



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Department of Mexican American & Latina/o Studies

210 W. 24th St. • F9200 • Austin, TX 78712 • (512) 471-4557 • www.utexas.edu

Consent to Participate in Research

Basic Study Information

Title of the Project: Community Oversight of Law Enforcement
Principal Investigator: Michael Roy Hames-García
Professor of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies
The University of Texas at Austin
Contact: hames.garcia@utexas.edu or (541) 743-1801

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to be part of a research study. This consent form will help you choose whether or not to participate in the study. Feel free to ask if anything is not clear in this consent form.

Important Information about this Research Study

Things you should know:

- The purpose of the study is to understand why people become involved in community oversight of law enforcement, the form their involvement takes, what shapes that involvement, and how they understand their involvement.
- In order to participate, you must be an adult who is or has been a participant in law enforcement oversight (either through an official or unofficial capacity) or an adult with a perspective on such oversight deemed important by the researcher(s) in this study.
- If you choose to participate, you will be asked to participate in an interview either in person in a location acceptable to you or virtually by an electronic means acceptable to you. This will take between 60 and 90 minutes. You may be asked to participate in a shorter follow-up interview or to respond to follow-up questions in person or electronically. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. You may choose to participate anonymously.
- Risks or discomforts from this research include the possible release of personally identifying information about you or the risk that someone might link statements made during your interview with you. Preventative measures will be taken to minimize these risks, but no preventative measures can be failsafe.
- There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study other than the possibility that participation may enable a better understanding for yourself and your involvement in law enforcement oversight.
- Taking part in this research study is voluntary. You do not have to participate, and you can stop at any time.

More detailed information will be described later in this form. Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research study.

What is the study about and why are we doing it?

The purpose of the study is to understand how and why people oversee law enforcement agencies in their communities. This study includes how and why *formal* oversight processes take shape and become accepted and established features of public policy. Examples of such processes include inspectors general, police auditors, independent review boards, oversight commissions, and internal affairs divisions. This study also includes how and why people engage in *informal* oversight practices. Examples of such practices include journalism, litigation, activism, and community organizing. You are being asked to participate because of your involvement in one or more of the processes and practices described above.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked

- to be interviewed about your involvement in law enforcement oversight;
- to answer questions about your experiences with law enforcement in general;
- to answer questions about your values and attitudes toward law enforcement and oversight in general;
- to answer questions about your opinions on the improvement of law enforcement and law enforcement oversight;
- to answer questions about your knowledge and opinions regarding other, related subjects including law enforcement reform; and
- to answer related, follow up questions.

How long will you be in this study and how many people will be in the study?

Participation in this study will last between 60 and 90 minutes for an interview, although additional time may be required to respond to follow-up questions in the days, weeks, or months following an interview. Responding to follow-up questions is optional, but may help to clarify elements of your interview and to ensure accuracy. It is expected that between 150 and 200 participants will be interviewed for this study in multiple locations over the course of three-to-four years.

What risks and discomforts might you experience from being in this study?

There are some risks you might experience from being in this study. These include stress, emotional distress, inconvenience, and possible loss of privacy and confidentiality associated with participating in a research study. Measures will be taken to protect your confidentiality, but no preventative measures can be failsafe even in the event that you choose to participate in this study anonymously.

If you find participation to be distressing or if it raises legal concerns for you, the researchers can assist you in identifying resources for counseling or legal advocacy but are not qualified to provide such services themselves.

The researchers will let you know about any significant new findings (such as additional risks or discomforts) that might make you change your mind about participating in this study and will also contact you in the event of a data breach affecting your personal information.

How could you benefit from this study?

While there will be no anticipated direct benefit to you, others might benefit because this study may help policy makers design and implement improved procedures for overseeing law enforcement.

What will happen to the samples and/or data we collect from you?

As part of this study your interview will be audio recorded and transcribed.

How will we protect your information?

If you choose to be interviewed anonymously, the researchers will remove any references that they believe could reasonably identify you. If you choose to be interviewed anonymously, your name and any other information that can directly identify you will be stored separately from the data collected as part of the project. If you do not choose anonymity, then your name will remain associated with your interview transcript and the original audio recording will be destroyed.

If you agree, we plan on sharing your transcript with other researchers. Those researchers in turn may share your transcript with additional researchers. Their storage/sharing policies are outlined on a separate form. Future research studies may be similar to this study or may be very different. The data shared with other researchers will only include information that can directly identify you if you do not opt for anonymity. Researchers will not contact you for additional permission to use this information.

Information about you may be given to the following organizations with representatives of UT Austin and the UT Austin Institutional Review Board.

We plan to publish the results from this study. To protect your privacy, will not include any information that could directly identify you if you choose to be interviewed anonymously. If you **do not** choose to be interviewed anonymously, then we may or may not include information that could directly identify you.

What will happen to the information we collect about you after the study is over?

We will keep your research data to archive for possible use by future researchers. If you **do not** choose to be interviewed anonymously, your name and other information that can directly identify you will remain part of your transcript. If you do choose to be interviewed anonymously, your name and other information that can directly identify you will be deleted from the research data collected as part of the project.

How will we compensate you for being part of the study?

You will not receive any type of payment for your participation.

Your Participation in this Study is Voluntary

It is totally up to you to decide to be in this research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. Your decision to participate will not affect your relationship with The University of Texas at Austin. You will not lose any benefits or rights you already had if you decide not to participate. Even if you decide to be part of the study now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

Contact Information for the Study Team

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact:

Michael Hames-García

Phone: (541) 743-1801

Email: hames.garcia@utexas.edu

Contact Information for Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the following:

The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board

Phone: 512-232-1543

Email: irb@austin.utexas.edu

Please reference the protocol number found at the top of this document.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. We will give you a copy of this document for your records. We will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I understand what the study is about and my questions so far have been answered. I agree to take part in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature

Date