

**University of Southern California  
University Park Institutional Review Board  
Guidelines Regarding Lotteries/Raffles/Drawings:**

The University Park IRB (UPIRB) has been informed by the USC Office of Compliance, that protocols using lotteries and/or raffle drawings must follow the guidelines below. There are particular IRS requirements that need to be adhered to when offering lotteries and raffles at a non-profit organization (USC). Please incorporate these guidelines for new submissions. If you have previously submitted a protocol and/or have an approved protocol, and your research includes a lottery or raffle drawing, please modify the protocol and/or informed consent form accordingly, **prior to the UPIRB processing an approval notice and/or submit an amendment to your current protocol for the University Park IRB's review and approval.**

California state law (like many other states) places restrictions on the use of raffles and lotteries. As a general rule, participation in a raffle or lottery cannot be conditioned on providing some form of consideration (usually the consideration is money). For example, raffles often have language stating that "no purchase is necessary" in order to participate in the lottery. Again, this is because individuals cannot be required to provide consideration in order to be eligible to participate in the lottery/raffle.

Applying these statutory requirements to a research project, the following is recommended:

1. Do not preclude individuals who either refuse to participate in the research project or fail to complete the project, from participating in the raffle. In other words, it must be clear to individuals who are eligible to participate in the research project (i.e., survey) that they do not have to participate in the project in order for them to be eligible for the raffle.
2. Place specific language in your informed consent that it is not necessary for a subject to complete the project (i.e., survey) in order to participate in the raffle/lottery.
3. If individuals who are not invited to participate in the research ask to be included in the raffle or lottery (not likely in most scenarios), it is recommended that you include them.
4. The UPIRB will review the raffle for purposes of determining whether the prize could be construed as "coercive."

If you have further questions, please contact the UPIRB staff at: [upirb@usc.edu](mailto:upirb@usc.edu) or by phone at: 213/740-6709.