

# Steps required for UCSF/SFVA investigators to access VA or VA/CMS data

updated February 2025

- 1) Enter a CHIME VA Data Core consult request
  - <https://consult.ucsf.edu/vadata>
  - Specify research question, predictor and outcome variables, covariate
  - Clarify payment source (VA, NCIRE or UCSF)
  - Dr. Mary Whooley or Dr. Katherine Hoggatt will contact you for a 1-hour free consultation.
  - Investigator time: 15 minutes ||| Approval time: 3 days
  
- 2) Obtain UCSF IRB and VA R&D approval
  - <https://irb.ucsf.edu/welcome-iris>
  - Add all CHIME VA Data Core personnel to the IRB: Mary Whooley, Katherine Hoggatt, Hui Shen, Gary Tarasovsky, Ning Zhang, Yanting Luo, Katherine Williams.
  - Forms required for research at the SFVA
    - [VA Research Protocol Privacy Review Checklist \(Form 10-250\)](#)
    - [Enterprise Research Data Security Plan](#) (ERDSP, VA intranet)
    - [VA R&D Approval Form](#) (requires VA Service Chief then ACOS signatures)
    - [VA Research Privacy and Security Assessment \(RPSS\)](#) - Refer to [instructions for completing the RPSS](#)
  - [Resources for SFVA Research on the UCSF HRPP website](#)
  - Contact for SFVA Human Research Protection Program is [V21SFCHRPP@va.gov](mailto:V21SFCHRPP@va.gov)
  - Investigator time: 1 hour ||| Approval time: 4 weeks
  
- 3) Ask a VA Principal Investigator to establish your scope of practice on the RDIS roster
  - [R&D Information System \(RDIS\)](#)
  - Please provide the following information:
    - CV
    - Date of Birth
    - Professional License or Certification (if any)
    - Preferred email
    - Citizenship status
    - Location of educational institute
    - SSN: do not send over email; call SFVA Data Core Program Manager
  - Investigator time: 15 minutes ||| Approval time: 2 days
  
- 4) Obtain VA WOC appointment (this can be pursued concurrently with IRB process)
  - [Agnes.Wong@va.gov](mailto:Agnes.Wong@va.gov) VA Research Office
  - VA Research Office will provide necessary forms and guide you through the process
    - EQIP (Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing) enrollment form
    - Declaration for Federal Employment
    - I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification
    - Appointment affidavits
    - CV
    - Fingerprint Request
    - Intellectual Property Agreement
  - Request Research Office to order a VA laptop
  - Research Office staff will work with you to make appointments for 1) fingerprinting and 2) PIV/USAccess card. [Schedule PIV card appointment](#) PIV office: Bldg. 4 Room 2A-103
  - Investigator time: 4 hours ||| Approval time: 4 weeks

## Occupational Health Screening

- Physical Exam and Immunization History
- Occupational Health Questionnaire and Screening
- PPD (TB test) – Building 203, GB-17, x22735
- Investigator time: 2 hours ||| Approval time: 2 weeks

## Required VA Training (UCSF training does not suffice)

- [VA CITI Human Subjects Research](#) → Add Affiliation → VA San Francisco, CA-662
- [VA Privacy and HIPAA \(course # 10203\)](#)
- [VA Privacy and Information Security Awareness and Rules of Behavior \(course # 10176\)](#)
- [Mandatory Training-All Personnel \(course # 4300999\)](#)
- For clinically licensed physicians or nurses, credentialing may also be necessary

## 5) Apply for remote access (VPN) to VA network

- Remote Access information (all access)
  - [DigitalVA: VA Remote Access Information](#)
  - Remote Access Portal Help - 855-673-HELP
- Must be on the VA intranet to request remote access. Many users do this at the time they pick up their VA laptop.
  - [VA Remote Access Self Service Portal](#) (request remote access)
  - [VA-provided laptop request](#) (highly recommended, no cost)
- VA supports remote access with two different applications. Users must request remote access and have their remote access accounts enabled for use with either:
  - Citrix Access Gateway (CAG). For users that do not have VA computer.
  - Cisco AnyConnect RESCUE VPN Client. For users with a VA laptop (highly recommended). VA provides laptops to all VA staff, including WOC staff.
- Investigator time: 15 minutes ||| Approval time: 2 days

## 6) Submit DART (Data Access Request Tracker) Application (not necessary for use of only CMS data). To view forms that say “Please wait. . .”, first save to desktop, then open from within Adobe Acrobat application.

- [Data Access Request Tracker \(DART\) Process & Forms](#) Must use Edge (not Chrome)
- [Vital Status Rules of Behavior](#)
- [Real SSN Access Request Form - Exempt and Non-Exempt Research](#) (not necessary for scrambled SSNs)
- HIPAA Waiver (=your IRB approval letter)
- IRB approval letter
- VA R&D Committee Approval letter
- Privacy Checklist
- [Data Use Agreement](#)
- [Research Request Memo](#)
- [CDW Domain Check List](#) Work with your CHIME VA Data Core team to select data
- Contact person: [katherine.williams@ucsf.edu](mailto:katherine.williams@ucsf.edu)
- Investigator time: 4 hours ||| Approval time: 2 weeks

## 7) Request VIREC approval to use CMS Data (only required if using CMS data)

- Submit a [New Request for VA/CMS Data](#) following the steps here: [New Request for VA/CMS Data](#)
  - Always use the latest versions of the forms from the website.
  - [Project Information and Authorization Form \(va.gov\)](#)
  - [VA/CMS Rules of Behavior \(ROB\) Agreement](#) for each person on your DART (regardless of whether they will access CMS data)

- Data Description Form(s). Work with your CHIME VA Data Core team to select data.
  - [VA/CMS Data for Veterans Only](#)
  - [VA/CMS Data for Veterans and Non-Veterans](#)
  - [VA/CMS Non-Repository Data](#)
  - Obtain Final Approval from VIREC.
  - After Data Description Form(s) is pre-reviewed by VIREC, obtain signature from SFVA Privacy Officer (PO) and resubmit to VIREC. VIREC provisions CMS data within 1 to 2 months of receiving signed data description form.
- Investigator time: 4 hours |||| Approval time: 4 weeks

#### 8) Request VINCI workspace (only required if using CMS data without DART application)

- Send a request to [vinci@va.gov](mailto:vinci@va.gov) with:
  - Name of project
  - Name of person with authority to add users to workspace
  - Names of people (with VA appointments) who will access workspace
- More info at: [http://www.hsrp.research.va.gov/for\\_researchers/vinci/](http://www.hsrp.research.va.gov/for_researchers/vinci/)
- Investigator time: 10 minutes |||| Approval time: 2 days