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Office of Research Integrity: a Reflection of Disputes and Misunderstandings

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Each year, the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) provides billions of dollars to support over 30,000 extramural research grants to more than 2,000 institutions in the U.S. and other countries. The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) is responsible for protecting the integrity of the research supported by the grants awarded for the PHS extramural research program. One of its responsibilities includes monitoring investigations into alleged or suspected scientific misconduct by institutions that receive the PHS funds. However, not all of the alleged or suspected scientific misconduct meet the the PHS definition of scientific misconduct. Among the wide range of allegations that the ORI receives are those that are ultimately determined to be authorship disputes. This article will report on ORI's functions and review some of the commonly reported allegations that do not constitute scientific misconduct according to the PHS definition.

Key words: authorship; ethics in publishing; fraud, scientific; intellectual property; mentorships; ownership; plagiarism; research misconduct; scientific misconduct; United States Office of Research Integrity