

Documenting Consent for Telephone Interviews

When obtaining consent for telephone surveys, the researcher should describe how the consent process will be documented (such as logging the date, time, and name of a caller, a note that the prescribed script was used, and a record of the participant's response).

The following information should be included in the telephone script:

1. A statement to the effect that the individual is being invited to participate in a research project.
2. A comprehensible statement of the nature of the research project, the identity and institutional affiliation of the researcher, a description of the type of questions to be asked, and an accurate estimate of the time entailed.
3. If the questions are sensitive, or there are other risks entailed by participating, these should be clearly outlined.
4. A clear statement that participation is voluntary and may be withdrawn without penalty.
5. A clear statement that participation is anonymous and confidential (if it is not, then the steps taken to maximize the anonymity and confidentiality of responses should be described).
6. A brief description of how the findings will be disseminated, if the findings will be disseminated in vehicles other than journal articles and conference presentations.
7. A statement to the effect that the individual may contact either the researcher or ICEHR with questions or concerns (if the respondent desires, the numbers should be provided).

The researcher should indicate in writing that the Consent Form/Cover Letter was read and explained to the participant before receiving the participant's consent, and the participant has knowledge of the research project and appeared to understand it.