

Dallas County Juvenile Department  
Research and Statistics  
**Procedures Concerning External Research Requests**

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The Research and Statistics unit of the Dallas County Juvenile Department (DCJD) has established an External Research Request Policy that has been ratified by Departmental leadership and adopted by Dallas County Juvenile Board. Although the policy was enacted to standardize the management of external research requests, the Research and Statistics unit constructed this document to provide step-by-step guidance to the external research request process. A timeline with some expectations has been included for the convenience of the requestor/PI/co-PI. However, if questions arise during any phase of the process, the point of contact for this policy is the Manager of Research and Statistics.

At the time the Principal Investigator and/or co-Principal Investigator (PI) identifies juveniles under the authority of the Dallas County Juvenile Department as the population of interest, IRB approval for the proposed research should be requested under the authority for which the PIs and research falls. For most researchers, the authority will be the University where they are employed. However, nonprofit agencies, non-academic governmental agencies and entities, and non-governmental organizations must be able to identify the human subjects research authority for their organization.

Note that while juveniles are indicated in the paragraph above, the policy and procedures over External Research Requests is valid for any external research involving human subjects research.

The External Research Request process consists of five (5) phases.

- A. Phase I: Pre-Proposal
- B. Phase II: Formal Review: Submission of the External Research Request packet
- C. Phase III: Review of the Request by the DCJD
- D. Phase IV: Feedback/Revise/Resubmission (Requests Amendments)
- E. Phase V: Juvenile Board agenda: Final Decision

The PI/co-PIs of the proposed research are encouraged to observe the Juvenile Board meeting schedule because of the paucity of the Board's meeting dates during the year. The Dallas County Juvenile Board meets six times a year. Meetings are held in January, March, May, June, August, and October. In particular, the DCJD calls attention to the Juvenile Board meeting schedule because the board MUST give final approval before research operations commence. The approval is attained through the regularly schedule board meetings and placement on the official agenda.

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**Phase I**

The Research and Statistics unit of the DCJD encourages the PI/co-PI of the research to make contact with the DCJD Manager of Research and Statistics with a very brief notice of the intent of forming a research proposal with youth, families, or employees under DCJD authority as participants.

1. At this time PIs/co-PIs should consult the External Research policy which is posted in the Research and Statistic unit webpages and will also be provided.
2. The External Research Application should be completed and submitted by MS Forms or via email to the Manager of Research and Statistics.
  - a. The application will be subjected to an initial vetting by the Deputy Director for Administrative and Executive Services and the Manager for Research and Statistics.
  - b. The PIs/co-PIs should take this time to prepare the executive summary.
  - c. All other documents identified in the External Research policy should be prepared for submission.
3. Informal feedback and recommendations for modifications and revision will be provided to the PIs/co-PIs in preparation for the formal review process.
4. It is acknowledged that the IRB for the proposed project may have only provided conditional approval of the research, pending approval by the DCJD.

**Phase II**

During this phase of the process, the PI/co-PIs should review all documents for clarity and completeness and edited for grammar and accuracy. All required documents should be checklisted and confirmed. All documents supporting the External Research Request will be submitted to the Dallas County Juvenile Department in this phase of the process.

1. Submit all materials in an electronic format (i.e., via email as .docx, .pdf, or similar attachments).
2. Provide explanations for any departures from the External Research policy. Additionally, any preliminary feedback that was provided during Phase I should also be included with some description for how the PIs/co-PIs addressed the recommendations within the scope of the project.
3. All materials should be submitted to the Manager of Research and Statistics.
4. Unless informed otherwise, the point-of-contact (POC) during the process will be the Manager of Research and Statistics.
5. **NOTE: A project that falls under Section IIIA of the External Research Request policy, will necessarily be subjected to scrutiny by the Dallas County Juvenile Department executive leadership team including the Executive Director of the Dallas County Juvenile Department. Such a request can prompt a summary decision by any member of the executive leadership team.**
  - a. **An additional consideration for a project falling under this policy section is that a presentation by the PI/co-PI may be required.**
  - b. **If a presentation is required, the PI/co-PI will be notified by the Deputy Director for Administrative and Executive Services.**
  - c. **The scheduling and coordination of the presentation will be made by the Deputy Director for Administrative and Executive Services.**

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**Phase III**

This phase of the External Research Request process begins at the time all documents supporting the request have been submitted. During this phase of the process all actions on the request will originate from within the DCJD. Reviewers can provide feedback during this phase.

1. The timeframe for this phase is approximately 30 days.
2. During this phase, the Research Review Committee (RRC) will be notified that a research request has been submitted.
3. All materials will be forwarded to RRC members and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the research proposal.
4. The RRC meeting convened specifically to review the research proposal will be scheduled within the same 30-day timeframe.
5. During the meeting the RRC will vote (there are five (5) voting members) on whether the proposal should be **APPROVED** or **REJECTED**.
6. The Deputy Director for Administrative and Executive Services will notify the PI/co-PIs of the RRC's decision, by email (electronically) and in writing.

**Phase IV**

This phase of the research review process is established but may not be invoked. This phase of the External Research Request process allows the PI/co-PIs the opportunity to revise and resubmit the research request in the event an element from the request does not meet a DCJD standard, the request does not fit the DCJD mission or vision, or is otherwise subject to rejection prior to being heard by the Juvenile Board (e.g., after being considered by the RRC).

1. Because of the nature of this phase, it is possible that it is not invoked during the research review process. For example, a revise and resubmit may not be required or the request is summarily rejected.
2. Feedback can be provided to the PI/co-PIs at any time that the research proposal is being considered for approval by the DCJD.
3. The **APPROVAL** of the research request by the RRC is presumptive. It is a formal recommendation to the Juvenile Board to move forward with the research proposal.
4. Invoking the revise and resubmit process does not guarantee favorable action on the External Research Request.

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**Phase V**

This phase of the process is the final phase regarding the External Research Request. This phase is reserved for the Juvenile Board. The Juvenile Board is the ultimate authority for approving the External Research Request. To be granted approval, the research proposal will be placed on the Juvenile Board agenda. The proposal cannot move forward to the Juvenile Board without a favorable outcome from the RRC. This phase is characterized by a decision of **APPROVED** or **REJECTED** by either the RRC during Phase III and the Juvenile Board at phase V.

1. After favorable action by the RRC, the proposal will be placed on the earliest possible Juvenile Board meeting agenda.
2. The PI/co-PIs **MUST** attend the designated board meeting and be prepared to address questions and concerns from board members.
3. An approval or rejection of the research proposal during this phase concludes the External Research Request.
  - a. If the request is **APPROVED**, research operations can commence after a coordinating meeting is held.
  - b. If the request is **APPROVED** for secondary research, the Manager of Research and Statistics will coordinate the appropriate data request, queries, and transfer of data.
  - c. If the request is **REJECTED**, the External Research Request will be closed with no further action.