

Requesting a Certificate of Confidentiality from the NIH for a UCSD Study

Some studies involving human subjects touch upon sensitive areas and the collected data, if released outside the research team, could be harmful to the subject's reputation, employability, status, or put them at risk of criminal or civil liability. To provide extra protection for subjects participating in these types of studies, the NIH is able to grant a Certificate of Confidentiality (CoC) to researchers which requires them not to release identifiable information about subjects except under circumstances where researchers may uncover imminent harm to another (e.g. child or elder abuse). This includes keeping the data secure in cases where a subpoena, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, or Public Records Act (PRA) request is received.

Studies funded by the NIH and CDC are automatically issued a CoC as a part of their award to the institution. For studies that are unfunded or funded by a non-NIH or CDC agency, a CoC may be requested from the NIH. Requests are usually issued quite quickly (under a week) and protect the data collected during their issuance in perpetuity.

To request a CoC from the NIH, navigate to the NIH's CoC Request website here: [Certificate of Confidentiality Request \(nih.gov\)](#)

Follow these steps:

1. Identify the funding source by selecting the appropriate choice from the drop-down menu and click "Next".
2. Answer questions 2-6 and click "Next".
3. Enter project title, start and end dates, description.
4. Under "Institution and Performance Site Details" enter the following information:
 - a. Name of Institution: UC San Diego or UC San Diego Health
 - b. Institution Address: 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla, CA 92093
 - c. Name of Institutional Official: Gary Firestein
 - d. Email Address of Institutional Official: irb@ucsd.edu
5. Under "Principal Investigator and Other Key Personnel" enter the name of the PI and any key personnel.
6. Under "Administration of Drugs" enter any drugs that will be administered as a part of the study, if applicable.
7. When everything is complete, click the "Submit for Verification" button.