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Ministry of Health  
Executive Secretary of the National Health Council  
National Research Ethics Committee

CIRCULAR OFFICIAL LETTER No. 16/2022/CONEP/SECNS/MS

Brasilia, July 04, 2022.

To the Research Ethics Committees – RECs

**Subject: Processing of Research Protocols related to SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19).**

1. In line with Ordinance GM/MS No. 913, of April 22, 2022, which declares the end of the Public Health Emergency of National Importance (Espin) as a result of human infection with the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV) and revokes the Ordinance GM/MS No. 188, of February 3, 2020;
2. Due to the substantial decrease in the number of research protocols related to SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) that have been registered at the Plataforma Brasil System;
3. The National Research Ethics Committee (Conep) guides as follows:
  - I - As of this date, all research protocols related to SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) should only be analyzed in the Research Ethics Committees (RECs) of origin, provided they do not fit into the following situations:
    - a) Protocols for special thematic areas provided for in item IX.4 of CNS Resolution No. 466, of 2012;
    - b) Protocols indicated by the Ministry of Health, by the Health Secretaries of states, municipalities, and the Federal District;
    - c) At the RECs' discretion, with due rationale.
  - II - The analysis deadlines for the RECs will be those established in item 2.2 of CNS Operational Standard No. 001, of 2013.
  - III - The analysis deadlines for Conep will be those established in item 2.3 of CNS Operational Standard No. 001, of 2013.
  - IV - Regarding the assessment of protocols amendments and notifications related to SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19), the analyses shall be conducted by the institutions of final approval (REC and/or Conep), complying with the analysis deadlines established in CNS Operational Standard No. 001, 2013.
  - V - In the case of multicenter protocols related to SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) that fall within Conep's analysis area, after issuing their unified opinion as "approved", it will be up to the RECs of the participating sites to analyze, following the regular proceedings for research protocols in the CEP/Conep System.

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4. In view of the foregoing, the following documents are revoked:
- a) “Notice to the Society”, of January 30, 2020;
  - b) “Notice for Research Ethics Committees”, of January 30, 2020;
  - c) “Notice for biobanks approved by Conep”, of March 26, 2020;
  - d) “II Notice for Research Ethics Committees”, of April 14, 2020;
  - e) “Guidelines for Research Ethics Committees and Researchers”, of May 9, 2020;
  - f) “Circular Official Letter No. 24/2020/CONEP/SECNS/MS”, of November 17, 2020;
  - g) “Circular Official Letter No. 3/2021-CONEP/SECNS/MS”, of July 8, 2021.
5. Regarding holding meetings through videoconferencing or video call web application, the provisions of Circular Official Letter No. 7/2020-CONEP/SECNS/MS, of March 16, 2020, remain in force, until further notice from Conep.

Sincerely,

LAÍS ALVES DE SOUZA BONILHA

Coordinator of the National Research Ethics Committee – Conep

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**Reference:** Process No. 25000.093029/2022-71

SEI nº 0027868988

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