



**NIH Biosafety Modernization Initiative Engagement Summary
Johns Hopkins University Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)
February 27, 2026**

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.

NIH requested to meet with the Johns Hopkins University IBC, which oversees high-containment research and clinical trials involving human gene transfer.

Event Summary

Staff from the Johns Hopkins University provided an overview of their IBC review processes. Attendees provided individual feedback on several topics, including some of the following comments and input:

- The institution is already reviewing experiments involving wild type agents, but a potential scope expansion could impact less resourced institutions.
- Experiments with *Drosophila* may be appropriate to exempt under the new policy, given low biosafety risks.
- Some human gene transfer experiments pose little biosafety risk, but other trials have biosafety risks that need to be mitigated.
- The IBC should be involved in the review and approval of research involving emerging technologies with less characterized safety profiles.

NIH thanked individuals for their comments and encouraged participants to continue providing feedback through the mechanisms listed on the NIH Office of Science Policy website.