

NIH Public Access Policy - How to Comply

How the New NIH Public Access Law Affects UCSF Researchers

As of April 7, 2008, researchers receiving grant money from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will now have to submit copies of their resulting research papers to PubMed Central (PMC) when their papers are accepted for publication in a journal. PMC will then make these papers freely available to the public no later than 12 months after publication.

PubMed Central (PMC) is the NIH's free digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature.

How to comply with the policy:

1) Address Copyright. **THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP.** Before you sign a publication agreement or similar copyright transfer agreement, make sure that the agreement allows the article to be submitted to NIH in accordance with the Public Access Policy.

In order to comply with this requirement, UC investigators should enclose this letter signed by William Tucker, Executive Director, Office of Technology Transfer and Research Administration, University of California, Office of the President, with any articles submitted to publishers for possible publication. This letter gives notice to the publishers that if accepted for publication the article will be required by law to be posted on PubMed Central. If this letter is not submitted to the publisher at the time the article is sent in for review, it must be submitted along with any publication agreement signed by a UC investigator.

2) Submit the article to NIH. This can be done in a number of ways:

- a. You or someone in your organization (e.g., an assistant) may deposit a copy of the peer reviewed manuscript in the NIH Manuscript Submission (NIHMS) system, which puts it into PubMed Central (PMC).
- b. Your publisher may send the peer-reviewed manuscript files to the NIH Manuscript Submission system for you. In both cases above (a and b), you still will have to verify and approve the manuscript personally via the NIH Manuscript Submission system, which will send you an email message requesting this action (see FAQ on using NIHMS).
- c. Some publishers have agreed to make the final published article of every NIH-funded article publicly available in PubMed Central within 12 months of publication. For these journals, you do not need to do anything to fulfill the submission requirement of the NIH Public Access Policy.

3) Cite. As of May 25, 2008, when citing an article in NIH applications, proposals, and progress reports that falls under the Policy, and was authored or co-authored by you or arose from your NIH award, you must include the PubMed Central reference number (PMCID). This policy includes applications submitted to the NIH for the May 25, 2008 due date and subsequent due dates.

Important dates:

As of April 7, 2008, all articles arising from NIH funds must be submitted to PubMed Central upon acceptance for publication.

As of May 25, 2008, NIH applications, proposals, and progress reports must include the PubMed Central reference number (PMCID) when citing an article that falls under the policy and is authored or co-authored by the investigator, or arose from the investigator's NIH award. This policy includes applications submitted to the NIH for the May 25, 2008 due date and subsequent due dates.

Articles accepted for publication before April 7: If, on May 25 or later, you cite an article that was accepted for publication before April 7, you don't have to include a PMC/NIHMS ID in your citation. The ID is required only for articles that fall under the mandatory policy, so you're not obliged to deposit all older articles that you might cite.