

Update on Tier 3 Studies

A [message circulated on November 20](#) instructed all human subject researchers in Allegheny County to suspend Tier 3 studies. Following guidance from the Governor's Office on November 23, this restriction is extended to the entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Tier 3 studies are defined on the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\) website](#) as:

Low Direct Benefit to Research Participants and Other Impacts to Research

- Research with healthy volunteers
- Protocols in which risks to research participants are higher (e.g., potentially exposing elderly vulnerable individuals to COVID) and benefits of the study to the participants remain minimal
- Protocols in which delays to starting or pausing of research does not substantively impact on research objectives of the research protocol
- Any minimal risk studies that require research subjects to travel, that involve undergraduate students, or that are in a community setting and require direct interaction with researchers
- Cohort and natural history studies where delays in data collection have limited impact on scientific objectives

No additional restrictions have been placed on [Tier 1 and 2 human subject studies](#) (with high or moderate direct benefit to the participants or have a high public health priority).

If you are unsure about the Tier Status of your human participant study, please contact the IRB: askirb@pitt.edu.

Note that there is no restriction on studies that are conducted through remote interaction with subjects, if performed in accordance with an approved IRB protocol.

Questions about these restrictions should be directed to the IRB at askirb@pitt.edu
