

NIH Biosafety Modernization Initiative Engagement Summary
Biosafety Administration Association Webinar
December 4, 2025

Background

NIH announced its Biosafety Modernization Initiative in Fall 2025 and began an expansive plan for engaging stakeholders. In addition to holding six regional listening sessions, NIH also participated in smaller engagements to gather individual input to help inform a new NIH biosafety policy.

The Biosafety Administrators Association (BSAA) is an organization that aims to facilitate training for and provide professional support to those administering biosafety research compliance programs. BSAA invited NIH to take part in a webinar focused on the Biosafety Modernization Initiative.

Event Summary

NIH presented an introduction to the Biosafety Modernization Initiative and shared how BSAA members can provide individual feedback on updates to NIH biosafety policies.

BSAA staff then moderated a discussion session for its members to provide individual input. Discussions focused on:

- Implications for expanding the scope of oversight and allocating resources to the riskiest types of research.
- Empowering Institutional Biosafety Committees (IBCs) to be able to make on-site determinations without having to consult with NIH.
- Allowing for delegated or designated review where a biosafety officer or subset of the IBC would be able to approve lower risk experiment and thus reduce the burden on IBCs.
- The need to harmonize requirements and oversight across the federal government to enable a consistent, standardized approach.

NIH thanked individuals for their comments and encouraged participants to continue to provide feedback through the mechanism described on the NIH Office of Science Policy website.