**Before you begin**

Consent forms are in addition to participant information sheets. There is some compulsory information in information sheets that must be included in a consent form if you wish to combine these.

It’s important to check what is required by law (your legal basis for the research) and what might be needed or not needed for your specific project (i.e., audio, pictures, and video recordings).

If you have any questions, please contact research@essex.gov.uk

 **EXAMPLE OF A CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH**

**When would I use a consent form?**

Your business area privacy statement will explain if the research is covered but recordings and pictures often need consent: [www.essex.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.essex.gov.uk/privacy)

If you are researching with members of the public including service users, do you wish to take handwritten notes or do want to record the research online (in Zoom or Teams) or record audio, take pictures or videos? If so, it’s likely you will need the research participant to sign consent for this.

**What happens if participants do not wish to consent?**

It may mean that you take handwritten notes instead of recordings of the research session, or you may decide to recruit a different participant to the research.

**What if I’m unclear about whether to use a consent form and what it should contain?**

If you are unclear whether you need a consent for your research, you can always check this with Information Governance and ask them to review a draft once you have developed one.

**Consent form structure**



Consent forms are usually structured in terms of:

* An introduction or overview of what the form is about and what legislation it complies with.
* The consent statements that you wish the participant to agree to
* Participant contact details

Forms may be sent by email (e.g. a word document), paper-based and sent by mail or online.

**Section 1 – Consent form introduction**

**Overview**

You are receiving this because you have been asked to take part in a research or engagement activity with Essex County Council's [insert team name]. Please complete the form to give your consent to take part in the activity.

Essex County Council (ECC) fully complies with information legislation. If you would like the full details of how we use personal data, and the rights you have about its use, please go to [www.essex.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.essex.gov.uk/privacy) or call 03457 430430.

ECC handles information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection legislation.

* Please read the statements below.
* Tick the boxes to confirm you understand and agree to each statement.
* Some statements are optional, and you will still be able to take part in the research if you do not consent to these.
* If you have any questions, please ask the researcher before signing.

 **EXAMPLE OF A CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH**

 **EXAMPLE OF A CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH**

**Compulsory and optional statements**



Some consent statements might be compulsory for your research to continue and work well whilst others might be optional.

For example, digital ethnography participants needed to consent to share contact details with the provider, read their privacy statement and allow for the anonymised outputs and quotes from the system to be shared with the Commissioning Team as a given.

**Section 2 – Consent form statements**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Statements** | **I understand / confirm** |
| I confirm I have read the participant information sheet |  |
| I understand staff from ECC [Team] will want to take direct quotes from the research session. These may be shared publicly but will not contain identifiable information.  |  |
| I understand that the results report can be made public. It will not contain any identifiable information (unless I have consented otherwise). |  |
| I understand that quotes, case studies and themes may be taken from the report and used for other ECC projects. |  |
|  |
| **Statements usually contained in participant information sheet** |
| I understand my participation is voluntary, and I can stop at any time. Participation will not affect any ECC services I may currently use.  |  |
| I understand if I tell the researcher something that concerns them about the risk of harm to myself or someone else they will need to contact a safeguarding team or other support service. This is the only reason where confidentiality may be breached. |  |
| I understand that the results report that are published can be held in public archives indefinitely. It will not contain any identifiable information (unless I have consented otherwise). |  |
| I confirm I have read and understood the ECC privacy policy<https://www.essex.gov.uk/privacy> [You should link to your business area privacy statement] |  |

**Section 2 – Consent form statements (cont.)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Consent statements** | **I agree** | **I don’t agree** |
| I understand staff from ECC [Team] will want to take audio recordings (and transcriptions) of the research sessions. These may be shared with other ECC Teams or partner organisations. Anything shared will not contain identifiable information (optional) |  |  |
| I understand staff from ECC [Team] will want to take pictures or copies of documents I share during the research sessions. These may be shared with other ECC Teams or organisations we work with. Anything shared will not contain identifiable information (optional) |  |  |
| I understand staff from ECC [Team] will want to take video recordings (and transcriptions) of the research sessions. These may be shared with other ECC Teams or partner organisations. Anything shared will not contain identifiable information (optional) |  |  |
| I confirm that audio recordings that I share with or are taken by ECC staff can be shared in a public report. Anything shared will not contain any identifiable information (optional) |  |  |
| I confirm that pictures or documents I share with or are taken by ECC staff can be shared in a public report. Anything shared will not contain any identifiable information (optional) |  |  |
| I confirm that videos that I share with or are taken by ECC staff can be shared in a public report (optional) |  |  |

**Consent statements**



Some examples of statements are provided. If you intend on taking audio recordings but not pictures remove this from the form. The same applies if you don’t intend on making a report public you can remove these statements but bear in mind, that once it is shared by others it could be made public.

You can also include opportunities for participants to sign-up for further research in this form but only if it forms part of the current project. Open ended ‘future’ research requests aren’t appropriate.

 **EXAMPLE OF A CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH**

 **EXAMPLES OF CONSENT FORMS FOR RESEARCH**

**‘Signing’ the form**



Ask participants to supply their contact details and ‘sign’ the form.

Also provide details on how people can withdraw their consent. Even if the report has been made public efforts need to be made to remove the participants, quotes, pictures etc., if consent is withdrawn.

**Section 3 – Wrapping up**

Please complete the details below to provide your consent to take part in the activity.

If at any point you decide you would like to withdraw your consent, this is your right, and we will remove any information you have provided from our study.

You also reserve the right to withdraw your permission to be contacted for future research about this project at any time; by contacting the us at [contact email address].

**Full name:**

**Email**

**address:**

**Phone**

**number:**