

## President Obama Issues Research Security Guidelines

The Obama Administration is worried that you are unnecessarily stressed. A blogpost by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) cited concern about the stress of compliance with existing federal select agent and toxin regulations for the scientific community. In fact, this was referenced on the blog as one reason to streamline current federal biosecurity regulations.

Last month, President Obama issued an Executive Order that outlines the regulatory roles, responsibilities, and actions to be taken by federal departments and agencies that fund research on select agents.

The major components of the Executive Order include:

- Creation of an Interagency Coordinating Council and a Federal Experts Advisory Panel to coordinate federal security policies and practices
- Development of a tiered list of select agents that takes into account the ability of each agent to cause mass casualties and then crafts security practices specific to each tier
- Coordination of federal oversight and inspection of facilities using select agents

Regulation of select agents and toxins began in 1996 and continued in the aftermath of the 2001 U.S. terror attacks. Since that time, new legislation and regulations have, according to OSTP, made compliance more complicated and confusing for scientists. The OSTP blogpost cited a survey by Texas Tech University School of Law that found that two-thirds of scientists surveyed said they were moderately to highly stressed about the possibility of accidentally breaking a select agent regulation.

Now that the White House has issued the Executive Order, it is up to the U.S. Congress to pass similar legislation codifying the regulations. A bipartisan bill in the U.S. Senate closely mirrors some of the major provisions of the Executive Order. In particular, both the Executive Order and a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives give laboratory inspection authority to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Agriculture. The Senate bill, however, gives the U.S. Department of Homeland Security lead responsibility for laboratory inspections. ■

—Kevin M. Wilson

## NIH: No More Late Papers

After September 25, 2010, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will not accept late homework. As of that date, the NIH will limit the information that can be sent to scientific review officers after grant applications are submitted.

Once the new policy takes effect, grant applicants will be able to submit only the following after submitting an application:

- Revised budget pages due to new funding
- Biographical sketches due to the loss of key personnel
- Letters of support or collaboration due to the loss of key personnel

- Adjustments resulting from natural disasters or change of institution
  - Articles accepted for publication  
The following will not be accepted:
  - Updated Specific Aims or Research Strategy pages
  - Late-breaking research findings
  - Supplemental pages for information not in the application
  - New letters of support or collaboration
- For more information, go to <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-10-091.html>. ■

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