

## Debriefing Statements:

“Debriefing” is a procedure that occurs at the conclusion of the human subject’s participation in the study (although, in cases that warrant it, a full debriefing may occur at the conclusion of the study), through which the subject is provided the opportunity to discuss with the researcher the details of the research. Accordingly, a debriefing statement is a statement that is given (or read) to the research participants at the conclusion of their participation in the study. In cases in which revealing the purpose or other details of the research may possibly compromise ongoing data collection, researchers may debrief research subjects fully after the completion of the data collection. Researchers debrief research participants to help ensure that the participants are fully restored to the condition in which they were prior to their involvement in the study, are informed of details they may not have known prior to participating in the study (e.g., deception that may have been employed and why), and are provided with appropriate resources and contact information.

Debriefing statements typically include the following (#2-6 stated in lay language):

1. Study title and the name(s) of the principal investigator(s).
2. The goals of the study/ why the study was developed; any predictions/hypotheses of the study; what the researcher(s) expect(s) to learn from the study; the research questions being studied; etc. Included in this section, as applicable, is explanation of any deception employed in the study and the reasons for it.
3. Withdrawal procedures/information on the opportunity to withdraw.
4. If available, results of the study thus far.
5. Information on whether/how the participant can/will be informed of the results of the study.
6. Additional resources for research participants, including
  - a. Contact information for IRB chair (for ethical concerns/information on one’s rights as a research subject).
  - b. Additional useful resources and/or support services for the research participant. For example, if a study may evoke distress in respondents, researchers may provide contact information for relevant crisis hotlines and mental health facilities and services; if a study is on food insecurity, providing a list of local food banks or the website for SNAP might be appropriate.
  - c. Researchers’ contact information to let research participants know to whom and how they can direct questions related to the research in the future.
  - d. Research references (e.g., one or two sources for those wanting to learn more about the research subject).
7. A thank you to the subjects for their participation.

Lafayette IRB **requires** a debriefing statement for studies involving deception and for those in which support resources are necessary to help minimize adverse effects to participants (unless a waiver is obtained). In most other cases, Lafayette IRB **strongly recommends** debriefing as an educational tool--as a way to provide additional information and resources to the research participants, to thank them for their participation, and to give them an additional moment to reflect on the study at its conclusion and ask questions of the researcher(s).