

**NIH Biosafety Modernization Initiative Engagement Summary New England Society for
Biomedical Research (NESBR)
April 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.

The New England Society for Biomedical Research (NESBR) (formerly the Massachusetts Society for Medical Research) is the nation's oldest biomedical research support organization, and its mission is to advocate for the responsible and humane use of animals in biomedical research to drive medical innovation forward. NESBR invited NIH to give a presentation on the Biosafety Modernization Initiative to its Biosafety and Biosecurity Committee.

Event Summary

NIH provided an overview of the goals of the Biosafety Modernization Initiative followed by a discussion where NESBR members asked questions on the status of the initiative.

Discussion focused on:

- Impact of the new biosafety policy framework on institutions conducting NIH-funded biomedical research, especially given proposed expansion beyond recombinant and synthetic agents.
- Some of the themes heard from stakeholders to date, regarding the potential policy scope and proposed levels of review for research with different levels of risk.
- The next steps in the policy development process including the opportunity to comment on the draft policy when it is published in the Federal Register.

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

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