

§ 93.305

(e) Opportunity for the respondent to provide written comments on the institution's inquiry report;

(f) Opportunity for the respondent to provide written comments on the draft report of the investigation, and provisions for the institutional investigation committee to consider and address the comments before issuing the final report;

(g) Protocols for handling the research record and evidence, including the requirements of § 93.305;

(h) Appropriate interim institutional actions to protect public health, Federal funds and equipment, and the integrity of the PHS supported research process;

(i) Notice to ORI under § 93.318 and notice of any facts that may be relevant to protect public health, Federal funds and equipment, and the integrity of the PHS supported research process;

(j) Institutional actions in response to final findings of research misconduct;

(k) All reasonable and practical efforts, if requested and as appropriate, to protect or restore the reputation of persons alleged to have engaged in research misconduct but against whom no finding of research misconduct is made;

(l) All reasonable and practical efforts to protect or restore the position and reputation of any complainant, witness, or committee member and to counter potential or actual retaliation against these complainants, witnesses, and committee members; and

(m) Full and continuing cooperation with ORI during its oversight review under Subpart D of this part or any subsequent administrative hearings or appeals under Subpart E of this part. This includes providing all research records and evidence under the institution's control, custody, or possession and access to all persons within its authority necessary to develop a complete record of relevant evidence.

§ 93.305 Responsibility for maintenance and custody of research records and evidence.

An institution, as the responsible legal entity for the PHS supported research, has a continuing obligation under this part to ensure that it main-

tains adequate records for a research misconduct proceeding. The institution must—

(a) Either before or when the institution notifies the respondent of the allegation, inquiry or investigation, promptly take all reasonable and practical steps to obtain custody of all the research records and evidence needed to conduct the research misconduct proceeding, inventory the records and evidence, and sequester them in a secure manner, except that where the research records or evidence encompass scientific instruments shared by a number of users, custody may be limited to copies of the data or evidence on such instruments, so long as those copies are substantially equivalent to the evidentiary value of the instruments;

(b) Where appropriate, give the respondent copies of, or reasonable, supervised access to the research records;

(c) Undertake all reasonable and practical efforts to take custody of additional research records or evidence that is discovered during the course of a research misconduct proceeding, except that where the research records or evidence encompass scientific instruments shared by a number of users, custody may be limited to copies of the data or evidence on such instruments, so long as those copies are substantially equivalent to the evidentiary value of the instruments; and

(d) Maintain the research records and evidence as required by § 93.317.

§ 93.306 Using a consortium or other person for research misconduct proceedings.

(a) An institution may use the services of a consortium or person that the institution reasonably determines to be qualified by practice and experience to conduct research misconduct proceedings.

(b) A consortium may be a group of institutions, professional organizations, or mixed groups which will conduct research misconduct proceedings for other institutions.

(c) A consortium or person acting on behalf of an institution must follow the requirements of this part in conducting research misconduct proceedings.

THE INSTITUTIONAL INQUIRY

§ 93.307 Institutional inquiry.

(a) *Criteria warranting an inquiry.* An inquiry is warranted if the allegation—

(1) Falls within the definition of research misconduct under this part;

(2) Is within § 93.102; and

(3) Is sufficiently credible and specific so that potential evidence of research misconduct may be identified.

(b) *Notice to respondent and custody of research records.* At the time of or before beginning an inquiry, an institution must make a good faith effort to notify in writing the presumed respondent, if any. If the inquiry subsequently identifies additional respondents, the institution must notify them. To the extent it has not already done so at the allegation stage, the institution must, on or before the date on which the respondent is notified or the inquiry begins, whichever is earlier, promptly take all reasonable and practical steps to obtain custody of all the research records and evidence needed to conduct the research misconduct proceeding, inventory the records and evidence, and sequester them in a secure manner, except that where the research records or evidence encompass scientific instruments shared by a number of users, custody may be limited to copies of the data or evidence on such instruments, so long as those copies are substantially equivalent to the evidentiary value of the instruments.

(c) *Review of evidence.* The purpose of an inquiry is to conduct an initial review of the evidence to determine whether to conduct an investigation. Therefore, an inquiry does not require a full review of all the evidence related to the allegation.

(d) *Criteria warranting an investigation.* An inquiry's purpose is to decide if an allegation warrants an investigation. An investigation is warranted if there is—

(1) A reasonable basis for concluding that the allegation falls within the definition of research misconduct under this part and involves PHS supported biomedical or behavioral research, research training or activities related to that research or research training, as provided in § 93.102; and

(2) Preliminary information-gathering and preliminary fact-finding from the inquiry indicates that the allegation may have substance.

(e) *Inquiry report.* The institution must prepare a written report that meets the requirements of this section and § 93.309.

(f) *Opportunity to comment.* The institution must provide the respondent an opportunity to review and comment on the inquiry report and attach any comments received to the report.

(g) *Time for completion.* The institution must complete the inquiry within 60 calendar days of its initiation unless circumstances clearly warrant a longer period. If the inquiry takes longer than 60 days to complete, the inquiry record must include documentation of the reasons for exceeding the 60-day period.

§ 93.308 Notice of the results of the inquiry.

(a) *Notice to respondent.* The institution must notify the respondent whether the inquiry found that an investigation is warranted. The notice must include a copy of the inquiry report and include a copy of or refer to this part and the institution's policies and procedures adopted under its assurance.

(b) *Notice to complainants.* The institution may notify the complainant who made the allegation whether the inquiry found that an investigation is warranted. The institution may provide relevant portions of the report to the complainant for comment.

§ 93.309 Reporting to ORI on the decision to initiate an investigation.

(a) Within 30 days of finding that an investigation is warranted, the institution must provide ORI with the written finding by the responsible institutional official and a copy of the inquiry report which includes the following information—

(1) The name and position of the respondent;

(2) A description of the allegations of research misconduct;

(3) The PHS support, including, for example, grant numbers, grant applications, contracts, and publications listing PHS support;