

MEMORANDUM

TO: Institutional Review Boards/Human Subjects Review Committees

FROM: David R. Weir, Principal Investigator, Health and Retirement Study

RE: Health and Retirement Study Public Use Datasets

The Health and Retirement Study (HRS) is an ongoing longitudinal survey of Americans over the age of 50, sponsored by the National Institute on Aging (U01 AG009740) with support from the Social Security Administration. HRS makes available to researchers both unrestricted datasets, available to all researchers, and restricted datasets, available only under agreement to researchers who meet rigorous conditions.

No individual identifiers or links to individual identifiers are provided to researchers under any conditions. Moreover, unrestricted datasets from the HRS have been sufficiently purged of secondary identifying information that they pose no significant threat to respondent anonymity. These files are public-use and are distributed via download from our website. We assert that in most cases the HRS public use files qualify as anonymized datasets and that secondary data analysis using these files may qualify for exempt IRB status, under [45 CFR 46.101\(b\)](#).

The entire Health and Retirement Study is under current IRB approval by the relevant committees at the University of Michigan and the National Institute on Aging, the primary sponsor of HRS.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact:

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