



## Guidelines for the Transportation of Animals

**Introduction:** The IACUC is responsible for oversight and assurance of the well-being of research and teaching animals during transportation between study areas. The transport of regulated species must be in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act and with the Title 9 Code of Federal Regulations enforced by the USDA. General standards for safe transport of a variety of species are available in *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* and *The Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching*. The overarching principles for safeguarding animals during transport include maintenance of health, avoidance of exposure to potential pathogens, prevention of escape, prevention of injury, and reduction of stressors such as temperature extremes, aversive odors, excessive noises, and confrontations with other animals. Appropriate animal transport must also minimize risks to animal care and research personnel. In addition, when animals must be transported through public areas, the safety of the general public must be considered. UIUC personnel must comply with the following guidelines unless specific exemptions are granted by the IACUC as detailed in an approved animal use protocol for clinical necessity as determined by the Attending Veterinarians.

### General Guidelines

- Animals and animal caging must be contained during transport to protect the animals, minimize risk of escape, and to protect personnel along the transport route from potential exposure to hazards.
- Transportation methods must minimize stress to the animals through maintaining appropriate ventilation, avoiding extremes in temperature and humidity, minimizing noise and odors, preventing exposure to pathogens, and minimizing interactions with people or other animals.
- The cage, carrier, container, or vehicle must prevent escape of the animals through locking mechanisms or latches that cannot be dislodged by movement. Animal enclosures should be appropriately secured to the transport vehicle or cart, should not be needlessly jostled, tilted, or unsafely stacked.
- Enclosures must be appropriately clean and sanitized to prevent the spread of pathogenic organisms, animal allergens, and animal wastes. Animal cargo areas should be clean and decontaminated as needed to protect the health of humans and other animals.

### Guidelines for Transporting Rodents

- When transporting rodents out-of-doors a secondary enclosure is required (e.g., a reusable container, disposable box, etc.). A secondary enclosure should be considered when rodents are transported between connected areas or through public corridors.
- Individuals transporting the animals should be aware of the risks to themselves and others of exposure to allergens and to negative reactions by those who are opposed to animal use in

research and teaching. Avoid public areas when possible. When it is necessary to transport rodents through public areas, the animals should be obscured from view by drapes, shrouds, opaque secondary enclosures, a specialized transport cart or carrier, etc.

- Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used to prevent crosscontamination among animals and between humans and animals (e.g. pathogenic organisms and other biological materials, chemicals, fomites, etc.).
- Release of animal dander, airborne animal allergens and animal bedding into the environment must be minimized. Personnel should ensure that filter tops or other effective covers are used on rodent cages and cages or carriers are covered during transport. Empty, soiled cages or carriers should be covered during transport.
- Temperature extremes must be avoided. Special precautions must be taken to protect animals from heat or cold stress when climatic temperatures are inappropriate for the species (e.g., below 45 F or about 85 F). Please consult a DAR or AACUP veterinarian for specific temperature recommendations.
- Reusable primary or secondary enclosures must be sanitized between use to prevent the spread of pathogenic microorganisms, animal wastes and allergens. When any body fluids (blood, urine, saliva, mucus), feces, or dirty bedding contacts any surface outside the enclosures, it should be removed and the area appropriately disinfected as soon as possible.

### **Guidelines for Use of Personal Vehicles to Transport Animals**

- Whenever possible a University – owned vehicle should be used to transport animals. If it is necessary to use a personal vehicle, the following conditions must be met:
  - 1) The use of a personal vehicle for transport of animals must be described in the protocol and approved by the IACUC
  - 2) The animal enclosures must be appropriately secured to prevent spillage
  - 3) Traditional laboratory animals (rodents, rabbits, dogs, cats, etc.) should be protected from direct sunlight. Transport of livestock or poultry in open trailers or trucks may be appropriate but consideration of prolonged exposure to sun and ambient temperatures is required.
  - 4) Closed vehicles used for animal transport must be environmentally controlled (i.e. heating, ventilation, and air conditioning)
  - 5) Plastic or a similarly impermeable material that can be sanitized should be placed under the transport cages or carriers

Questions, concerns, or comments about these guidelines can be addressed to the UIUC IACUC (333-7789), the Division of Animal Resources (333-2564) or the Agricultural Animal Care and Use Program (265-6790).

*Approved 03/14/08*