NIH Public Access Policy Check List

Peer-reviewed journal articles arising from direct funding from an NIH grant, contract, or cooperative agreement must comply with the NIH Public Access Policy.

Step 1: Prepare Manuscript

- Review the journal’s Instructions to Authors for any specific information or instructions related to the NIH Public Access Policy.
- Designate someone (PI, author, staff member) to ensure that the manuscript moves through the submission process and is deposited in PubMed Central. Ultimately, the PI is responsible.
- If you are an author but not the PI, notify the PI that you are working on a manuscript so that s/he can plan to follow its progress.
- Create a My NCBI account. Link it to your eRA Commons account.

Step 2: Establish Agreement with Publisher

- Communicate your need to comply with NIH’s Public Access Policy.
- Understand who will be responsible for submitting the manuscript to the NIH Manuscript Submission system (NIHMS). For Methods A, B, and D, the publisher submits the manuscript. For Method C, the author or designee submits.

Step 3: Submit and Monitor Manuscript

- Regardless of which submission method is used, take the time to ensure that the submission has occurred.
- Approve NIHMS submissions when requested. Initial submission approval and approval to display in PubMed Central once formatting is complete.
- Use the My Bibliography feature of your My NCBI account to link publications to Awards and to monitor compliance.

Step 4: Use PMCID (PubMed Central ID) Number

- Use the NIHMSID number or the notation "PMC Journal - In Process" for up to 3 months after the article is published.
- Use the PMCID number when it's available. You can use a PubMed ID (PMID) to find the corresponding PMCID/NIHMSID using the PMCID Converter.
- Use the My Bibliography feature of My NCBI to manage your compliance to the NIH Public Access Policy. You may share your My Bibliography collection with a delegate to assist with managing the bibliography. [video]
- Use My Bibliography to generate a PDF of publications to submit with Research Performance Progress Reports.