

### **Public Health Activities That Do Not Require IRB Review**

To prevent unnecessary amendments and to minimize delays in the IRB approval process, it is important for researchers to keep in mind that Texas Governor Abbott issued [Executive Order No. GA-36](#) and [Executive Order-No. GA-39](#) prohibiting governmental agencies and officials from mandating face coverings or asking about vaccination status in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While it is appropriate to encourage others to do their part in minimizing the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19, Texas A&M University and its employees are prohibited from requiring that another person wear a face covering or provide their vaccination status in order to receive services which includes participation in human subjects research.

Taking precautions against COVID-19 by wearing face coverings or providing vaccination status are public health activities and not research procedures that require IRB review and approval.

If a study specific procedure requires the use of face coverings or knowledge of vaccination status for research purposes, please contact the IRB prior to submission of the protocol.