PURPOSE

The purpose of this operating procedure is to clarify and define the roles of the SOM Office of Research Administration (SOMRA) and SOM Departments in the maintenance of and adherence to standard operating procedures for effective administrative and financial management of research.

The VCU School of Medicine Office of Research Administration’s mission to support research and scholarly activity in the School by working as a strategic partner with faculty, departments, university, and health system offices includes the development and maintenance of School-wide standard operating procedures.

INTRODUCTION

Grants and contracts for sponsored projects represent a contractual obligation between the grantor and the University for the performance of a specific activity through which the grantor, or sponsor, is entitled to receive some consideration or benefit. The contractual obligation is normally documented by a proposal and award combination, contract, or a written memorandum of agreement. The University assumes full legal responsibility for complying with all requirements imposed by the grantor or sponsor upon acceptance of grants and contracts for sponsored projects, including a requirement for a report of expenditures or a provision for an audit (refer to VCU’s policy Sponsored Programs Award Review, Negotiation, Acceptance and Notification). In turn, the School of Medicine must ensure its investigators and personnel are in compliance with all VCU and sponsor requirements for the charging of expenses to sponsored projects.

To facilitate SOMRA’s support of research and scholarly activity in the School of Medicine, a set of standard operating procedures has been developed and will be maintained by SOMRA. The expectation is that all departments, centers, and institutes within the School must adhere to these standard operating procedures.

PROCEDURE

Process for development and review of Standard Operating Procedures:

1. Development
   a. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) development, review, and approval process is overseen by the SOM Office of Research Administration (SOMRA).
   b. The development of new SOPs is typically initiated by the need to convey a specific standard operational requirement to the entire School to facilitate the effective administrative and financial management of research.
   c. Research personnel who wish to propose a new SOP may do so by contacting the Associate Director for Research Administration & Training.
   d. SOPs are drafted by SOMRA in coordination with research administrators and other content experts throughout the School.

2. Review and Approval
   a. Once drafted, SOPs will be distributed to the SOMRA School-wide listserv for a two-week comment period. Draft SOPs will also be posted to the SOMRA website during this period.
   b. At the end of the School-wide comment period, the document will be revised as needed, finalized, and approved within SOMRA.

3. Posting and Dissemination
   a. Finalized SOPs will be posted to the SOMRA website.
b. Original Word files for SOPs will be maintained on the SOMRA Shared Drive.
c. The SOM research community is notified of the posting of the finalized SOPs via email to SOMRA School-wide listserv.

4. Continuing Review
   a. All SOPs will be reviewed on an annual basis. Review may be conducted earlier than annually if warranted or if requested based on operational changes.
   b. A record of review will be maintained in SOMRA.
   c. The review, approval, posting, and dissemination processes for updated SOPs will be the same as the process for new SOPs, including a two-week comment period when warranted.
   d. Revised or updated SOPs will use the document standards outlined below.

Document standards:

1. The SOP contains:
   a. A header with the following information that is updated by SOMRA to match font and style standards before posting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VCUHealth</th>
<th>SOP: School-wide Use of Standard Operating Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VCU School of Medicine</td>
<td>Number: 309 Date: April 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Research Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The SOP need not follow a specific organizational format but typically will contain the following sections:
   a. Purpose
   b. Introduction
   c. Procedure
   d. Responsibility

Monitoring School-wide adherence to SOPs:

1. Effective FY20, SOMRA will monitor on a routine basis for adherence to these SOPs across all departments, centers, and institutes.

RESPONSIBILITY

SOM Office of Research Administration (SOMRA) SOMRA is primarily responsible for:

- Overseeing the SOM research administration SOP development, review, and approval process.
- Annually monitoring for the School-wide adherence to the SOPs.

Departments, Centers, and Institutes SOM Departments, centers, and institutes are primarily responsible for:

- Providing comments on each draft SOP as warranted.
- Adhering to each final SOM research administration SOP.
- Developing internal guidance documentation that builds on the SOPs and facilitates the effective administrative and financial management of research within their unit.