INSTRUCTIONS AND EXAMPLE:
Data/Sample Access Approval Letter

When is an approval letter required? An approval letter is required when using data/samples owned by another individual, organization or institution, and some owners of data/samples require a request form to be completed ahead of time.

Who writes the letter? Access approval letters are written and signed by an individual, PI, or governing committee who owns and administers the data. The letter should be printed on the data owner’s letterhead stationery.

What information should the letter include? The content of a typical letter is summarized below. However, not all information is required for all projects, and some projects may require additional information. If you have questions about the content of this letter, please contact apply@heart.org.

MEMORANDUM
DATE: <Today’s date>
TO: <AHA Applicant’s name>
FROM: <Data owner’s name, title, and contact information>
SIGNATURE: __________________________
RE: PERMISSION FOR USE OF DATA/SAMPLES
TITLE: <AHA Proposal Title and application ID>

The data owner should:

• indicate that the inquirer is granted permission to analyze the data (or samples) collected during the project, “original project name,” expressly for the CE/thesis/dissertation project titled, “student’s project name.”

• address whether personal identifiers are present in the data to be provided. If identifiers are present, discuss whether the inquirer will be given access to identifiers.

• indicate whether data were collected with the approval of an Institutional Review Board (IRB) and, optionally, if the data is broadly consented to be shared with researchers. If available, please attach a copy of the study’s IRB approval letter.