



Policy on Oversight of Investigator-Maintained Animal Colonies

Background: Federal regulations specify that animal care must be provided by qualified personnel and that the attending veterinarian must have the authority to ensure adequate veterinary care and oversee other aspects of animal care and use. In some cases, groups of vertebrate animals, including fish and amphibians--whether housed in conventional animal facilities, laboratories, or satellite facilities--are maintained by research staff. In order to insure consistency of care and documentation of care, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) implemented a policy that requires professional animal care staff to oversee all animal care on campus, even when care is provide in facilities outside centrally managed animal care facilities.

Policy: Principal investigators (PI's) who are approved by the IACUC to provide animal care (husbandry, sanitation, and/or daily monitoring) to animals assigned to an animal use protocol are subject to routine oversight by the Division of Animal Resources. This policy is not intended apply to agricultural animals housed at the UIUC livestock and poultry research units.

Role of the Investigator: PI's who intend to provide their own animal husbandry must justify this in the pertinent animal use protocols and provide to the IACUC a written description of the care to be provided.

Animal Care Provided By Investigators: Animal care must be consistent with that provided by professional animal care staff and must meet pertinent requirements described in the Guide, Ag Guide, and the AWR. Written descriptions of care must include daily observation of all animals; methods and frequencies for provision of feed, water, and clean bedding when appropriate; cage, tank, housing accessories and room sanitation methods and frequency; and the names and qualifications of those persons providing care. Daily observation of animals, monitoring of relevant environmental parameters such as room or water temperatures, feeding and watering, and sanitation must be documented and posted near animal enclosures. This may be a checklist or log with space provided for care providers to initial completed tasks each day. Logs should also include information on receipt of new animals, daily census, and removal of animals due to experimental use, transfer to another protocol or site, or unanticipated deaths. The PI is responsible for immediate notification of veterinary staff of health problems. The PI is also responsible for gaining unrestricted access to the facility for DAR veterinary and professional animal care staff for areas located outside of centralized animal facilities.

Role of the Division of Animal Resources (DAR): The Division of Animal Resources is responsible for oversight of animal care in all non-agricultural animal holding areas. The animal care staff visits each on-campus animal holding area at least once each week to assure that adequate care has been provided in accordance with written husbandry procedures. Veterinary professional staff will visit on-campus satellite holding facilities at least every other month. Animal care staff and veterinary staff report failures to comply with written procedures to the PI. The Attending Veterinarian will determine, after consultation with the PI, when repeated failure to provide or document adequate care requires more frequent oversight by the animal care staff. Monitoring of off-campus sites will be at the discretion of the Attending Veterinarian.

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Oversight: The IACUC will visit all animal holding rooms at least semiannually and prior to allowing housing of animals in an area not previously approved for that purpose. During visits, the IACUC may request or inspect records of animal husbandry and veterinary care, including animal medical records. The IACUC will take actions such as requesting additional oversight or direct care by professional staff when needed to insure adequate care of animals.

Reference(s):

- Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide), NRC, 1996
- Animal Welfare Regulations (AWR), 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter A
- U.S. Government Principles for the Care and Use of Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training.

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