



Ministry of Health
Executive Secretary
Department of Interfederative and Participatory Management
Executive Secretariat of the National Health Council
National Research Ethics Commission

CIRCULAR LETTER No. 10/2024/CONEP/SECNS/DGIP/SE/MS

Brasília, April 9, 2024.

To Research Ethics Committees (CEPs)

Subject: Guidance on the procedures to be adopted in the event of a strike or institutional recess.

Dear Sirs,

The National Research Ethics Commission (Conep) reminds the Ethics Committees in 1. Research (CEP) which, in accordance with [Circular Letter nº 244/2016/CONEP/CNS/GB/MS](#), if CEP activities are temporarily suspended due to a strike or institutional recess, the following measures must be adopted:

2. In the event of a strike, as soon as it begins, the CEP must inform: a) The research community and related institutional bodies (such as, for example, postgraduate committees, clinical research center, research dean's office) regarding the situation, informing whether there will be a temporary interruption in the processing of protocols, and whether the processing will remain paralyzed (partially or completely) for as long as the strike continues;
- b) To the research participants and their representatives the estimated duration of the strike and the methods of contact with Conep, so that they remain assisted in cases of doubts about ethics and filing of complaints throughout the strike period, and
- c) In relation to academic projects, such as TCC, master's and doctoral studies, the institution must duly adapt the students' final deadlines, according to the situation of each one, if there is a delay in the ethical evaluation by the institutional CEP, ensuring that there is no harm to the quality of ethical analysis and risk to research participants.

In the situation foreseen above, Conep must have information to guide the researcher and 3. the research participant who, perhaps, require assistance or clarification. To this end, the CEP that has its activities changed must:

- a) Immediately inform Conep, via email (conep.cep@saude.gov.br), when the situations described in "item 2" occur, thus providing accurate information to the researcher and research participant who contact Conep, requesting assistance or clarification;

b) The CEP must also inform Conep of the measures that will be adopted to regularize its actions regarding the processing of protocols for ethical assessment, after the period of interruption.

4. It should also be noted that, with regard to the analysis of protocols, the CEP must follow the deadlines set out in item 2.2, "D", in Operational Standard No. 001/13, namely: 10 (ten) days for document checking and 30 (thirty) days to release the opinion. In this way, we count on the support of all Research Ethics Committees, of the CEP/Conep System, in the essential partnership in the exercise of the culture of democratic ethics, in the defense of citizens, the scientific community and society.

5. If any further clarification is required, please contact us by email.

mail: conep.cep@saude.gov.br or telephone (61) 3315-5893 or 5883.

Cordially,

LAÍS ALVES DE SOUZA BONILHA

Coordinator of the National Research Ethics Commission



Document signed electronically by **Laís Alves de Souza Bonilha, Coordinator of the National Research Ethics Commission**, on 04/09/2024, at 22:09, according to official Brasília time, based on § 3 of art. 4th, of [Decree No. 10,543, of November 13, 2020](#); and art. 8th, of [Ordinance No. 900 of March 31, 2017](#).



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