

Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents Risk Assessment

Use this information to complete PHBA Risk Assessment Form 6A

Risk assessment defines the potential level of harm, injury or disease to plants, animals and humans that may occur when working with biological agents. The end result of a risk assessment is the assignment of a biosafety level which then determines the laboratory facilities, equipment, training, and supervision required.

Risk assessment involves:

- Assignment of the biological agent to a risk group.
- Studies involving a known microorganism must begin with an initial assignment of the microorganism to a biosafety level risk group based on information available through a literature search.
- The study of unknown microorganisms and the use of fresh tissues relies on the expertise of the supervising adult(s).
- Determination of the level of biological containment available to the student researcher to conduct the experimentation. (See “Levels of Biological Containment” for details.)
- Assessment of the experience and expertise of the adult(s) supervising the student.
- Assignment of a biosafety level for the study based on risk group of biological agent, level of biological containment available and the expertise of the Qualified Scientist or Designated Supervisor who will be supervising the project.

Documentation of review and approval of study prior to experimentation:

- If a study is conducted at a non-regulated site (e.g. school), the SRC reviews the Research Plan.
- If the study was conducted at a Regulated Research Institution, and was approved by the appropriate institutional board (e.g. IBC, IACUC), the SRC reviews the institutional forms provided and documents SRC approval (Form (6A)).
- If a PHBA study was conducted at a Regulated Research Institution but the institution does not require review for this type of study, a letter from an institutional representative stating that review was not required must be obtained. The SRC must review the study and document approval on Form 6A that the student received appropriate training and the project complies with Intel ISEF rules.