NIH Guidelines to determine which class(s) your research falls under.

1. Exempt Experiments: Experiments listed under Section III-F are exempt from NIH Guidelines and do not require a full IBC review for approval. However, IBC registration and approval via submission of a [Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement](#) (MUA) is still required with a minimum of BSL-1 precautions employed when working with these agents.

2. Non-exempt Experiments: Experiments falling under Sections III-A, III-B, III-C, III-D, and III-E of the Guidelines are non-exempt categories and require IBC approval and registration through completing the requirement listed below.

B. IBC Registration of Non-exempt rDNA Experiments:

1. Experiments falling under Sections III-A, III-B, III-C, III-D, and III-E (excluding DNA-modified plants and animals) require IBC registration and approval via submission of a [Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement](#) (MUA).

2. Experiments involving DNA-modified plants and transgenic animals (altered by stable introduction of recombinant DNA, or DNA derived therefrom, into the germ-line) as detailed under section III-E, which require handling/housing under BSL-2/ABSL-2 or greater precautions must be registered via submission of:

1. DNA-modified (transgenic) plants: [Transgenic Plant Registration Form](#)
2. Transgenic Animals: [Transgenic Animal Registration Form](#)

Submissions may be made via campus mail (OEHS, PO Box 980112, attn: Biosafety Office) or via email to the mtelliot@vcu.edu. If you have any questions regarding rDNA or other biosafety concerns please contact the Biosafety Office at 400-4984.