This fact sheet provides a brief overview of existing guidelines for research involving Inuit, and lists several relevant documents for further information.

In Canada, researchers are expected to work with Aboriginal Peoples in a way that respects individuals, communities and their culture. Aboriginal organizations, governments and universities have worked to create ethical guidelines for researchers with the goal to ensure that research about Aboriginal people works for Aboriginal people.

Inuit organizations have provided documents on how to develop partnerships where people, communities and researchers are equal partners. Region-specific guidelines help researchers to consider governance systems and local customs.

**What are ethical guidelines for research?**

“Ethics” is a term that captures the values of society and tells us how to behave appropriately and treat each other with respect. Ethical research means that researchers working in Inuit regions understand and respect that Inuit have their own protocols for behaviour. Ethical standards and requirements are set out in documents called ‘guidelines’, ‘protocols’ or ‘codes’. Researchers—including those who want to study Inuit—must follow guidelines to make sure their work is fair and respectful (ethical). Research guidelines address questions such as these:

- What is research?
- What are the rules for researchers?
- What are the rights of research participants?
- How are the rights of research participants protected?
- How do we build good research relationships?
- How can we evaluate the risks and benefits for the individual and the community that participates in the research?

**Who is making sure that researchers follow ethical guidelines?**

All research involving people carried out in connection with Canadian universities follows ethical guidelines found in a document called *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. Every researcher seeking funding from one of Canada’s research funding agencies is required to apply the ethical principles and the articles of this policy, also called the TCPS. This policy is based on three core principles: respect for persons, concern for welfare, and justice.

Ethical review boards or ethics committees are part of universities and research organizations. They review research plans and make sure that researchers are following ethical guidelines. For example, they can send project plans back to the researcher if the project doesn’t meet the requirements. The researcher then needs to change the research plan and submit it again to the board or committee.

Government departments also conduct research and follow ethical guidelines. For example, as of April 2010 Health Canada shares the Research Ethics Board (REB) with the Public Health Agency of Canada. This board reviews all research involving human subjects that is carried out by either one of these federal departments, including research conducted under a contract. All reviews are guided by the principles set out under the TCPS.
Below, we provide a selected list of research guidelines applying to research involving Inuit.

**Guidelines applying to research in Inuit regions**


**Guidelines produced by Inuit organizations and governments**


**Nunatsiavut Government.** (2008). *Nunatsiavut Government Interim Research Process.* Updated December 2008. Contact John Lampe, the Nunatsiavut Inuit Research Advisor for updates of this document. ([john_lampe@nunatsiavut.com](mailto:john_lampe@nunatsiavut.com))

**Canadian Guidelines for Ethical Research**


**Guidelines concerning research involving Aboriginal Peoples in Canada**

**Canadian Institutes of Health Research.** (2007). *CIHR Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal People.* Ottawa: Canadian Institutes of Health Research. [www.ircs.gc.ca/e/29134.html](http://www.ircs.gc.ca/e/29134.html)


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Fact Sheet #9: “Guidelines for Research Involving Inuit” can be retrieved from [www.naho.ca/inuit/e/ethics](http://www.naho.ca/inuit/e/ethics)  

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