

Introduction to on-line surveys

Introductions, rather than consent forms, may be used for some categories of exempt minimal-risk research with adults such as survey or questionnaire research on non-sensitive topics. The introduction should state the purpose of the survey, the expected number of respondents, a description of the topic of the survey or the content of the questions on the survey, a statement about confidentiality or anonymity, and a statement about how the participant may obtain additional information about the study. Responding to the survey indicates a willingness to participate in the study. Provide contact information for the IRB should they have questions about the rights of research participants. To be exempt, the survey may not engage persons under 18-years-old. In that case, there should be a forced choice option to confirm the participant is 18 or older.

Example:

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Mary Smith, a graduate student in the Department of Counseling at The University of Akron. The purpose of this research is to find out how individuals decide on what type of counseling is appropriate for them.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete an anonymous web-based survey. The survey should take no more than 30 minutes and I hope to recruit 100 participants.

The survey will not collect any identifiable information and no one will be able to connect your responses to you. Your anonymity is further protected by not asking you to sign and return a consent form. Your completion of the survey will serve as your consent. Please print this introduction for future reference.

If you have any questions about this study, you may call me at [phone number] or my advisor, Dr. Jones, at [phone number]. This project has been reviewed and approved by The University of Akron Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the IRB at [phone number].

Please click on the link below to access the survey. Thank you.

Force Choice example:

I am at least 18-years-old:

Yes (If the person chooses this answer, they are taken to the survey)

No (If the person chooses this answer, they are taken to a thank you page indicating they are not eligible to take the survey).