

Rutgers University
Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) – Central Campus
Meeting for NIH Guidelines Materials
Minutes of August 5, 2026

1. ATTENDEES

☐ Nada Boustany	☒ Milind Shah	☐ Jeetendra Eswaraka – Ex Officio
☒ Jeffrey Boyd	☒ Matthew Ferguson – Local Non-Affiliated	☐ Alejandro Ruiz – Ex Officio
☒ Qian Cai	☐ Ellen Welch – Local Non-Affiliated	☐ Bryan Bocco – Ex Officio
☐ Julie Caruth	☒ Thomas Boyle – Local Non-Affiliated	☐
☐ Richard Ebright	☐ James Clancy – Local Non-Affiliated	☐
☐ Zhaohui Feng	☒ Ron Hart – Co- Chair	☐
☒ John Hershey	☒ Brian Eggert - REHS	☐
☐ Peng Jiang	☒ Marija Borjan - REHS	☐
☒ Eric Klein	☐ Blas Peixoto - REHS	☐
☐ John McLaughlin	☐ Robert Adcock - REHS	☐
☒ Latisha Moody	☒ Jacquelyn Vidal - REHS	☐
☒ Donald Schaffner	☒ Sophia Cheng - REHS	☐

2. MEETING LOGISTICS

CURRENT MEETING		
Called to Order: 12:01 PM	Adjourned: 12:20 PM	Location: WebEx
PREVIOUS MEETING		
Minutes from June 3, 2026		Approved (12:0:0)^{1, 2}
NEXT MEETING		
Date: October 7, 2026	Time: 12:00 PM	Location: WebEx

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Committee members with a conflict of interest related to the review of a specific registration may not be involved in the review or approval of a project in which he or she has been or expects to be engaged or has a direct financial interest.

3. PRE-AGENDA

TOPIC	SUMMARY
Member Education: New US Government Policy on High-Risk Life Science Research	The new U.S. Government Policy on High-Risk Life Science Research has been released. There are similarities to the prior Dual Use Research of Concern (DURC) policies that this new policy supersedes; however, the new policy prohibits certain experiments deemed dangerous gain-of-function (DGOF) and prohibits research involving countries or entities of concern. REHS is currently working with the Office for Research to review the policy, understand how it will impact programs at Rutgers, and develop mechanisms for compliance.
New Business: Meeting Schedule	The recurring IBC-North and IBC-Central meetings are currently offset by different numbers of weeks, which has the potential to result in a higher volume of protocols at some meetings as well as longer wait times for PIs to receive approval of protocols that need full IBC review. REHS proposed adjusting the recurring meeting schedule to try to have roughly equal intervals between meetings. A member poll will be sent to assess the feasibility of moving the IBC-Central meetings to the 2 nd Wednesday of the month. If approved, this would start in 2027.
New Business: Limits for Protocol Size and Scope	A subcommittee is being formed to discuss limits for protocol size and scope. Members from both IBC-North and IBC-Central will be invited to participate, and the recommendations of the subcommittee will be brought to the IBC for discussion and voting. Comments for consideration of the subcommittee may be emailed to biosafety@rutgers.edu. <u>Background:</u> <i>While reviewing protocols at the IBC-Central meeting in June, a few members suggested that there should be limits on protocol size and scope. There was a brief discussion about protocols that have many unrelated projects and different classes of biohazards, making the reviews and risk assessments challenging. A proposed solution is to divide large protocols into several smaller protocols. Another possible solution might be to modify sections of the protocol system to facilitate better organization (perhaps grouping) of information by project. For example, the Project Description could be adjusted to allow each distinct project to be entered as a separate text box (which in turn could be tied to a separate, project-specific risk</i>

	<i>assessment). Limits for size and scope will need to consider impacts on the IBC, REHS, and the investigators (e.g., added volume of protocols, duplicity / frustration or confusion regarding which protocol to amend when protocols overlap).</i>
New Business: Defining BSL2-enhanced	A subcommittee is being formed to define the requirements for BSL2-enhanced (BSL2e) laboratories at Rutgers. Members from both IBC-North and IBC-Central will be invited to participate as well as several principal investigators with BSL2e protocols. The recommendations of the subcommittee will be brought to the IBC for discussion and voting. Comments for consideration of the subcommittee may be emailed to biosafety@rutgers.edu. <u>Background:</u> <i>The terms biosafety level 2 plus (BSL2+) and BSL2 with enhancements (BSL2e) are not specifically defined in CDC and NIH guidance documents. In general, BSL2+ and BSL2e involve adopting certain BSL3 practices that go beyond the typical BSL2 requirements. These measures are often institution-specific (and protocol-specific) and can include specialized training, access restrictions, containment enhancements, additional PPE, glass & sharps restrictions, increased biosafety audits, and spatial or temporal separation of agents or strains. Creating an institution-wide definition for BSL2e will help to bring more consistency to classifying protocols as BSL2e and will help to establish IBC-approved criteria for how certain agents or strains (e.g., SARS-CoV-2 variants) can be used outside of BSL3 environments at Rutgers.</i>

PROTOCOL REVIEWS

The following protocols were reviewed according to the risk assessment guidelines published in the *NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules* and the CDC/NIH publication *Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories*. The risk assessment is documented in the REHS Biosafety Protocol Management System and includes a review of the engineering controls, work practices, safety training, and medical surveillance of project personnel. Individual protocols are evaluated on the following matters as appropriate: the proposed biosafety level and safety practices, agent characteristics, source and nature of agents or recombinant/synthetic nucleic acid sequences and resulting effects of expressed proteins, host animals/ cells, and cloning vectors to be used, and the type of manipulations planned.

Note: Protocols were not necessarily reviewed in the order they appear below.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS			
PROTOCOL	PI	MATERIAL(S) OF INTEREST	BSL
13-507	Salgame, Padmini	Renewal without changes	3
23-026	Kara, Eleanna	Renewal without changes	2e
22-032	Madireddy, Advaita	Amendment – adding de-identified human cell lines	2
23-027	O'Brown, Natasha	Amendment – adding cell sorter to protocol	2
19-080	Huda, Rafiq	Renewal without changes	2
20-048	Subbian, Selvakumar	Renewal without changes	3

2. ADMINISTRATIVE TERMINATIONS			
PROTOCOL	PI	TITLE OF PROTOCOL	EXPIRY DATE
None			

3. BIOSAFETY OFFICER REPORT (BSO)			
PROTOCOL	PI	TITLE & MATERIAL(S) OF INTEREST	BSL / GUIDELINES
None			

4. AD HOC MEETING APPROVALS			
PROTOCOL	PI	TITLE & MATERIAL(S) OF INTEREST	BSL
None			

5. NEW PROTOCOLS			
PROTOCOL	PI	TITLE & MATERIAL(S) OF INTEREST	BSL / GUIDELINES
26-010	Lin, Zongtao	Title: Recombinant and synthetic genetic material for cell transfection Materials: rDNA, <i>E. coli</i>, Human cells Submission Summary: The main goal of this project is to investigate the regulation of protein arginylation in human cell cultures. This is a new protocol submission for protein overexpression in <i>E. coli</i> and in cell cultures to discover arginylation and	2 / III-E

		associated regulatory pathways controlling protein degradation and function. This submission includes <i>E. coli</i> culturing to express recombinant proteins, specifically, the protocol is requesting approval to perform inoculation, induction, and culturing of <i>E. coli</i> to purify proteins used in arginylation assays. These bacteria are Biosafety Level 1 organisms that are commonly used in research labs. This submission also includes cell culture transfection by plasmids, specifically, the protocol is requesting approval to perform plasmid transfection in cells to overexpress proteins and detect their protein modification and cellular functions. Cells will be incubated with addition of plasmid and transfection agents. Cells will be collected in a week, lysed in buffers for immunoprecipitation pulldown experiments. Additional experiments include assessment of protein abundances by Western blotting and gel staining. Biosafety level 2 (BSL2) containment practices will be followed. Biological waste materials, including <i>E. coli</i> and cell culture-related materials, will be autoclaved before disposal. Spills will be decontaminated with 70% ethanol and 10% bleach for disinfection. Occupational Health: In Place Training: In Place BioAudit: Required before commencing work (Provision of approval) IBC Vote: Approved (12:0:0)¹	
26-021	Gordon-Fennell, Adam	Title: Neuronal Circuits of Reinforcement Materials: rDNA, AAV, mice Submission Summary: This protocol describes the use of recombinant adeno-associated viral (rAAV) vectors to study the neuronal circuits underlying positive and negative reinforcement, with a focus on the lateral hypothalamus (LHA) and its regulation of striatal dopamine signaling. The long-term objective is to identify circuit mechanisms that are recruited during the development of substance use disorder. Experiments involve stereotaxic intracranial microinjection and retro-orbital injection of rAAV into mice, followed by behavioral testing, in vivo calcium imaging (fiber photometry, two-photon microscopy),	2 / III-D-1, III-D-4

		and optogenetic or chemogenetic manipulation of targeted neuronal populations. rAAV vectors are obtained exclusively from established vector core facilities (e.g., Addgene, UNC, Stanford, Penn Vector Core) and are replication-incompetent; they are not associated with known human disease. Transgenes encode functional tools including but limited to opsins (optogenetics), DREADDs (chemogenetics), calcium indicators (GCaMP), fluorescent reporters, biosensors, and neuronal silencers. No oncogenic sequences, human growth factors, or replication-competent virus is used. All work is classified as BSL-1. Vector handling, including aliquoting and syringe loading, is performed inside a certified Class II biosafety cabinet; injections are performed in a designated surgical suite with appropriate PPE. Waste is decontaminated with 10% bleach or autoclaved prior to disposal. Occupational Health: In Place Training: In Place BioAudit: Required before commencing work (Provision of approval) IBC Vote: Approved (12:0:0)¹	
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6. AMENDMENTS			
PROTOCOL	PI	TITLE & MATERIAL(S) OF INTEREST	BSL / GUIDELINES
None			

¹ Voting Decision (Yay: Nay: Abstain)

² Member(s) joined the meeting

³ Member(s) left the meeting