

15.99.07.R1 Use of Vertebrate Animals

Revised October 27, 2023
Next Scheduled Review: October 27, 2028



Rule Summary

Texas A&M University-Commerce (A&M Commerce) is committed to the humane and ethical treatment of vertebrate animals used in research, teaching and testing; and complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, polices and guidelines.

This rule provides guidance in complying with federal and state laws, regulations, and guidelines relating to the humane and ethical use of vertebrate animals in research, teaching and testing. This rule applies to all employees and students who use vertebrate animals in research, teaching or testing.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1 ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1 All vertebrate animals, including animals not owned by A&M-Commerce, used in research, teaching and/or testing, regardless of funding source, will be provided humane care and treatment and fall within the scope of this rule.
- 1.2 In addition to on-campus activities, this rule includes animal(s) used in teaching, testing and/or research conducted:
 - 1.2.1 In the field by member faculty, students or staff;
 - 1.2.2 By member students at other institutions as part of the completion of a degree;
 - 1.2.3 At another institution as part of a joint contract;
 - 1.2.4 In off-campus activities involving a student as part of the completion of a member's course;
 - 1.2.5 In the teaching of member undergraduate and graduate courses; and
 - 1.2.6 With client-owned animals participating in clinical research studies.

- 1.3 A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) registration or license will be obtained prior to performing any activity subject to the Animal Welfare Act.
- 1.4 A Public Health Service (PHS) Animal Welfare Assurance (Assurance) from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) will be obtained prior to performing any activity supported by PHS involving animals.
- 1.5 If A&M-Commerce is not required, by federal regulations, to register with the USDA and/or obtain an Assurance from OLAW, it will follow:
 - 1.5.1 The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals when conducting research, teaching or testing activities involving non-agricultural animals and biomedical research activities in agricultural animals; and
 - 1.5.2 The Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching when conducting research, teaching and/or testing activities involving agricultural animals intended for improving animal nutrition, breeding, management, or production efficiency or for improving the quality of food and fiber.
- 1.6 The President will establish an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) as needed to meet the university's mission.
- 1.7 The use of vertebrate animals, whether for research, teaching or testing purposes, shall be described in an Animal Use Protocol (AUP). The AUP form provides relevant information regarding the appropriate use of the animals in research, teaching or testing activities.
 - 1.7.1 For each project involving animals used in research, teaching or testing, an AUP must be approved by the IACUC.
 - 1.7.2 An approved and current AUP for all animal activities must be in place at all times animals are housed or used for research, testing or teaching.
 - 1.7.3 All modifications to approved animal activities must be approved prior to initiation of the changes.

2 INSTITUTIONAL OFFICIAL (IO)

- 2.1 The President has appointed the Vice President for Research and Economic Development to serve as the Institutional Official (IO) with administrative authority to commit institutional resources to ensure that the animal care and use program will comply with federal and state requirements.
- 2.2 The IO executes the USDA registration(s), PHS assurance(s), and reports submitted to these agencies as required.
- 2.3 The IO has been delegated authority by the President to appoint and remove members of the IACUC.

3 INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE (IACUC)

- 3.1 The IACUC is appointed, structured and performs duties and functions as set forth in the most current version of the documents referenced at the end of this rule or other applicable documents promulgated by relevant government agencies.
- 3.2 The IACUC shall be appointed by the IO. Responsibility for oversight of the IACUC is delegated to the Director of Research Compliance.
- 3.3 The IACUC approves, disapproves or requests modifications of AUPs. The IACUC also conducts semi-annual facility inspections, a semi-annual review of the Animal Care and Use Program and investigates reports of non-compliance and concerns involving the care and use of animals. The IACUC may also suspend a previously approved AUP covered by this rule for non-compliance. The IACUC has full authority to enter any areas where animals are used or housed for research, teaching and/or testing to ensure compliance. A decision by the IACUC not to approve research, teaching or testing may not be overridden by the IO. The IO may override a decision by the IACUC, where the IACUC has approved research, teaching or testing.
- 3.4 The IACUC conducts all of those duties specifically assigned to it in government regulations and policies. In addition to duties mandated in government regulations and policies, the IACUC reviews all aspects of the program for the humane care and use of animals including short-term and long-term goals, and regulations and procedures pertaining to animal care and use.

4 USE OF VERTEBRATE ANIMALS IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, TEACHING, OR TESTING

- 4.1 Use of vertebrate animals in agricultural research, teaching or testing is overseen by the IACUC. Agricultural research, teaching or testing is defined as research, teaching or testing activities involving horses and other farm animals, not limited to livestock or poultry, used or intended for use as food or fiber, or used or intended for use for improving animal nutrition, breeding, management, or production efficiency, or for improving the quality of food or fiber. A&M-Commerce must follow *The Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* when conducting activities involving food and fiber production in agricultural animals.
- 4.2 When agricultural animals are involved in biomedical research, animal use and compliance must adhere to additional applicable federal guidelines.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Principal investigators (PI) are primarily responsible for compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations involving activities covered by this rule and are specifically responsible for:

- 5.1 Assuring that animal work is appropriately reviewed and approved prior to initiation of any activities or changes to approved activities. Regardless of funding sources, an AUP involving the use of animals in research, teaching or testing must be prepared and signed by the PI and must be reviewed and approved by the IACUC. If the activity is collaborative or involves other institutions, approval must be obtained from each institution;
- 5.2 Assuring that conduct of the animal activity is restricted to the animal activities described in the approved AUP or approved amendments, and is in congruence with funded grants, if applicable;
- 5.3 Assuring that all participants in animal activities are appropriately qualified through training and education to perform their responsibilities as listed in the AUP;
- 5.4 Assuring that all participants in animal activities are enrolled in an occupational health and safety program;
- 5.5 Assuring that all animal activities involving hazardous and bio-hazardous activities are approved by the appropriate safety committees;
- 5.6 Abiding by all determinations of the IACUC, including, but not limited to, directives to terminate participation in designated animal activities; and
- 5.7 Notifying the IACUC Chair as soon as possible after the discovery of any incidents that lead to harm or endanger the well-being of animals and humans covered by this rule, including reporting any animal concerns or noncompliance.
- 5.8 Notifying the IACUC Chair, IO, Dean, and Attending Veterinarian as soon as possible after discovery of any incidents that lead to significant injury or illness, unrelieved pain or distress, or the death of an animal covered by this rule.

6 ATTENDING VETERINARIAN

- 6.1 The Attending Veterinarian(s), or designee(s), shall provide guidance to the campus animal facility managers, animal users and administrators on current standards for the care and use of animals in teaching, testing and research programs, and shall serve as the Attending Veterinarian of record under the Federal Animal Welfare Act.

The Attending Veterinarian(s) has direct or delegated authority for activities involving animals at the institution, serves as a voting member of the IACUC and coordinates campus programs for the provision of adequate husbandry and veterinary care of research, testing and teaching animals.

7 REPORTING

- 7.1 The IO is responsible for ensuring prompt notification to governmental authorities after the discovery of any incident that requires notification to the IACUC, OLAW, USDA, or other governmental authority with respect to the care or use of animals that are involved in research, teaching, or testing activities covered by this rule.

- 7.2 Anyone who is aware of potential violations of existing animal care and use regulations or observes misuse or mistreatment of animals is strongly encouraged to report their concerns to the IACUC, the Attending Veterinarian or the IO. Concerns may also be reported anonymously via the [EthicsPoint](#) webpage or at 1-888-501-3850.
- 7.3 All allegations of mistreatment or noncompliance will be taken seriously and investigated by the IACUC. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible and appropriate and permissible under the law. No university employee or student will be discriminated against or subject to any reprisal for good faith reporting of actual or potential violations.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[The Animal Welfare Act \(7 U.S.C. § 2131-2159\) and Amendments and the Animal Welfare Regulations \(9 CFR chapter 1\)](#)

[Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals \(National Institutes of Health\)](#)

[Health Research Extension Act of 1985](#)

[U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training](#)

[Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#)

[Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching](#)

[United States Department of Agriculture Animal Care Policies](#)

System Regulation [15.99.05, Research Compliance](#)

System Regulation [15.99.07, Use of Vertebrate Animals](#)

[University IACUC-Research with Animals](#)

Suspends University Procedure *15.99.05.R0.01 Animal Care and Use*

Definitions

Animal - any live vertebrate animal used or intended for use in teaching, research, research training, experimentation, or biological testing or for related purposes, or other university sanctioned activities.

Animal Care and Use Program - the activities conducted by and at an institution that have a direct impact on the well-being of animals, including animal and veterinary care, policies and procedures, personnel and program management and oversight, occupational health and safety, IACUC functions, and animal facility design and management. The University may maintain multiple location specific programs.

Animal Facility - any and all buildings, rooms, areas, enclosures, or vehicles, including satellite facilities, used for confinement, transport, maintenance, breeding, or experiments including surgical manipulation.

Animal Welfare Act - Public Law 89-544, 1966, as amended, (P.L. 91-579, P.L. 94-279, and P.L. 99-198) 7 U.S.C. 2131 et. Seq. Implementing regulations are published in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 9, Chapter 1, Subchapter A, Parts 1,2, and 3 and are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Attending Veterinarian - the veterinarian responsible for the health and well-being of all animals used at the institution or at off-site locations where sanctioned activities occur.

Institutional Official (IO) - the individual who bears ultimate responsibility for the Animal Care and Use Program and is responsible for resource planning and ensuring alignment of Program goals with the university's mission. The Vice President for Research and Economic Development is the University's Institutional Official for purposes of this rule.

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) - an administrative body reporting to the Institutional Official in accordance with 9 CFR Chapter 1, Subchapter C, Part 2.31, P.L. 99-158, and the Health Research Extension Act of 1985.

Non-Compliance - failure to comply with federal or state regulations, System Policies or Regulations, University Rules or Procedures, IACUC procedures or the requirements to conduct research, teaching, testing, demonstration, or other activities using animals.

Public Health Service Policy - refers to Public Health Service Policy for the Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals ("PHS Policy") which requires institutions to establish and maintain proper measures to ensure the appropriate care and use of all animals involved in research, research training, and biological testing activities conducted and supported by the Public Health Service.

Revision History

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Contact Office

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