

**NIH Biosafety Modernization Initiative Engagement Summary**  
**Lewis-Burke Associates**  
**Dec. 15, 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.

Lewis-Burke Associates is a government relations firm specializing in advocating for public policy relating to science, technology, education, and health.

**Event Summary**

Lewis-Burke invited NIH to participate in a meeting featuring individuals interested in the bioeconomy, biomanufacturing, and biotechnology.

NIH staff provided an informational overview of the NIH Biosafety Modernization Initiative to attendees. The presentation described the current state of NIH biosafety oversight, including an overview of the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules.

During the presentation, NIH also:

- Shared the goals of the Biosafety Modernization Initiative.
- Indicated that the agency was interested in:
  - Hearing feedback on the appropriate scope of oversight under the new policy.
  - Determining how to best allocate resources to oversee the highest risk research.
  - Removing unnecessary burden for low-risk research.

NIH also communicated the timeline and engagement plan for the effort, including the public listening sessions, smaller engagements, and opportunity to provide feedback on an ongoing basis, as well as an opportunity to provide comments when the draft policy is released in 2026.

NIH encouraged meeting attendees to provide any feedback they had using the mechanisms described on the NIH Office of Science Policy website.