Overview of the Life Cycle of Research Projects Using Confidential Microdata from the NYRDC for Syracuse University Researchers

Syracuse University has become an affiliate of the New York Research Data Center (NYRDC). Our primary administrative partners are at Cornell University. This document lists the process for SU researchers to obtain and publish with confidential data secured from the NYRDC.

1. Submit a two-page informal proposal for a project that proposes to use confidential data stored in the RDC. SU researchers should complete the RDC Application Form on our website and submit to CPR administrators for approval.
2. Once approved, the informal proposal will be forwarded to the administrators at the NYRDC. NYRDC administrators will prepare and submit pre-proposal to Census Bureau, NCHS or AHRQ.
   a. Register with CES Management System
   b. Census – NYRDC staff will work with researcher to get informal review from appropriate persons at Census Bureau
   c. NCHS – NYRDC staff will work with researcher to get informal review from appropriate persons at NCHS
   d. AHRQ – send to AHRQ Data Center contact at CFACTDC@AHRQ.HHS.GOV
3. After incorporating suggestions, write a formal proposal.
   a. Meet/conference call with NYRDC administrators to discuss the proposal development guidelines and receive resource materials useful in writing a proposal. This development involves not only making a case for why the research has scientific merit, but must also establish how it will benefit the statistical agency. This is the legal requirement for granting an external researcher access to confidential data.
   b. CES: Federal Statistical RDC Research Proposal Guidelines
   c. NCHS: NCHS Research Data Center Information
   d. AHRQ: AHRQ Restricted Data Information
4. Submitting the proposal. CPR administrators will submit to NYRDC to review and approve.
   a. For Census data, the NYRDC will submit the proposal to the CES Management System.
   b. For NCHS data, self-submission via email. Instructions are available at the RDC Proposal Process website. Upon receipt, NCHS RDC Director assigns an analyst who provides preliminary review for completeness and feasibility. Analyst provides assistance to researcher needing help to revise proposal.
   c. For AHRQ data, self-submission by mailing application package to AHRQ Data Center coordinator. Instructions on AHRQ’s Restricted Data Files website.
5. Proposal review process
   a. Census
      i. CES reviews for benefits to Census Bureau data programs and scientific merit.
      ii. CES reports there is a 75 day average to make decision following submission.
      iii. Proposals involving Federal Tax Information (FTI) must also be reviewed by IRS, which adds to the review time.
   b. NCHS
      i. Committee reviews proposal for appropriateness, availability of data, and public health benefit.
      ii. The review takes about six to eight weeks.
iii. Upon approval, NCHS will request confidentiality training and forms as well as your pursuit of SSS clearance.

c. AHRQ
   i. A committee reviews application
   ii. Applications are accepted continuously and are reviewed and approved on a monthly basis.

6. Special Sworn Status (SSS) and Census Badge
   a. Researcher must have Census badge to enter the RDC in Ithaca, NY.
   b. Research Director at NYRDC will notify SU researcher when they may apply for SSS. Generally, researchers must submit SSS forms after proposal has been approved. Some forms are time-limited and may need to be repeated if there are delays.
   c. One should expect to wait 60 to 90 days before SSS is approved and a Census badge issued. NYRDC administrator will notify researcher and schedule on-site orientation.

7. On-Site Orientation to the RDC in Ithaca, NY
   a. Receive Census badge from administrator
   b. Obtain copy of CES’ Researcher Handbook from NYRDC administrator
   c. NYRDC Research Director will issue
      i. a unique individual code and provide instruction for motion detection system in the NYRDC.
      ii. a proximity card registered/issued for access to building and interior doors with swipe locks.

8. See Researcher Handbook for
   a. suggestions and links to other training material.
   b. the process for getting work reviewed and released.
   c. guidelines for submission of articles to journals and dealing with a “revise and resubmit.”
   d. reporting on papers and professional presentations based on work in the RDC.

To contact CPR Administrators directly with any questions about the application process email:
CPRRDC@maxwell.syr.edu