

***Ottawa Health Science Network Research Ethics Board (OHSN-REB) /  
Conseil d'éthique de la recherche du réseau de science de la santé d'Ottawa (CÉR-RSSO)***

## **Instructions for Use of Mail**

**When applicable, the REB application must outline the use of mail as a method of secure file transfer (SFT).**

### **When sending documents to potential/existing participants via mail (Canada Post or courier):**

1. If the potential/existing participant is expected to return a document (e.g.: signed consent form, completed survey, etc.), a pre-addressed envelope with pre-paid postage must be enclosed.
  - a. The return address must be the address of the relevant TOH/UOHI department/division (study staff's personal home address cannot be used).
  - b. Must consider the weight of the documents to ensure adequate pre-paid postage is enclosed.
  - c. Must include instructions for the potential/existing participant on what documents need to be returned, and how they are supposed to return them. If including the option to return documents via email, the [Research Participant Consent to Communicate via Email](#) form must also be enclosed for the potential/existing participant to sign and return as well.
2. Do not use envelopes with windows; the potential/existing participant's address label must be affixed to the outside of the package.
3. Ensure the researcher's return address is clearly visible on the package.
4. The potential/existing participant's information visible on the outside of the package must be limited to only what is required for delivery and shall not include sensitive information such as date of birth or MRN.
5. Label packages as "confidential" on the outside and ensure they are securely sealed.
6. Use registered mail (e.g.: UPS, FedEx, etc.) when sending sensitive information. For example, if sending a blank ICF for an HIV study, registered mail should be used.

### **When receiving documents from potential/existing participants via mail:**

1. If working remotely, coordinate with other research team members to decide on a regular schedule to check the mail room.

### **Resources:**

- Corporate Standard Operating Procedure: Secure Transfer of Information