

# Serve Your Community: Consider Volunteering for a Local Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

## WHAT IS AN INSTITUTIONAL BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE (IBC)?

- IBCs are composed of a panel of experts that assess risks associated with the safety of [recombinant DNA research](#) and ensure the research is conducted in compliance with the [NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules](#).
- IBCs assess the risks of engineered genetic materials to research personnel, research subjects, the community and the environment. They may also oversee the use of infectious agents, toxins and human/primate sourced materials, and review laboratory practices and mitigation measures, such as standard operating procedures (SOPs), equipment, disinfection and personal protective equipment (PPE).



IBC's have at least **five members** with the necessary expertise to evaluate research risks and at least **two** of these non-affiliated members must:

- Live within 50 miles of the research site
- Be independent from the site
- Represent the interests of the community and the environment
- Be ready to regularly attend IBC Meetings

## BENEFITS OF SERVING ON AN IBC



### PUBLIC SERVICE

Represent your community in keeping your neighbors and the environment safe.



### NETWORKING

Connect with biosafety professionals in academia, pharma, and research entities to expand your professional network in biosafety. You can also meet renowned researchers who serve as experts on the IBC.



### VALUE

Stay updated on the latest scientific research and learn about recent clinical trials. Although most IBC members serve voluntarily, some IBCs may offer honorariums, travel reimbursement, meals, etc. Site inspectors for clinical trials may also be needed on occasion.



### CERTIFICATION

ABSA International awards Certification Maintenance points for volunteer IBC service.

## HOW TO VOLUNTEER FOR A LOCAL IBC

- Contact Biosafety Officers (BSOs) in nearby academic institutions, in some cases, the Office of Research Compliance of the university may supervise the IBC.
- [ABSA International Affiliates](#) and other biosafety groups usually provide guidance on how to reach out to a BSO of an institution.
- Post on the [ABSA International Listserv](#).
- Contact independent [IBC Administration and Review](#) vendors via their websites as they may be searching for community members in various areas.

