

IMPLEMENTATION OF A LABORATORY SELF-INSPECTION PROGRAM AT EMORY UNIVERSITY (ID #48)

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Objectives: To simultaneously implement and utilize a laboratory self-inspection program and laboratory signage program, enhance compliance, provide training, complete initial risk assessment, and access behavior in an academic research environment.

Method: Two tools are simultaneously utilized to complete the following: The implementation of a laboratory signage program/laboratory registration program which assists EHS staff in registering all laboratories on campus. This helps completion of the initial risk assessment screen of those labs that work with recombinants, infectious materials, samples from human sources, chemicals of interest, and radioisotopes; the laboratory self-inspection program provides Principal Investigators (PIs) with the information to prepare their lab to be audit-ready and ensures training and other key safety activities are being completed.

Results: Any Research Investigator at the University must complete the laboratory self-inspection and signage forms for submission to Environmental Health and Safety (EHSO). Completion of the program elements is tied directly to IBC, IACUC, DOD, and IRB approvals.

Conclusion: Compliance with this new program is significantly enhanced by this direct link that captures all researchers, particularly those who work with agents other than recombinants, infectious agents, etc. The coverage of this program includes all researchers on campus, therefore capturing even those researchers who do not receive traditional funding such as NIH. This program's uniqueness facilitates the EHS department's ability to systematically identify the gaps among regulatory requirements and facilitate audit-ready compliance. This program also serves as a learning opportunity for researchers as it promotes a heightened awareness of regulatory standards. The program's flexibility allows for changes to the format in response to emerging and changing environments. This strategy mainly focuses on a proactive approach.

Outcome: EHS prepares labs to be audit-ready and ensures training and other key safety activities are being completed. Participants/researchers achieve a better understanding of regulatory requirements.