**HRP-502a: TEMPLATE – SBS Consent**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

* This consent template is intended for use with Socio-Behavioral focused studies
* When you write a consent, keep an electronic, clean (all changes accepted, all comments deleted) copy. You will need to modify this copy when making changes.
* When you make changes, update the version date in the footer of the consent
* All referenced checklists, templates, policies, and manuals can be found in the RAMP Library and on the IRB website.
* As you are writing the consent, **remove all instructions in red italics so that they are not contained in the final version of your consent.** Depending on the nature of your study, some sections may not be applicable to your research. If so you may delete those sections.

# Permission to Take Part in a Human Research Study

## Title of research study: **[insert title of research study here with protocol number, if applicable]**

## Investigator: **[insert name of principal investigator]**

## Key Information: The following is a short summary of this study to help you decide whether or not to be a part of this study. More detailed information is listed later on in this form.

## Why am I being invited to take part in a research study?

We invite you to take part in a research study because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. [Fill in the circumstance or condition that makes subjects eligible for the research.]

## What should I know about a research study?

1. Someone will explain this research study to you.
2. Whether or not you take part is up to you.
3. You can choose not to take part.
4. You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
5. Your decision will not be held against you.
6. You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

## Why is this research being done?

[Tell the subject the purpose of the research. Explain the background of the research problem. Explain any potential benefits to others.]

## How long will the research last and what will I need to do?

We expect that you will be in this research study for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [hours/days/months/weeks/years, until a certain event].

You will be asked to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [include a high level summary of the procedures that will be done. For example: You will be given an investigational drug and asked to be asked to come for 3 study visits. You will give a total of 3 blood samples and fill out questionnaires asking about how you feel.]

More detailed information about the study procedures can be found under ***“What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?”***

## Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?

[This beginning section of the consent form should identify the most important risks, e.g., emotional distress resulting from a series of questions in a social-behavioral research project

More detailed information about the risks of this study can be found under ***“Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me? (Detailed Risks)”***

## Will being in this study help me in any way?

[This beginning section of the consent form should identify one or more likely benefits resulting directly from participation in the study; in doing so, you should not overemphasize the benefits. If you need to discuss benefits in additional detail, add an additional section later in the consent document]

[Include if there are benefits to participation. Otherwise delete this section.] We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your taking part in this research. However, possible benefits include \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. [First describe any direct benefits to the subject, then any benefits to others. If benefits from participation may not continue after the research has ended, describe them here. Monetary reimbursement for participation is not a benefit.]

[Include for a study with no benefits to participation. Otherwise delete.] There are no benefits to you from your taking part in this research. We cannot promise any benefits to others from your taking part in this research. However, possible benefits to others include \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. [Describe any benefits to others. Monetary reimbursement for participation is not a benefit.]

## **[Include for research involving prisoners]** Taking part in this research study will not impact your housing or correctional program assignments. Your taking part in this research study will not impact your chance of parole or release.

## What happens if I do not want to be in this research?

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You can decide to participate, not participate, or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

[Include if there are alternatives other than participating.] Instead of being in this research study, your choices may include: [List alternatives procedures. For student subject pools describe alternatives for course credit.

[Include if there are no alternatives other than participating.] Your alternative to participating in this research study is to not participate.

## Detailed Information: The following is more detailed information about this study in addition to the information listed above.

## Who can I talk to?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to the research team at [Insert contact information for the research team]

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (“IRB”). You may talk to them at 703-993-6801 or irb@gmu.edu if:

1. Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
2. You cannot reach the research team.
3. You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
4. You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
5. You want to get information or provide input about this research.

## How many people will be studied?

We expect about \_\_\_\_\_ people here will be in this research study out of \_\_\_\_\_ people in the entire study nationally [or internationally].

## What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?

[Tell the subject what to expect using lay language and simple terms. Whenever appropriate include the following items:]

* A time-line description of the procedures that will be performed.
* The length and duration of visits and procedures
* With whom will the subject interact
* Where/When the research will be done
* What is being performed as part of the research study versus what is occurring regardless of the study (I.e. what is occurring as part of regularly scheduled class time)
* When applicable indicate that the subject will be contacted for future research.
* If deception is involved, a statement informing participants that certain aspects of the project cannot be disclosed before data collection but that a full debriefing will take place at the conclusion of the project should be included

## What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?

You can leave the research at any time; it will not be held against you.

[Include if there are potential adverse consequences to withdrawing from the research. Otherwise delete] If you decide to leave the research, [Describe the adverse consequences.] If you decide to leave the research, contact the investigator so that the investigator can [Describe the procedures for orderly termination by the subject, if any.]

[Include for FDA-regulated research. Otherwise delete.] If you stop being in the research, already collected data may not be removed from the study database. You may be asked whether the investigator can collect data from your routine medical care. ***[Note: The consent document cannot give the subject the option of having data removed.]*** If you agree, this data will be handled the same as research data. ***[Note: If a subject withdraws from the interventional portion of a study and does not consent to continued follow-up of associated clinical outcome information, the investigator must not access for purposes related to the study the subject’s medical record or other confidential records requiring the subject’s consent. However, an investigator may review study data related to the subject collected prior to the subject’s withdrawal from the study, and may consult public records, such as those establishing survival status.]***

***[For research that is not FDA-regulated, describe what will happen to data collected to the point of withdrawal. Describe whether subjects will be asked to explain the extent of their withdrawal and whether they will be asked for permission to collect data through interaction or collection of private identifiable information. For example, a subject may wish to withdraw from the experimental procedure because of unacceptable side effects but may agree to undergo follow-up procedures and data collection.]***

## Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me? (Detailed Risks)

[Delete this section if there are no risks or discomforts.]

[The risks of procedures may be presented in a table form.]

[Describe each of the following risks, if appropriate. If known, describe the probability and magnitude of the risk.]

* [Physical risks
* Psychological risks
* Privacy risks
* Legal risks
* Social risks
* Economic risks]

***[If the research includes topics that may fall under the scope of Mason’s Title IX policies (including sexual or interpersonal misconduct, assault or harassment) please include the following statement. Otherwise delete.]*** Although we will be asking you about experiences that could be considered sexual misconduct, in the context of this research study we are exempt from reporting your responses to the Title IX Office at George Mason University. This exemption does not apply if you disclose assault to a GMU faculty or staff member in office hours or in other roles (such as a teacher, adviser, or administrator). Moreover, if you feel you have been the victim of sexual or interpersonal misconduct, please reach out to the University’s Title IX Coordinator, at 703-993-8730 or at [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu). For more information about Title IX and sexual misconduct at George Mason University, please visit this webpage: <https://diversity.gmu.edu/sexual-misconduct>.

***[If the research involves the potential for participants to become emotionally or psychologically upset from participating, please include the following statement. If the study will occur outside of GMU, replace the CAPS contact information with a national hotline such as the "National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) at 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) or*** [***info@nami.org***](mailto:info@nami.org)***" or replace with another appropriate resource tailored to the specific study population involved in your study. Otherwise delete.]***There is always a slight chance that someone might feel upset after participating. Please note that if you do feel upset and would like to speak with someone, you can contact the George Mason Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CAPS) at (703) 993-2380.

[Research involving potential physical injury to participants during the course of participation should include the following statement in the Risks section of the consent form:] In case of injury during testing procedures, the GMU research team may provide basic first aid. If appropriate, the staff will call the emergency response team at 911. Neither GMU nor the investigators have funds available for payment of medical treatment for injuries that you may sustain while participating in this research. Should you need medical care, you or your insurance carrier will be responsible for payment of the expenses required for medical treatment.

[If the research involves focus groups, please include the following statement. Otherwise delete.] Although focus group participants will be asked to keep the contents of the discussion confidential, due to the nature of a focus group, the researcher cannot control what participants might say outside of the research setting.

***[***Include for research that will collect/store data and samples for future research. Otherwise delete.]

We will do our best to protect your data and samples during storage and when they are shared. However, there remains a possibility that someone could identify you. There is also the possibility that people who are not supposed to might access your data and samples. In either case, we cannot reduce the risk to zero.

***[Include for Department of Defense (DoD) research where DoD-affiliated personnel are subjects and if the HSR includes a risk to their fitness for duty (e.g. health, availability to perform job, data breach).]*** This research project may impact your fitness for duty. Please seek command or Component guidance before participating.

***[Include for Department of Defense (DoD) research, if applicable.]*** This research includes the potential risk of the loss of clearance, credentials, or other privileged access or duty.

***[Include for Department of Defense (DoD) research that is greater than minimal risk.]*** For the duration of the study, you may be eligible for health care services for research-related injuries at a military treatment facility, and this eligibility for health care services extends beyond your participation in the study to such time after the study has ended. ***[Add additional information about how this organization will care for participants with research-related injuries, including injuries that are the direct result of activities performed by DoD-affiliated personnel]***

## What happens to the information collected for the research?

Efforts will be made to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information, including research study and medical records, to people who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete secrecy. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the IRB and other representatives of this organization. [Add to this list other organizations that may have access to the subject’s records such as the Food and Drug Administration, when the research if FDA-regulated, the Department of Health and Human Services, when the research is conducted or funded by DHHS, the sponsor, contract research organization, sponsor’s agent and other collaborating institutions. ***Include for Department of Defense (DoD) research that representatives of the DoD are authorized to review research records***.]

[Research being conducted that involves collecting data virtually over Zoom or with the aid of any other platform should include one of the following statements (or something similar if using Teams or Google, etc.)] Participants may review Zoom's website for information about their privacy statement. <https://zoom.us/privacy/>.

* Microsoft Teams: <https://privacy.microsoft.com/en-us/privacystatement>
* Prolific: <https://researcher-help.prolific.com/hc/en-gb/articles/360009094594-Data-protection-and-privacy>
* MTurk: <https://www.mturk.com/privacy-notice>
* Google Forms: <https://policies.google.com/privacy?hl=en-US>
* Qualtrics: <https://www.qualtrics.com/privacy-statement/>
* WhatsApp: <https://www.whatsapp.com/legal/privacy-policy>

***[Research involving videotaping and/or audio-taping must include a description of when the taping will take place, the information being sought from the tapes, how the tapes will be kept secure, who will have access to the tapes, and if applicable, when the tapes will be destroyed. If recordings are being transcribed, please include when the recordings would be erased (i.e., as soon as they are transcribed). Researchers should also add "check boxes" above the signature line at the end of the consent as follows:]***

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to audio (video) taping.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree to audio (video) taping.

***[Research involving the electronic collection of data (e.g. by e-mail or an internet web site) must also include the following statement:]*** While no computer transmission can be perfectly secure, reasonable efforts will be made to protect the confidentiality of your transmission.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) committee that monitors research on human subjects may inspect study records during internal auditing procedures and are required to keep all information confidential.

[Describe any limitations on confidentiality based on possible legal issues. For example, if the research team is likely to uncover abuse, neglect, or reportable diseases, explain that this information may be disclosed to appropriate authorities.]

***[In some research, the participants' responses could indicate intent to commit suicide, intent to kill or cause serious bodily harm to another person, and/or knowledge of past, current, or future unreported child abuse or elder abuse. Mandatory reporting requirements under the Virginia Code of Law must be included in the informed consent form. If there is a possibility that this information may be reported to the researcher due to the nature of the research, visit:*** [***https://hr.gmu.edu/employee-relations/reporting/***](https://hr.gmu.edu/employee-relations/reporting/) ***and*** [***https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Policy-1202-Appendix-B-Resource-and-Reporting-Guide-for-Students-and-Employees-August-2020-FINAL-09012020.pdf***](https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Policy-1202-Appendix-B-Resource-and-Reporting-Guide-for-Students-and-Employees-August-2020-FINAL-09012020.pdf) ***for further information about the Code of Virginia Requirement. Contact the IRB office at (703) 993-4121/4208 regarding specific questions about your research project and the mandatory reporting requirements.***

***If the study may be subject to mandatory reporting requirements, include the following statement:]*** There is one exception to confidentiality. It is our legal responsibility to report situations of suspected child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities. Although we are not seeking this type of information in this study nor will you be asked questions about these issues, we will disclose them as required under the law if discovered.

***[Include for NIH-funded studies or those receiving a CoC by request from NIH.]*** This research is covered by a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health. This means that the researchers cannot release or use information, documents, or samples that may identify you in any action or suit unless you say it is okay. They also cannot provide them as evidence unless you have agreed. This protection includes federal, state, or local civil, criminal, administrative, legislative, or other proceedings. An example would be a court subpoena.

There are some important things that you need to know. The Certificate DOES NOT stop reporting that federal, state or local laws require. Some examples are laws that require reporting of child or elder abuse, some communicable diseases, and threats to harm yourself or others. The Certificate CANNOT BE USED to stop a sponsoring United States federal or state government agency from checking records or evaluating programs. The Certificate DOES NOT stop disclosures required by the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The Certificate also DOES NOT prevent your information from being used for other research if allowed by federal regulations.

Researchers may release information about you when you say it is okay. For example, you may give them permission to release information to insurers, medical providers or any other persons not connected with the research. The Certificate of Confidentiality does not stop you from willingly releasing information about your involvement in this research. It also does not prevent you from having access to your own information.

***[If data or specimens will be retained after the study for future research, explain where the data or specimens will be stored, who will have access to the data or specimens, and how long the date or specimens will be retained.]***

***[If identifiable private information or identifiable specimens will be collected during the research, add one of the following statements:***

If identifiers are removed from your identifiable private information or identifiable samples that are collected during this research, that information or those samples could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without your additional informed consent. See the information found under ***“Will my data or samples be used for future research?”***

**OR**

Your information or samples that are collected as part of this research will not be used or distributed for future research studies, even if all of your identifiers are removed.

[Include for research where the sponsor may pay for medical expenses of the subject.] If the sponsor pays any of your medical expenses, we may be required to give the sponsor your name, date of birth, and Medicare ID or social security number.

[Include if a HIPAA authorization is required. Otherwise delete.] Federal law provides additional protections of your medical records and related health information. These are described in an attached document.

[Include for research involving prisoners. Otherwise delete.] If you are a prisoner, your medical records may also be given to officials and agencies within the criminal justice system when necessary and permitted by law.

## Will my data or samples be used for future research?

***[Include this section if data or specimens will be retained after the study for future research, add/modify the following text to explain where the data or specimens will be stored, who will have access to the data or specimens, and how long the data or specimens will be retained.]***

This study is collecting data and samples from you. We would like to make your data and samples available for other research studies that may be done in the future. The research may be about similar diseases or conditions to this study. However, research could also be about unrelated diseases, conditions, or other types of research. These studies may be done by researchers at this institution or other institutions, including commercial entities. Your data and samples may be shared with researchers around the world. Our goal is to make more research possible. We plan to keep your data and samples for ***[Insert time frame as indicated in the study protocol]***. To get your data or samples, future researchers must seek approval from this institution and review by an IRB may be required.

***[If the data and biospecimens are coded and can be linked back to the identity of the participant enter the following text.]***

We will protect the confidentiality of your information to the extent possible. Your data and samples will be coded to protect your identity before they are shared with other researchers. Only the study team ***[or indicate who has the code key]*** will have a code key that can be used to link to your identifying information. The code key will be securely stored.

***[If the data and biospecimens cannot be easily linked back to the identity of the participant enter the following text.]***

Your name and identifying information will be removed from any data and samples you provide before they are shared with other researchers. Researchers cannot easily link your identifying information to the data and samples.

***[Include when sharing of data and specimens will NOT be optional (e.g., where sharing is integral to the purpose of the study).]***

Participating in this study means you agree to share your data and samples. You can change your mind later, but researchers might still use your data and samples if they have already been shared. If you do not want your data and samples used for other research studies, you should not participate in this study.

## Can I be removed from the research without my OK?

[Delete this section if not applicable.]

[Include for research where this is a possibility. Otherwise delete.] The person in charge of the research study or the sponsor can remove you from the research study without your approval. Possible reasons for removal include [describe reasons why the subject may be withdrawn, if appropriate.]

[Include for research where this is a possibility. Otherwise delete.] We will tell you about any new information that may affect your health, welfare, or choice to stay in the research.

## What else do I need to know?

[Include for sponsored research. Otherwise delete.] This research is being funded by [Insert name of sponsor]. ***[Include for Department of Defense (DoD) research that the DoD or a DoD organization is funding the study.]***.

[Include for research involving more than minimal risk. Otherwise delete.] If you need medical care because of taking part in this research study, contact the investigator and medical care will be made available. Generally, this care will be billed to you, your insurance, or other third party. [Insert the name of the institution] has no program to pay for medical care for research-related injury. [Describe any compensation available for research related injury.]

[Include if subjects will be paid. Otherwise delete.] If you agree to take part in this research study, we will pay you [indicate amount] for your time and effort. [Indicate if the amount is pro-rated for research visit completion.] "Under the U.S. federal tax law you may have individual responsibilities for disclosing the dollar value of the incentive received on this study. Additionally, for certain studies, the research team will be collecting an informational tax form and reporting the income to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) either on 1099-MISC, or on 1042-S tax form."

[Include for Department of Defense (DOD) research that targets military personnel where subjects will be paid. Otherwise delete.] Military personnel should check with their supervisor before accepting payment for participation in this research.

***[Include when applicable.]*** Your information and samples (both identifiable and de-identified) may be used to create products or to deliver services, including some that may be sold and/or make money for others. If this happens, there are no plans ***[or replace with plans when using identifiable information/samples]*** to tell you, or to pay you, or to give any compensation to you or your family.

***[When applicable, include whether clinically relevant research results, including individual research results, will be disclosed to subjects, and if so, under what conditions; and for research involving biospecimens.]*** Most tests done on samples in research studies are only for research and have no clear meaning for health care. If the research with your identifiable information or samples gives results that do have meaning for your health, the researchers ***will/will not*** contact you to let you know what they have found. If the researchers return genetic test results to you, it may be because they think you could have a health risk and want to recommend that the test should be re-done by a certified clinical laboratory to check the results. If this happens, then you may want to get a second test from a certified clinical laboratory, consult your own doctor, or get professional genetic counseling. You may have to pay for those additional services yourself.

## Optional Procedures for the Study

It is your choice whether or not to let researchers share your data and samples for research in the future. If you say “yes,” you can change your mind later. If you say “no,” you can still fully participate in this study. If you change your mind and no longer wish to have us store or share your data and samples, you should contact the investigator. We will do our best to honor your request and to get back any data and samples that have been shared with other researchers. However, there may be times we cannot. For example, if we do not have a way to identify your data and samples, we will not be able to get them back. In addition, if the data and samples have already been used for new research, the information from that research may still be used. We will destroy any samples we have or are able to get back.

Please initial next to your choice:

\_\_\_\_\_\_YES, my data and samples may be used in other research studies

\_\_\_\_\_\_NO, my data and samples MAY NOT be used in other research studies

[There are three signature pages attached to this template consent. Use the signature page or pages appropriate for your study. The IRB recommends that you make separate consent documents for each signature page to be used.]

[Omit the signature page if there is no written documentation of consent and include one of the following when applicable

* *Check box, language for By continuing or clicking “next” you consent*
* *Verbal Consent Statement: If you have read this form and all of your questions have been answered, please verbally indicate your consent to the researcher now*

Signature Block for Capable Adult

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

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Signature of subject Date

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Printed name of subject Date

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Signature of person obtaining consent Date

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Printed name of person obtaining consent

***[Add the following block if a witness will observe the consent process. E.g., short form of consent documentation or illiterate subjects.]***

My signature below documents that the information in the consent document and any other written information was accurately explained to, and apparently understood by, the subject, and that consent was freely given by the subject.

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Signature of witness to consent process Date

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Printed name of person witnessing consent process Date

Signature Block for Adult Unable to Consent

Your signature documents your permission for the named subject to take part in this research.

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Printed name of subject

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Signature of legally authorized representative Date

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Printed name of legally authorized representative

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Signature of person obtaining consent Date

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Printed name of person obtaining consent IRB Approval Date

***[Add the following block if you will document assent of the subject.]***

Assent

Obtained

Not obtained because the capability of the subject is so limited that the subject cannot reasonably be consulted.

***[Add the following block if a witness will observe the consent process. E.g., short form of consent documentation or illiterate subjects.]***

My signature below documents that the information in the consent document and any other written information was accurately explained to, and apparently understood by, the subject, and that consent was freely given by the subject.

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Signature of witness to consent process Date

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Printed name of person witnessing consent process

**Signature Block for Children**

Your signature documents your permission for the named child to take part in this research.

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Printed name of child

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Signature of parent or individual legally authorized Date

to consent to the child’s general medical care

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Printed name of parent or individual legally authorized Date  
to consent

Parent

Individual legally authorized to consent to the child’s general medical care (See note below)

**Note:** Investigators are to ensure that individuals who are not parents can demonstrate their legal authority to consent to the child’s general medical care. Contact legal counsel if any questions arise.

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Signature of parent Date

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Printed name of parent

If signature of second parent not obtained, indicate why: (select one)

The IRB determined that the permission of one parent is sufficient. **[Delete if the IRB did not make this determination]**

Second parent is deceased

Second parent is unknown

Second parent is incompetent

Second parent is not reasonably available

Only one parent has legal responsibility for the care and custody of the child

***[Add the following block if you will document assent of children]***

Assent

Obtained

Not obtained because the capability of the child is so limited that the child cannot reasonably be consulted.

***[Add the following block if a witness will observe the consent process. E.g., short form of consent documentation or illiterate subjects.]***

My signature below documents that the information in the consent document and any other written information was accurately explained to, and apparently understood by, the subject, and that consent was freely given by the subject.

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Signature of witness to consent process Date

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Printed name of person witnessing consent process