

NIH PUBLIC ACCESS POLICY

The Law

[PubMed Central \(PMC\)](#) is the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) free digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature. Participation in the public NIH PMC system is now **mandatory** as outlined below.

Overview

The [NIH Public Access Policy](#) ensures that the public has access to the published results of NIH funded research. It **requires** scientists to submit final peer-reviewed journal manuscripts that arise from NIH funds to the digital archive PMC **upon acceptance for publication**. To help advance science and improve human health, the Policy requires that these [papers](#) **are accessible to the public on PubMed Central no later than 12 months after publication**.

Important Dates

April 7, 2008

As of April 7, 2008, final peer-reviewed manuscripts arising from NIH funds must be submitted to PubMed Central upon acceptance for publication.

May 25, 2008

As of May 25, 2008, NIH applications, proposals, and progress reports must include the PubMed Central reference number when citing a paper 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.

How to Comply

Address Copyright

Before you sign a publication agreement or similar copyright transfer agreement, make sure that the agreement allows the paper to be submitted to NIH in accordance with the Public Access Policy.

Because the NIH does not participate in the review and signing of copyright agreements for investigators, they suggest that the following language be included in the agreement:

“(Journal) acknowledges that Author retains the right to provide a copy of the final manuscript to the NIH upon acceptance for Journal publication, for public archiving in PubMed Central as soon as possible but no later than 12 months after publication by Journal.”

Submit Papers

Authors may submit a paper to the journal of their choice for publication. There are four methods to ensure that a manuscript is submitted to PubMed Central in compliance with the NIH Public Access Policy (See http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process.htm).

Method A: Publish in a [journal](#) that deposits *all* NIH-funded [final published articles](#) in PMC without author involvement (A list of such journals is located at http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process_journals.htm)

Method B: Make arrangements to have a [publisher](#) deposit a *specific* final published article in PMC.

Method C: Deposit the [final peer-reviewed manuscript](#) in PMC yourself via the NIH Manuscript Submission System ([NIHMS](#)). For a video of this process, see [Submitting an Article to PubMed Central](#) (WMV Video - 12:01)

Method D: Complete the submission process for a final peer-reviewed manuscript that the publisher has deposited in the NIH Manuscript Submission System (NIHMS). For a video demonstrating author tasks on the NIHMS for Method D, see [Approving Submission of an Article to PubMed Central](#) (WMV Video - 6:26).

Cite Papers

When citing their NIH-funded papers in NIH applications, proposals or progress reports, authors must include the PMC reference number for each paper.

For questions and answers about the NIH Public Access Policy, please refer to the Public Access Frequently Asked Questions webpage: <http://publicaccess.nih.gov/FAQ.htm>