Requirements for Obtaining Letters of Cooperation/Approval from Collaborating Institutions

Background
Research with human subjects often involves collecting data from persons through their affiliation with an institution (e.g., students/staff in schools or universities, patients/staff in medical clinics, employees in a workplace, etc.). Obtaining approval or permission prior to conducting research with individuals within the institution helps establish or maintain collegial relationships between ISU researchers and these institutions. Evidence of such permission is required during the IRB review process when deemed necessary to ensure protection of human research participants. This document outlines requirements for obtaining letters of cooperation/approval from outside institutions in which ISU research is conducted.

Guidance
Investigators are responsible for ensuring that adequate permission is obtained from each institution in which research will occur, in accordance with that institution’s policies and procedures. Investigators are encouraged to maintain documentation of permission in their files. Documentation of permission will be required during IRB review in the following cases:

- **Research conducted in prisons:** Documentation of permission from prison officials should include assurance that participation in the research will not affect decisions regarding parole.

- **Other situations** when the IRB determines that obtaining permission is necessary to ensure that regulatory criteria for approval (per 45 CFR 46.111) are met (e.g., that risks are sufficiently minimized, informed consent is obtained without coercion or undue influence, adequate safeguards are in place for vulnerable populations, etc.).