

sufficient. If the Panel determines that the research institution does not have sufficient policies and procedures in place to conduct inquiry, investigation, and adjudication proceedings, or that the research institution is in any way unfit or unprepared to handle the inquiry, investigation, and adjudication in a prompt, unbiased, fair, and independent manner, the ARIO will inform the research institution in writing of the Panel's decision. An appropriate USDA agency, as determined by the Panel, will then conduct the inquiry, investigation, and adjudication of research misconduct in accordance with this part. If an allegation of research misconduct is made regarding extramural research conducted at a Federal research institution (whether USDA or not), it is presumed that the Federal research institution has research misconduct procedures consistent with the OSTP Policy. USDA reserves the right to convene the Panel to assess the sufficiency of a Federal agency's research misconduct procedures, should there be any question whether the agency's procedures will ensure a fair, unbiased, equitable, and independent inquiry, investigation, and adjudication process.

**§ 422.5 Reservation of right to conduct subsequent inquiry, investigation, and adjudication.**

(a) USDA reserves the right to conduct its own inquiry, investigation, and adjudication into allegations of research misconduct at a research institution conducting extramural research subsequent to the proceedings of the research institution related to the same allegation. This may be necessary if the USDA RIO or ARIO believes, in his or her sound discretion, that despite the Panel's finding that the research institution in question had appropriate and OSTP-compliant research misconduct procedures in place, the research institution conducting the extramural research at issue:

- (1) Did not adhere to its own research misconduct procedures;
- (2) Did not conduct research misconduct proceedings in a fair, unbiased, or independent manner; or
- (3) Has not completed research misconduct inquiry, investigation, or adjudication in a timely manner.

(b) Additionally, USDA reserves the right to conduct its own inquiry, investigation, and adjudication into allegations of research misconduct at a research institution conducting extramural research subsequent to the proceedings of the research institution related to the same allegation for any other reason that the USDA RIO or ARIO considers it appropriate to conduct research misconduct proceedings in lieu of the research institution's conducting the extramural research at issue. This right is subject to paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) In cases where the USDA RIO or ARIO believes it is necessary for USDA to conduct its own inquiry, investigation, and adjudication subsequent to the proceedings of the research institution related to the same allegation, the USDA RIO or ARIO shall reconvene the Panel, which will determine whether it is appropriate for the relevant USDA agency to conduct the research misconduct proceedings related to the allegation(s) of research misconduct. If the Panel determines that it is appropriate for a USDA agency to conduct the proceedings, the ARIO will immediately notify the research institution in question. The research institution must then promptly provide the relevant USDA agency with documentation of the research misconduct proceedings the research institution has conducted to that point, and the USDA agency will conduct research misconduct proceedings in accordance with the Agency research misconduct procedures.

**§ 422.6 Notification of USDA of allegations of research misconduct.**

(a) Research institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must promptly notify OIG and the USDA RIO of all allegations of research misconduct involving USDA funds when the institution inquiry into the allegation warrants the institution moving on to an investigation.

(b) Individuals at research institutions who suspect research misconduct at the institution should report allegations in accordance with the institution's research misconduct policies and procedures. Anyone else who suspects

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that researchers or research institutions performing Federally-funded research may have engaged in research misconduct is encouraged to make a formal allegation of research misconduct to OIG.

(1) OIG may be notified using any of the following methods:

(i) Via the OIG Hotline: Telephone: (202) 690–1622, (800) 424–9121, (202) 690–1202 (TDD).

(ii) Email: *usda\_hotline@oig.usda.gov*.

(iii) U.S. Mail: United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General, P.O. Box 23399, Washington, DC 20026–3399.

(2) The USDA RIO may be reached at: USDA Research Integrity Officer, 214W Whitten Building, Washington, DC 20250; telephone: 202–720–5923; Email: *researchintegrity@usda.gov*.

(c) To the extent known, the following details should be included in any formal allegation:

(1) The name of the research projects involved, the nature of the alleged misconduct, and the names of the individual or individuals alleged to be involved in the misconduct;

(2) The source or sources of funding for the research project or research projects involved in the alleged misconduct;

(3) Important dates;

(4) Any documentation that bears upon the allegation; and

(5) Any other potentially relevant information.

(d) Safeguards for informants give individuals the confidence that they can bring allegations of research misconduct made in good faith to the attention of appropriate authorities or serve as informants to an inquiry or an investigation without suffering retaliation. Safeguards include protection against retaliation for informants who make good faith allegations, fair and objective procedures for the examination and resolution of allegations of research misconduct, and diligence in protecting the positions and reputations of those persons who make allegations of research misconduct in good faith. The identity of informants who wish to remain anonymous will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law or regulation.

### § 422.7 Notification of ARIO during an inquiry or investigation.

(a) Research institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must promptly notify the ARIO should the institution become aware during an inquiry or investigation that:

(1) Public health or safety is at risk;

(2) The resources, reputation, or other interests of USDA are in need of protection;

(3) Research activities should be suspended;

(4) Federal action may be needed to protect the interest of a subject of the investigation or of others potentially affected;

(5) A premature public disclosure of the inquiry into or investigation of the allegation may compromise the process;

(6) The scientific community or the public should be informed; or

(7) There is reasonable indication of possible violations of civil or criminal law.

(b) If research misconduct proceedings reveal behavior that may be criminal in nature at any point during the proceedings, the institution must promptly notify the ARIO.

### § 422.8 Communication of research misconduct policies and procedures.

Institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research are to maintain and effectively communicate to their staffs policies and procedures relating to research misconduct, including the guidelines in this part. The institution is to inform their researchers and staff members who conduct USDA-funded extramural research when and under what circumstances USDA is to be notified of allegations of research misconduct, and when and under what circumstances USDA is to be updated on research misconduct proceedings.

### § 422.9 Documents required.

(a) A research institution that conducts USDA-funded extramural research must maintain the following documents related to an allegation of research misconduct at the research institution: