



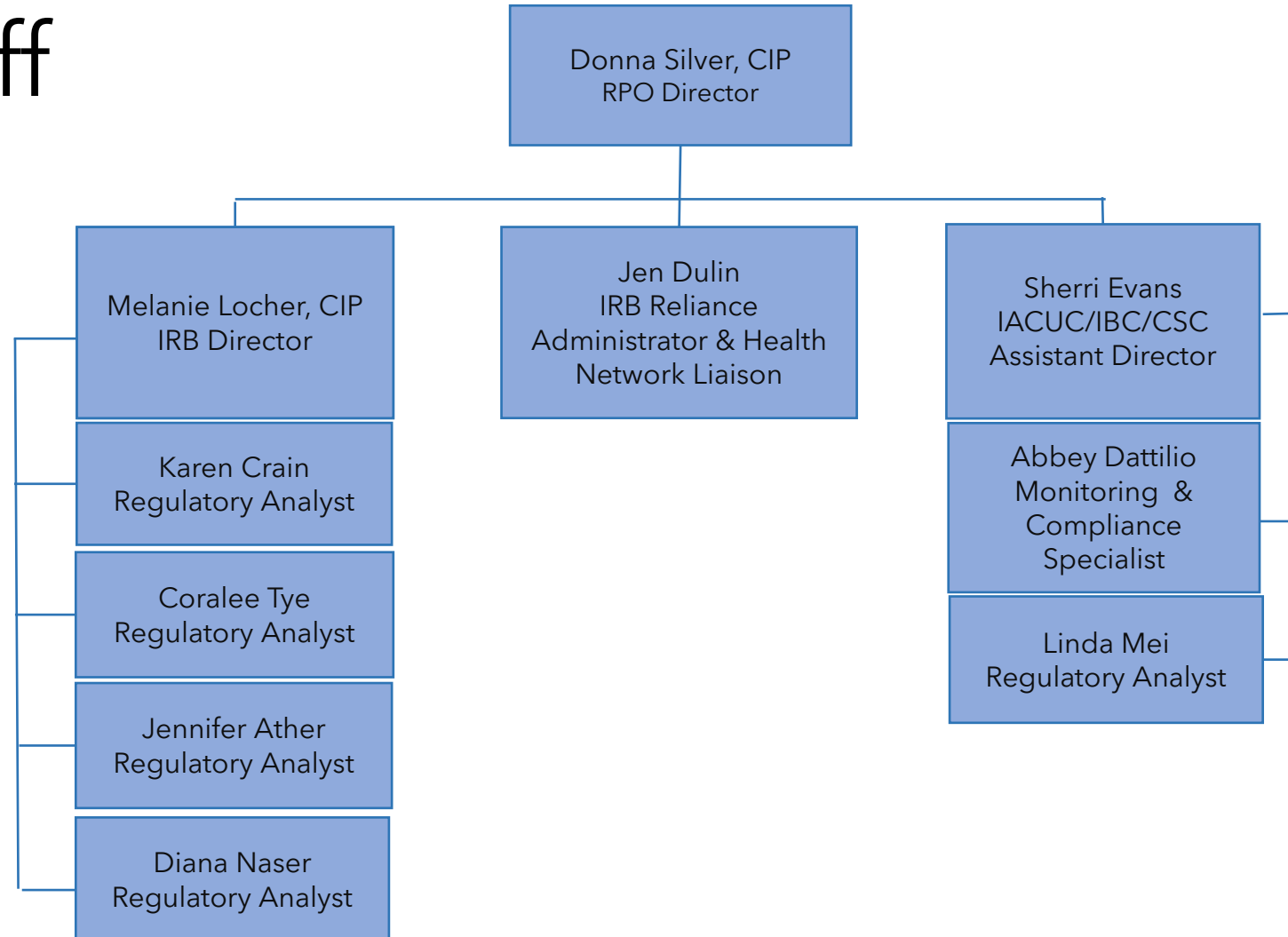
 University
of Vermont

Research Protections Office
Annual Report
March 26, 2026

RPO Mission, Vision & Purpose

The mission of the University of Vermont Research Protections Office (RPO) is to support the University research enterprise in understanding and complying with regulatory and local requirements to ensure safe, ethical and compliant conduct of research. We strive to be recognized for outstanding review and oversight programs that support UVM's research vision and are trusted and respected secondary to our expertise, responsiveness, and collaborative disposition.

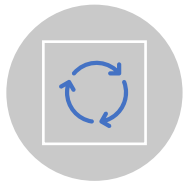
RPO Staff



Activities over the last 12 months



Staff and
Committee News



Regulatory & Local
Updates



On the Technical
Side



Beyond UVM



Training &
Outreach



External
Compliance
Reviews



Statistics

Staff and Committee News

- RPO hired Sherri Evans, Assistant Director for IACUC/IBC/CSC.
- Professor Emeritus, Ted Marcy, M.D., stepped down as the Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB Chair after 21 years of service first as a member then as Chair.
- Jennifer Laurent, PH.D. was appointed Chair of the Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB.
- Erin Shoulberg, Ph.D. was appointed Associate Chair of the Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB.
- Jen Dulin, Single IRB Reliance Administrator and Health Network Liaison, received her certification as an IRB Professional (CIP). This certification confirms an advanced knowledge of regulations and ethical standards in human participant research. Congratulations to Jen!
- November 2025, we celebrated our community members this year at our annual member luncheon. All Committees must have representation and perspective from our community. We are very fortunate to have these individuals volunteer their time.
 - James Currier (CHRMS), Investigative Reporter
 - Margery Rosenblatt (CHRMS), Retired Research Coordinator
 - Lori Olson, (CHRBSS), lawyer
 - Richard Hibbert (IACUC), Retired Minister
 - Dorothy Pumo (IACUC), Retired Biology Teacher and Scientist
 - Karen Oppenheimer (IBC), Fischer Science Representative
 - Paul Held (IBC), Lab Director, Agilent Technologies

Regulatory & Local Updates

IBC

- **Oversight of Dual Use Research of Concern (DURC) and Pathogens with Enhanced Pandemic Potential Notice** [NOT-OD-25-061](#) Effective May 6, 2025 – since rescinded by executive order on May 7, 2025 until further notice.
- **Promoting Maximal Transparency under the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules** ([NOT-OD-25-082](#) Effective June 1, 2025) NIH will publicly post membership information on its website and the IBC is required to publicly post our IBC meeting minutes.
- **Executive Order 14292**: The RPO has responded to sponsor requests for concurrence that research projects approved by our IBC do not meet, and cannot be modified by future amendment, to include activity which meets the definition of dangerous gain-of-function.

IRB

- Local guidance released on use of **Artificial Intelligence in Research**.
- Local guidance released on appropriate **management of research data**.

On the Technical Side

Artificial Intelligence

- RPO is taking part in the Vice President for Research Co-Pilot Project to assess how University employees might be able to use Co-Pilot to reduce burden in their daily work.

Catamount Data Glossary

- Designed to support a common language across the institution, RPO provided common terms specific to our work.

Material Transfer Agreements

- RPO Directors are now notified when it is determined there are biological materials coming in or out of UVM. Having this knowledge assists us in supporting researchers to remain in compliance with regulatory requirements.

Beyond UVM - UVM Health Systems

UVM Health successfully updated their Federalwide Assurance (FWA) with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP).

- The FWA is a binding, written agreement in which UVM Health has committed to the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that it will comply with the regulations for protecting human subjects in research. UVM Health will apply the same level of protections to all human subjects research regardless of funding. UVM Health has had an approved FWA for many years. This update includes:
 - Dr. Ramsey Herrington, Chief Physician Executive of UVM Health, has been named the Institutional Official who is legally authorized to act for the institution and, on behalf of the institution, obligates UVM Health to the [Terms of the Assurance](#).
 - The FWA lists UVM Health System affiliate hospitals thus setting the stage to allow research activities at those sites when approved.

UVM and UVM Health negotiated and executed an Institutional Authorization Agreement (IAA or Reliance Agreement)

- The IAA is a formal, written contract allowing one institution/program to rely on an IRB. Once approved to do so, UVM Health affiliate hospitals will utilize the UVM IRB to review their research.
- UVM Health is securing resources on the Health Systems side to manage the preparations and role out of each site.

Beyond UVM – USDA ARS and Biolabs

- RPO executed agreements for our Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) and our Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) to review and oversee [USDA ARS](#) research projects occurring both on campus and at rural farms.
- The new [UVM Biolabs Innovation Center](#) hosts small biotech companies and UVM's IBC and IACUC Committees are reviewing research projects for those companies.

IRB Training & Outreach

- **Committee Activities** - Monthly Committee education focused on - levels of IRB review and mitigating risks, consent process education, medical safety subcommittee reviews, research involving prisoners, pathways to research HIPAA and refreshers on conducting continuing reviews.
- **Staff Activities** - Three IRB regulatory analysts and the Chair of the CHRMS and both Chairs for CHRBSS were able to attend the national Public Responsibility in Medicine & Research annual meeting.
- **Researchers** - IRB staff provided the following in-person educational opportunities this past year.
 - UVMHC Investigational Drug Services and IRB review
 - Research Conducted in Public Schools
 - Special Protections For Children in Research
 - Vulnerable Populations
 - What projects do and do not require IRB review?
 - Obtaining Informed Consent for Non-English speakers

IACUC/IBC/CSC Training & Outreach

- **Committee Activities** - IACUC members were presented with materials on new technologies and updated procedures in Animal Anesthesia and in Animal Housing procedures. IBC members were presented with materials on downgrading BSL-3 agents to BSL-2, and material on updated definitions and regulations regarding Dual Use and Gain-of-Function.
- **Staff Activities** - Two staff were able to attend the national Public Responsibility in Medicine & Research annual meeting for IACUC. Staff attended multiple webinars on the NIH Strengthening and Modernizing Biosafety Oversight series.
- **Researchers** - New opportunities for assistance were rolled out this past year. Weekly in-person open office hours on Tuesdays from 9:00 - 11:00 and Monthly Protocol Submission Prep in-person meetings that include members from IACUC, IBC, CSC, University Veterinarian and the Biosafety Team for one-stop assistance in protocol development and submission through Click.

External Compliance Reviews

IACUC

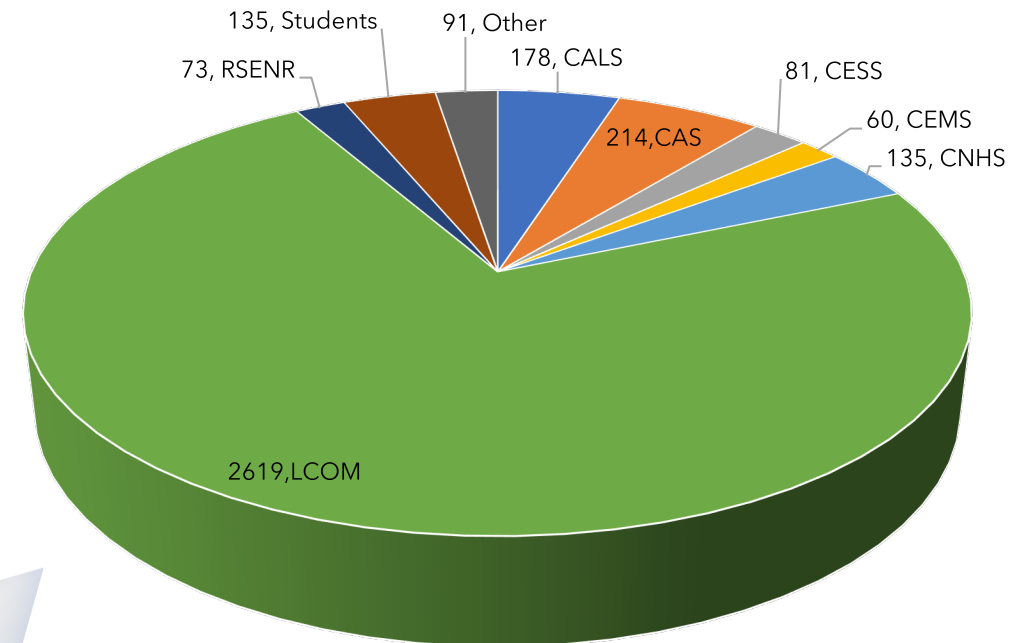
- The USDA conducted a site visit to UVM in February 2025. There were no findings.
- AAALAC conducted the 3-year review of UVM's Animal Welfare Program March 11-13, 2025. RPO appreciates the large collaborative effort that resulted in UVM's continued reaccreditation.

IRB

- The UVM IRB underwent a routine FDA surveillance inspection from September 23-26, 2025. FDA conducts IRB inspections to determine if IRBs are operating in compliance with current FDA regulations and statutory requirements and if the IRBs are following their own written procedures when reviewing investigational drugs and devices. No issues were identified.

Total Submissions by Department

- COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES
- COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
- COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES
- COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES
- COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES
- LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
- RUBENSTEIN SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
- STUDENTS
- Other - 30 Submissions or fewer (Affiliated, Central Vermont Medical Center, Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital, Continuing Education, Extension, General Operating, Grossman School of Business, UVM Medical Center)





RPO Annual Activities					
Activity*	IRB Medical	IRB Behavioral	IACUC	IBC	CSC
New Protocols or Registrations	223	233	30	7	3
Amendments	1676	410	276	121	18
Annual Review	269	99		80	21
Triennial Review			16		
Reportable New Information	19	13			
New Protocol Reliance Agreements	30	0			
Single IRB Consultation Process for Grantees	17	0			
Agreements to Rely on UVM	1	1	2	0	
IRB Safety Committee Reviews	44	0			
IACUC Concerns/Deficiencies			183		
IBC/CSC Incidents				1	3
IRB Quality Assurance Reviews	8	3			
Lab Inspections**/PAM Visits/Other			363	57	21
Compliance Investigations	0	1	2	0	1
External Regulatory Site Visits	1	1	2	0	1
*Activities are weighted differently dependent upon level of risk and extent of review necessary.					

Ongoing Projects and New Initiatives in 2026



Use of AI in research
policy and training



Research Conflict of
Interest Committee
policy and procedures



Continued alignment of IBC
and EHS activities



Ongoing participation
on various technical
committees



Maintain surveillance of
the NIH modernization
of biosafety initiative



New Research Biosafety
Officer

In Closing

We can all take pride in what UVM has accomplished over the past few years as everyone has played an important part of our success.

Thank you.

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