

Providence St. Joseph's and St. Michael's Healthcare Research Ethics Board: Investigator Signature Requirements

1.0 Purpose

To ensure all submissions to the Providence St. Joseph's and St. Michael's Healthcare Research Ethics Board (REB) are signed appropriately.

To ensure appropriate delegation of tasks and retention of overall responsibility by the Network Lead Applicant.

2.0 Scope

This working procedure applies to all individuals conducting research under the auspices of Providence St. Joseph's and St. Michael's Healthcare and describes signature requirements on REB submissions.

3.0 Definitions

"original signature" - hand-written ink signature

*"electronic/digital signature"*ⁱ = a signature that consists of one or more letters, characters, numbers or other symbols in digital form incorporated in, attached to or associated with an electronic document, whereⁱⁱ:

- *The electronic signature must be unique to the person using it;*
 - *The person whose electronic signature is on the document and must have control of the use of the technology to attach the signature;*
 - *The technology must be used to identify the person using the electronic signature; and*
 - *The electronic signature must be linked to an electronic document to determine if the document has been changed after the electronic signature was attached to it.*
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3.0 Requirements

All hard copy submissions to the REB require an original signature or an electronic/digital signature as defined above. Electronic images of signatures (e.g. .jpg, .bmp, gif etc.) are not acceptable.

Initial Applications

The initial application for ethics review requires the original signature of the Network Lead Applicant or the Network Lead Applicant's secure password protected *electronic/digital signature* applied by the Network Lead Applicant.

Subsequent Submissions

All subsequent submissions on an existing study require the original signature of the Network Lead Applicant or the Network Lead Applicant's secure password protected *electronic/digital signature* applied by the Network Lead Applicant.

If the Network Lead Applicant is unavailable to sign the submission, a Network Co-Investigator may sign the submission, provided an explanation for the delegation of sign-off is included. Network Co-Investigators should not routinely sign correspondence when the Network Lead Applicant is available to sign the submission. Submissions signed by Study Personnel/Research Staff are not routinely accepted**.

For example: [Network Co-Investigator] for [Network Lead Applicant], (reason).

**In rare extenuating urgent circumstances where the Network Lead Applicant and Network Co-Investigator are unavailable to sign the submission, Study Personnel/Research Staff may sign the submission if documentation that the Network Lead Applicant authorized the Study Personnel/Research Staff to sign on their behalf is provided to the REB with the submission.

Any deviations to above must be discussed with the Research Ethics Office prior to submission.

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4.0 Revision History

Revision	Reason for change	Date of release
25 May 2016	Working Procedure Development	
29 June 2016	REO Review	
12 September 2016	Final approved. Posted on SMH REB website	
07 Jun 2018	Revised to reflect Providence St. Joseph's and St. Michael's Healthcare and updated terminology	

ⁱ <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/p-8.6/page-8.html#h-17>

ⁱⁱ https://www.priv.gc.ca/resource/fs-fi/02_05_d_38_e.asp