

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION**

FAQ Topic: IRB Membership- Administrative Staff Membership on the IRB

Date: March 12, 2012

Question: Can VA Associate Chiefs of Staff (ACOSs) for Research and Development (R&D), VA Administrative Officers (AOs) for R&D, VA research office staff, VA IRB administrators, or VA IRB administrative staff serve as voting members or alternate voting members of a VA facility's local IRB of record?

Answer: No. VA ACOSs for R&D, VA AOs for R&D, VA research office staff, VA IRB administrators, and VA IRB administrative staff cannot serve as voting members or alternate voting members of a VA facility's local IRB of record, whether that IRB is an internal VA IRB, the IRB of another VA facility, or an affiliate IRB.

Question: Can affiliate administrative staff, including affiliate IRB administrative staff, serve as voting members or alternate voting members of an affiliate IRB serving as a VA facility's IRB of record?

Answer: Yes. VHA policy cannot address this issue. The affiliate IRB has the authority to decide whether or not to allow affiliate administrative staff to serve as voting members or alternate voting members of the affiliate IRB, even when it serves as the IRB of record for a VA facility.

References: *VHA Handbook 1200.05 §12.j*