



**THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY**  
WASHINGTON, DC

**Responsible University Official:**  
Director, Office of Laboratory Safety  
**Responsible Office:** Office of Laboratory  
Safety  
**Last Revised Date:** December 21, 2009

## USE OF RECOMBINANT DNA (rDNA)

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### Policy Statement

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Any research or academic activity involving Recombinant DNA (rDNA) must be approved in advance by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), and must comply with the guidelines published by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the university's [Biosafety Manual](#) and this policy.

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### Reason for Policy

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Organisms used in rDNA research potentially can take on new and sometimes dangerous properties. The purpose of this policy is to promote the safe use of rDNA, as well as communication and transparency with the community, in compliance with the [NIH Guideline for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules](#).

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### Who is Governed by this Policy

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Faculty, staff and students

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## Policy

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### I. Prior Approval

Prior to engaging in any research or academic activity involving rDNA, the activity must be reviewed and approved by the IBC. This includes work considered exempt by the NIH. No rDNA work may proceed until approval is obtained from the Biosafety Officer (BSO).

### II. Usage of rDNA

Before using rDNA individuals must complete biosafety training. Individuals must comply with the [Biosafety Manual](#) and the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules throughout all stages of the activity. Workers also must comply with all requirements of their approval, all government regulations, and must cooperate in periodic reviews by the IBC. The IBC may make changes to the requirements for an agent at any time.

If the activity also will involve select agents or pathogens, review and approval is required in accordance with the [Policy for Compliance Regarding Select Agents and Pathogens](#). University departments proposing to engage in activity with rDNA (or with select agents) also are responsible for notifying the Office of Laboratory Safety before engaging in the activity.

IBC forms and other information regarding the IBC, including details regarding the review process, the charter and regulatory links, are available on the [OLS-IBC website](#).

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## Definitions

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**Recombinant DNA (rDNA):** Molecules that are constructed outside living cells by joining natural or synthetic DNA segments to DNA molecules that can replicate in a living cell, and the molecules that result from the replication of those cells. [[Ref: NIH rDNA Guidelines: Section B](#)].

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## Related Information

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[Biosafety Manual](#)

[Chemical Hygiene Policy](#)

[Hazardous Waste Management Policy](#)

[Policy for Compliance Regarding Select Agents and Pathogens](#)

[Office of Health & Emergency Management Services](#)

[Office of Laboratory Safety: Biosafety](#)

[Office of Laboratory Safety: Institutional Biosafety Committee \(IBC\)](#)

[Centers for Disease Control, Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories](#)

NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules

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## Contacts

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## Document History

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- **Last Reviewed Date:** April 27, 2017
  - **Last Revised Date:** December 21, 2009
  - **Policy Origination Date:** Not Available
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## Who Approved This Policy

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Leo M. Chalupa, Vice President for Research

Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

Beth Nolan, Senior Vice President and General Counsel

*This policy, as well as all [university policies](#), are located on the [Office of Compliance and Privacy's](#) home page.*