**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Randolph W. Hall, PhD

Vice President of Research

Office of Research

**FROM:** Martin Koning-Bastiaan,

Director of Research Technology

Office of Research

**DATE:**  August 27, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Electronic Signatures in iStar

The University of Southern California Institutional Review Boards maintain and require use of an electronic system for the submission and approval of human subjects research (iStar). This system is a validated, auditable, protected, and documented system as defined by 21 CFR Part 11.

Access and user accounts in this system are strictly enforced with security policies, password protection and encryption. Additionally, all users must agree to a written policy that they agree that the electronic signature has the same force as a written one and prohibits use of an account by someone other than the person whose account it is.

Since IRB members, chairs, and staff also adhere to this policy, the issuance of correspondence through the iStar system is deemed official and does not require further proof of its authenticity. Because of this, the IRB discontinued the issuance of physical correspondence for research submitted through the electronic system concurrent with its mandatory adoption in 2005.