

ARIC Data Sharing Policy on Geocode Data

1. Geocoded location data for ARIC study participants held by any investigator must be stored on secure servers and may not be shared. Geocode data may not be linked to genetic information. Investigators must adhere to the NIH Best Security Practices for Controlled-Access Data (<https://osp.od.nih.gov/scientific-sharing/requesting-access-to-controlled-access-data-maintained-in-nih-designated-data-repositories-e-g-dbgap/>).
2. Access to individual level cohort participant location information (longitude, latitude, or geocode) is restricted. If requested by an approved ancillary study or manuscript project the ARIC Coordinating Center (CC) may provide derived location data based on geocodes. The ARIC CC may also approve access to geocodes on secure workspace maintained by a contract-supported ARIC field center or lab, if requested.
3. ARIC investigators with an approved manuscript proposal or ancillary study that requires direct access to geocode data may receive data files containing geocodes and health information provided with ARIC IDs from the CC, under a DUA indicating that that a secure work environment is provided for these data. Investigators provide written confirmation that any data files containing geocode data provided by the CC have been destroyed once project is completed.
4. Qualified outside researchers with an approved ancillary study or manuscript project may receive geocode data from the CC for the purpose of creating derived variables (e.g., linkage with exposure or outcome information). Only dummy IDs will be provided and no health information or genotype data. Following the creation of the linkage or derived data the outside researcher will return the data file to the CC for cross-walk to the original ARIC IDs. The cross-walk information to ARIC IDs only resides at the ARIC CC. **The ARIC CC will provide the outside researcher with a data file containing the derived data (no latitudes and longitudes) and other required data (phenotype and genotype data specified in the approved manuscript or ancillary study proposal) for the project after the outside investigator provides written confirmation that the data file containing geocode data provided by the CC have been destroyed.**