* Regardless of the approach used to conduct research, researchers must ensure that participants receive the following:

	+ The protection from harm
	+ The right to voluntary and informed participation
	+ The right to privacy
	+ The researcher’s honesty with professional colleagues
* All research participants must be protected from unnecessary and atypical physical or psychological harm.
* Participants have the right to informed consent, which is a combination of informed and voluntary participation; they must provide informed consent to participate.
* Informed consent is typically provided by signing a form that describes what participation in the study entails.
* When participants over the age of 18 agree to participate in the study, they are providing their consent.
* Minors involved in any research study can provide only assent, because they are not of legal consenting age.
* An informed consent form should always include the following:

	+ A brief description of the study
	+ A description of participant activities and duration of involvement
	+ A statement indicating that participation is voluntary and may be terminated at the participant’s discretion
	+ Description of any potential risk as well as potential benefits
	+ A guarantee that all data remain confidential and anonymous
	+ The researcher’s name and contact information, as well as contact information for an official office
	+ An offer to provide a summary of the findings of the study
	+ A place for participants to sign and date the form
* Accurate disclosure is when the researcher informs participants only of the details that directly impact them as participants in the study.
* Privacy can be attained through an assurance of anonymity, where identities are kept hidden from the researcher.
* Privacy can also be attained through assurance of confidentiality, where identities are known, but not disclosed to people outside of the study.
* Regarding privacy, confidentiality is the minimal practice.
* Researchers have the important ethical obligation always to report their findings in a complete and honest manner.
* Ethical issues may be difficult to identify at the outset of a qualitative study, due to its emerging nature.
* Ethical dilemmas may arise during qualitative studies, due to the intimate nature of data collection and the close involvement of the researcher with participants in the setting.
* Researchers must ensure that their involvement and investment in the research setting do not jeopardize the quality of the research.
* Institutional review boards (IRBs) are committees at colleges, universities, or research institutions that review and approve research studies.
* Three categories of IRB review are *exempt from review*, *expedited review*, and *full board review*.
* Be sure to familiarize yourself with the process used by the IRB on your campus so you provide all the required information on your application.
* Two online courses for formal preparation to conduct research with human participants are offered by the National Institutes of Health and the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative.